THE ACCULTURATIVE STRESS EXPERIENCE OF CHINESE AND INDONESIAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This is a longitudinal study aiming to ascertain the influence of ethnic identity, daily hassles, social network of support, coping strategies, English language proficiency, self-rating of health, and demographic variables on levels of acculturative stress and overall distress experienced by international students from mainland China and Indonesia. Students from these countries (and a comparison group of Australians students) completed measures on the above constructs at different stages of their sojourn to Australia, namely, at entry, four months after entry and eight months after entry. A grand total of 974 students completed the entry questionnaire (277 Indonesians, 558 Chinese and 139 Australians), 291 students completed the four months follow up questionnaire and 148 students completed the three waves of assessment (41 Indonesian, 70 Chinese and 37 Australian students).

The international students were recruited from 17 Australian universities. The Australian sample was recruited at Macquarie University. A separate sample of 161 students from Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia completed a translated version of the questionnaire to ascertain the equivalence of Indonesian students living in Australia with students attending Universitas Indonesia. This study used both hard copy and web-based delivery mode of the questionnaire to students participating in this study. A sub-sample of 20 Indonesian and Chinese international students completed a one-to-one in-depth interview to investigate their acculturative stress experiences further.

This study supported the stress and coping model, confirming that sojourners experienced moderate to high levels of stress from their initial interaction with the host society (Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998). Both Indonesians and Chinese experienced more distress than local Australian students across the three waves of assessment. These findings refute the traditional U-curve assumption of cultural shock, which argues that sojourners go through different phases in their process of adjustment to the host society, comprising honeymoon, disillusionment and readjustment phases. Chinese students scored higher on ethnic identity than Indonesians, and this was reflected in their lower levels of distress, particularly when they first entered the Australian culture. Contrary to traditional views, the Chinese were more willing than Australians to admit suffering emotional difficulties, and both Indonesian and Chinese students were willing to seek professional help for support with their emotional difficulties. Overall, high daily hassles and acculturative stress were the strongest predictors of high levels of distress. Higher avoidance and self-blame coping strategies were strong predictors of high distress across the three waves of assessment. Other predictors of high distress were language other than English as preferred language in Australia, using less support-seeking coping, less problem-focused coping, more willingness to seek professional help for emotional difficulties, and more religious coping. These findings contribute to the literature of stress and coping and have implications for both counselling international students and policy development for international offices in higher education.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following paragraphs serve as an introduction to position the subject matter of this study. Sojourning in a new culture represents an exciting challenge to international students commencing study in Australia. It is, however, a stressful process, leading in many cases to physical and/or psychological illness. In spite of reports indicating an initial sojourning honeymoon stage of euphoria, as reported by Oberg (1954), it appears that stress is experienced more intensely at the entry stage to the host culture. This does not mean there is no joy or excitement initially about entering the host environment, but the stress of sojourn becomes intense at times, interfering with further adjustment into the host culture.

Local students also experience several problems with adjustment to the university environment (Tan, 1994). International students, however, find that values, language, diet, laws and the people in the host culture are different to their familiar cultural background (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003). The understanding that international students experience stress as early as the beginning of their sojourn in the host society has implications for policy development and counselling, and most importantly, will assist in a smoother entry into the host society. International offices at universities can concentrate support and advice from an early stage towards the successful adjustment of international students to the host society. An early, proactive approach to dealing with acculturative stress may

greatly improve adjustment and further their academic achievement. Advice and support may even extend to international students who are planning to study in Australia. Ryan and Twibell (2000) rightly pointed out that adjustment outcomes can be greatly enhanced if international students have an understanding of what is expected from them in the new academic environment. Similarly, counselling services may prepare international students to deal with the undesirable aspects of the acculturative stress experience. This strategy may allow international students to accept their stress experience as a natural aspect of their sojourn, give them a realistic appraisal of the host society, and fine-tune their coping strategies towards a healthy adjustment.

Universities share a responsibility to introduce preventative measures to enhance a successful entry, and encourage further integration of international students into the university and consequently into the host society. Furthermore, universities have a pastoral responsibility towards international students in addition to their academic offering. This pastoral responsibility particularly concerns those who are considered the most vulnerable of the international student population; namely, those for whom English is not their first language and those culturally distant from the host culture. As Babiker, Cox and Miller (1980) reported, levels of stress experienced by sojourners are directly proportional to the cultural distance between home and host societies.

In order to study these issues, mainland Chinese and Indonesian students were selected for this study. These two groups have increased their presence at Australian universities in the last 20 years since the introduction of the Full Fee Paying Overseas

Student Program (FFPO) in 1987. They have added complexity and heterogeneity to the university culture and the education system.

This study of Chinese and Indonesian international students attempts to advance knowledge of the differences and similarities between these two ethnic groups in relation to Australian students. To be fair to the experiences of these two international students' ethnic groups, this study will avoid grouping them as "Asians", which denies the actual nature of their cultural particularities (Uba, 1994). It is therefore important to study the acculturative stress experiences of specific nationalities, instead of lumping them into one group called "international students", as this does not address the rich cultural experience of their sojourning to Australia (Yeh & Inose, 2003).

According to Education Australia Ltd (IDP), international students represented 20.7% of the overall university population at Macquarie University as per census of Semester 1, 2003. China, one of the ten largest sources of students at Australian universities, showed significant growth from 2002 levels in the order of 22.8% within the international student population. International students overall comprise 25.6% of the student population at Macquarie University, where this study was based. Macquarie also has a larger onshore Chinese student population (1,677) than any other Australian university. The other group included in this study, Indonesian, is the eighth largest international student base with 429 attending Macquarie University.

1.1. Definition of Terms.

This section briefly clarifies some concepts that will be used throughout this study. Some of the terms central to this study (e.g. ethnic identity, acculturative stress, coping, etc.) are further defined in later sections.

1.1.1. Sojourners.

Sojourners refer to those people who leave their homeland and decide to stay in another country for an extended time period (Navara & James, 2002). The essence of the process of sojourn includes leaving the home country to experience a new culture and later returning home (Furham, 2004). Currently, research on sojourn focuses on entry to a new culture, but re-entry to one's original country has not been highly researched (Adler, 1981). The generic term of sojourners includes foreign students (international students), Peace Corps, business people engaged in enterprises overseas, diplomats, interpreters and translators (Brislin, 1986).

1.1.2. International Students.

The term "international student" has been loosely used in general discourse to identify any student who has an Asian appearance, English difficulties or does not have the cultural proficiency to respond to social cues (Pearce & Borland, 1997).

In this study, the term "international student" specifically refers to full-fee-paying students who were resident in a country other than Australia and who came to Australia specifically for defined educational study purposes (Department of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA), 2001). In the following chapters, the term "international students" may, unless otherwise qualified, refer to those students selected for this study and may also be accompanied by their specific nationality i.e., Indonesian or Chinese, as appropriate.

1.1.3. First Language Other than English (FLOTE) Students

There are many terms that have been used to identify students who are non-English speaking and who also do not have an English-speaking background. DEETYA uses the term Non-English speaking background (NESB), which refers to someone who was born overseas, speaks a language other than English at home and has resided in Australia less than 10 years. In this study I will refer to this group of students as First Language Other than English (FLOTE).

1.1.4. Culture.

Mikulas (2002) proposed the following description of how cultures differ: "…Cultures differ in their perceptions, values, styles of communication, ways of expressing emotions, approaches to working and playing together, ways of building friendships, strategies of problem solving and expectations of relationships"(p 19). Following the above, Chinese international students in this study will refer to mainland

Chinese nationals with no reference to those Chinese nationals who have been influenced by other cultures, such as Britain in Hong Kong, for example.

1.2. Theoretical Considerations about Stress.

According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress can be defined as an adverse linkage between the individual and the environment which may lead to psychological and/or physical dysfunction.

The Transactional Model views stress as a dynamic transaction between external requirements and restraints, external resources and aids, and an individual's own internal supplies, values and needs (Babiker et al., 1980; Hobfoll, 1998). If a balance between the individual's resources and pressures from the environment is not achieved, the stress response is initiated (Gottlieb, 1997). It implies, however, a cognitive acknowledgment that the event is stressful before it has an impact on the individual's well-being. Furthermore, when the experience is coded as stressful, coping responses are put in place (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The Transactional Model incorporates cognitive, affective and behavioural factors in the understanding of the stress cycle (Daniels & Guppy, 1997). Following the premises established by the Transactional Model of stress, individuals experience stress when certain aspects of the interplay between individual and environment go beyond their resources and become a hazard for their psychological well-being (Lazarus & Folkman).

Selye (1974) made a further distinction between eustress (beneficial stress) and distress (non-beneficial stress). Eustress was identified as being good for the body and mind while distress caused bodily instability. To elaborate on the stress concept further, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) viewed a stressful event as a process including primary and secondary cognitive appraisals in people's efforts to preserve their well-being. Through primary cognitive appraisal, the individual evaluates the stressful situation resulting in three possible outcomes (Lazarus, 1993). First, if the person assesses the situation as inconsequential, then no response to the situation is undertaken. Second, if the person assesses the situation favourably, then a positive emotional response such as happiness, joy, or pride is elicited. Third, the person assesses the situation as a threat, harm or challenge. Perceiving the situation as a challenge may stimulate growth, mastery, and hence the presence of positive emotions. Alternatively, Lazarus found that a threat indicates potential danger and harm, that the damage to well-being is imminent or has already occurred, and both will invite negatively valued emotions.

Secondary appraisal occurs when an assessment is made that the situation actually represents a threat for the individual. It entails a review and formulation of coping strategies appropriate for dealing with the particular stressful event. Secondary appraisal also includes the evaluation that the individual is able to perform the appropriate coping strategy, with an assessment of possible outcomes when that coping strategy is performed (Lazarus, 1993). When a coping strategy is enacted to deal with the event, further primary and secondary appraisals are elicited, thus initiating further coping strategies (Honey, Morgan, & Bennett, 2003).

The Transactional Model has been used to understand a wide variety of topics such as low mood following childbirth (Honey et al., 2003), women's adjustment to failed in-vitro-fertilisation attempts (Terry & Hynes, 1998), adjustment of homeless youth (Dalton & Pakenham, 2002; Unger et al., 1998) adjustment to rehabilitation settings (Ptacek & Pierce, 2003) women in management positions (Long, Kahn & Schutz, 1992) and adjustment to multiple sclerosis (Pakenham, 1999). It has also been used in cross-cultural studies to understand issues such as life satisfaction, comparing Turkish and American students (Matheny et al., 2002). Despite the social, cultural, and economic differences, Matheny et al. found the Transactional Model useful and validated its use across cultures.

1.2.1. Stressors Affecting University Students.

Adjustment to university life, together with the stresses imposed by academic commitments, is a challenge for both local and international students. There are also the issues of gaining independence from family and having a constructive role within the overall society (Furnham & Bochner, 1986). Local and international students may experience separation from significant relationships, housing arrangements, food availability adjusted to their dietary patterns, and pressures of conducting finances on their own. International students, however, face additional pressures. According to Furnham (2004) their problems may be associated with racial discrimination, their need to fill a role imposed by their sojourn as ambassadors of their country, while at the same time dealing

with their own issues such as ethnic identity, communication in English, acculturative stress and homesickness.

Entering university is a transition period for students, who need to balance academic, social and personal demands. Stressors associated with this transition to university are contingencies that require adjustments in addition to normal everyday efforts to manage and control events as per a study conducted with undergraduate university students in the US (Gadzella, 1994). Gadzella found that females had more emotional, behavioural and physiological reactions to stress, while males had more cognitive appraisal responses. In relation to the type of stresses, one significant stressor is the search for new social supports that can substitute for the family support prevalent through high school as reported by on-campus undergraduate students (Hudd et al., 2000).

Woosley (2003) conducted a study on the adjustment of students during the first few weeks of their study at US colleges and found that social integration was a significant stressor, i.e., feeling that they were socially adjusted and accepted within the social group. Social adjustment was more relevant to the student's experience than employment prospects or academic satisfaction.

Ross, Niebling and Heckert (1999) identified interpersonal, academic, intrapersonal, and environmental stressors influencing adjustment of undergraduate university students at a midwestern US university. Interpersonal stressors refer to their relationship with others, academic describes academic achievement stressors,

intrapersonal relates to changes within oneself, such as dealing with health problems, and environmental describes events outside university, such as living arrangements (Ross et al.). Ross et al. reported that changes in sleeping patterns, eating habits or new responsibilities, were the most frequent stressors. Other stressors frequently mentioned by students were university-class workload, financial problems, and changes in social activities.

The multifaceted nature of stressors in the life of university students is indicative of the demands and resources required to achieve study goals according to Chemers, Hu, and Garcia (2001). Accordingly, the above authors found that first-year US university students viewed challenges posed by the university environment as evidence that they needed to overcome these in order to satisfy their study aspirations. Furthermore, the university experience included uncertainty about making friends; maintaining finances, and making decisions about living arrangements with others for the first time. The fear of failure in studies and the dangers associated with freely available illicit drugs caused further preoccupation for new students.

University students, in the majority female and white, requesting counselling at a major public midwestern university in US, reported experiencing vocational, academic, emotional, motivational and social problems (Heppner et al., 1994). In descending order of frequency, Heppner et al. found the following frequently occurring problems for university students: mood instability, interpersonal conflict, thought disorders, suicidal ideation, behavioural disturbance and chemical dependency. In summary, Heppner et al.

found that the most common problems students experienced were mood, physical and relationship difficulties, and to a lesser extent, substance abuse, suicidal ideation or thought disorders.

1.2.2. Stressors and Gender.

Gender differences are associated with the amount and intensity of stressors experienced by university students. Day and Livingstone (2003) reported some evidence suggesting that men and women differed in their perception of stressors in their everyday life. Female university students rated exam stress, financial difficulties, facing rejection from others, relationship break-up and academic failure as the five most prevalent stressors affecting their life (Frazier & Schauben, 1994). Similarly other studies found that women reported experiencing more academic stressors than men (Hamilton, & Fagot, 1988; Misra, McKean, West, & Russo, 2000). According to Misra et al. it appeared that women engaged in more extracurricular activities, such as employment and family duties. Additionally, women experienced more stressors related to social life, relationships, children, family health and employment (McDonough & Walters, 2001).

Misra et al. (2000) found that men viewed events in life as less stressful and therefore appraised academic stressors more positively. However, males' lower ratings of stressors may be related to their socialisation process, where men consider it a weakness to express emotions (Davidson-Katz, 1991; Hudd et al, 2000). In contrast to males, females rated problems as relatively more stressful, though this may not reflect a real

difference in the number of stressors. Misra et al. concluded that it might not be the stressor but the perception of a stressor which impacts more negatively on women's stress. Furthermore, females tried to find perfect solutions to problems, which may lead them to experience higher distress (Misra et al.). Hudd et al. urged more research to address the unique sources of stress experienced by female university students, which can explain the prevalence of stress in women. They also advocated further examination of women's strategies for coping with stress which may establish whether women's coping responses are different to, or less successful than, those exhibited by male university students.

To date, studies have shown that female university students experience higher levels of help-seeking behaviour than male students for stress problems. Surveys of the health and stress status of university students in the US found 52.2% of females reporting stress problems (Hudd et al., 2000). Similarly, surveys on gender and university students who requested counselling at a university counselling centre found that the participants were predominantly female (70.7%). This appears to be the normal rate of utilisation of counselling services by gender and the usual pattern of response to survey research in university settings (Heppner et al., 1994).

1.2.3. Psychological Difficulties and University Students.

There seems to be an association between number of stressors and psychological adjustment (Bolger & Schilling, 1991). According to Frazier and Schauben (1994),

university students who presented a larger number of stressors also showed more signs of psychological difficulties, such as a higher incidence of neuroticism or psychoticism.

Dill and Henley (1998) reported a number of stressors affecting college students in the US. They were grouped as follows:

a) Academic stressors. University students reported homework and attendance at lectures as some of the stressors in their academic life.

b) Peer interaction. The pressures imposed by studies made it difficult for students to attend social gatherings, sustain membership in university clubs and maintain friendships with other students.

c) Family. High academic achievement expectations from parents.

d) Responsibility. Maintaining balance between being dependent on parents and family and emerging independent behaviours.

e) Relationships. Intimacy, sexuality and romance.

Some categories of psychological problems were more prevalent in the university population (Oliver, Reed, & Smith, 1998). Internalising disorders such as anxiety, depression, and physical symptoms were frequently diagnosed in university students, together with eating disorders and alcohol abuse. The prevalence of internalising and eating disorders were higher for females, while alcohol problems were more common in males (Oliver et al.).

1.2.4. Stressors and International Students.

The literature on acculturative stress has attempted to identify the stressors affecting international students. Robertson, Line, Jones, and Thomas (2000) reported that international students found the process of comprehending and gaining proficiency in the English language to be complex. They experienced several stressors during settlement in the host culture which interfered with their learning experience and presented difficulties associated with emotional and psychological adjustment into the host culture, such as homesickness (Ali, Van der Zee, & Sanders, 2003). Behind all these efforts by international students to fit into the host culture, Robertson et al. conceded that it was their paramount desire to be accepted by other students and staff, so that their experience of sojourn might take a positive turn.

Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994) categorised the problems experienced by international students into intrapersonal and interpersonal factors. Intrapersonal factors included deep feelings of loss of their culture, feelings of inferiority in relation to host nationals, disappointment, and resentment related to their own abilities and intellectual skills. Interpersonal factors featured communication difficulties and culture-shock experiences, with ongoing feelings of homesickness, isolation and loneliness potentially causing depression. Other interpersonal factors included changes in their network of support and the awareness of the loss of their relationships with family and friends, together with circumstances such as immigration problems, educational system differences, and their efforts in building a new friendship network.

If international students initially appraise their interaction with the host society as negative, it can precipitate a stressful reaction in their lives, thus negatively affecting their further experience in the host society (Chen, 1999). Two main kinds of stressors have been reported to affect international students trying to settle in the new culture: (1) academic stressors including those triggered by differences in educational systems, and (2) socio-cultural stressors relating to fitting personally into the host society (Aubrey, 1991). Chen found that a major concern for international students in academic and socio-cultural adjustments is their perception of their actual level of communication in English. If they perceive their English skills as deficient, this may have significant consequences for their confidence and overall purposeful efforts to adjust to the new culture.

Academic stressors can become a significant barrier for international students to overcome (Stoynoff, 1997). Such stressors commonly involve expectations about performance levels, which are anticipated to be as good as or better than those attained in the home culture (Clark Oropeza, Fitzgibbon, & Baron, 2001). Adjusting to the new educational system may also become a significant stressor for international students attempting to use analytical rather than memorisation techniques to process information in the host society (Chen, 1999). International students approach university exams with great apprehension because exams are perceived as the confirmation of their potential to succeed academically in the new culture. If international students believe that their communication skills in English are insufficient, they will appraise exams as a threat, with further negative implications for academic achievement.

Additionally, international students face socio-cultural stressors with great apprehension (Miyamoto & Kuhlman, 2001). These include culture shock, i.e., experiencing a culture in which values differ markedly from those of the home culture. Culture shock is experienced by international students during class interaction at university where, for example, interaction between academics and students is less formally defined than in the home culture. Lifestyle differences between host and international students may trigger feelings of isolation and of alienation from other students. Culture shock as a stressor may also be further complicated by cultural distance, as seems to be the case with some Asian students trying to settle into Western cultures (Clark Oropeza et al., 2001).

Another stressor in the lives of international students is the financial pressure of taking care of their own day-to-day financial expenses, which was unlikely to be the case in their own culture. Inability to administer finances poses a great burden in their lives, jeopardising their future studies. Frequently, international students come from wealthy financial backgrounds; thus, changes in their economic status resulting from their sojourn may trigger feelings of resentment, loss and grief (Clark Oropeza et al., 2001). International students may also experience racial discrimination or prejudice, which can severely affect their overall well-being.

Further stressors of a more idiosyncratic nature might affect international students' overall adjustment in the new culture. Receiving news from home about political changes,

economic downturns or internal hostilities may have a detrimental effect on international student adjustment (Clark Oropeza et al., 2001). Similarly, gender issues and the fact that some students come from male-dominated societies may trigger conflict due to the contradiction of being in a Western society with a new set of gender-role expectations and behaviours (Hashim & Zhiliang, 2003).

Although research has enhanced our knowledge of the stressors experienced by international students, Chen (1999) advocated a focus on the following: (1) understanding different causes for the same type of stressor, (2) identifying levels in the experience of stressors, and (3) establishing how international students' personality traits will influence both the existence of stressors and the direction thereof, once experienced.

Other stressors reported included worry over housing, sleep, food, climate, relationships with others in the new culture, communication and further academic differences and difficulties. Chinese students in the US were reported to experience communication problems, unfamiliarity with customs and values prevalent in the host society, conflicted social relationships, academic difficulties together with issues of discrimination, loneliness, isolation, and intergenerational conflict (Yeh & Inose, 2002). These stressors change in the course of the sojourn; however, more research is needed to address the stressors affecting international students over time during their stay in the host culture (Ryan & Twibell, 2000). Epstein and Katz (1992) advocated use of longitudinal designs that can capture symptoms preceding and resulting from stressors.

The fact that there are more reports of stressors by international students also indicates that as they move through the settlement process in the new culture, they will probably experience further psychological symptoms. Overall, it is feasible that by not having the home support structure, experiencing the conflicts of adolescence, sojourning difficulties and university requirements, international students may experience more emotional adjustment problems than local students (Neill & Proeve, 2000).

1.2.4.1. International Students' Strategies for Well-Being.

International students have been found to display a variety of competencies in their efforts to safeguard well-being in the host culture. Tseng and Newton (2002) identified the following strategies for well-being necessary for successful adjustment by international students:

- Awareness and understanding of own behaviour compared to people in the host culture.

- Building friendships with co-nationals, other international students and host nationals as an opportunity for breaking isolation stemming from sojourn.

- Awareness and understanding of other cultures that facilitates the adjustment process to the host culture.

- Seeking help from others as an approach to understanding and adjusting to the host culture.

- Participating in activities that enhance contact with host nationals as a strategy for knowledge of the host culture.

- Keeping a working relationship with advisors and lecturers who may familiarise international students with ways of doing things in the host culture.

- Focus on mastering English as a key to entry into the host society.

- Being able to let go when unable to resolve a problem so it does not become a block to adjustment.

1.2.4.2. Domains of Adjustment for International Students.

Tseng and Newton (2002) identified four categories of adjustment that international students underwent while settling into the host culture:

- Everyday-living adaptation, including familiarisation with food, transport, accommodation, weather, etc.

- Academic adaptation, such as acquiring knowledge of the new educational system, learning skills, mastering of English, etc.

- Socio-cultural adaptation, covering the experience of cultural shock, discrimination, fitting in with host-culture customs and norms, and values.

- Psychological adaptation, including feelings of homesickness, loneliness, anxiety, depression, identity conflict, and isolation.

1.2.4.3. Symptoms of Stress Experienced by International Students.

The acculturative stress experienced by international students in their process of settling into the host culture is highlighted by the presence of physiological, somatic and

psychological symptoms. Winkelman (1994) outlined some of the physiological

symptoms, including adrenal dysfunction, alterations in the immune system, regulation of

the sympathetic nervous system, and higher susceptibility to illnesses. Winkelman

reported that somatic symptoms were characterised by the persistence of sleeping

problems, decreased appetite, reduced energy levels, constant headaches and frequent

gastrointestinal difficulties.

1.2.4.4. Types of Acculturation for International Students.

Because sojourning involves the leaving behind of family, friends and

acquaintances, such as work colleagues and neighbours; sources of social support are

reduced, and there is, accordingly, a subsequent increase in physical and mental illness.

Supportive relationships with family and friends are no longer available to the same extent

to sustain migrants and sojourners (Furnham, 1997).

Sojourning and its associated stress do not necessarily result in the presence of

mental health difficulties. The level and intensity of the acculturative stress experience

may be mediated by or dependent on individual and group characteristics. Berry and Kim

(1988) suggested that mediating variables include the nature of the dominant society, the

nature of the acculturating group, mode of acculturation chosen (assimilation, marginality,

separation and biculturalism), and finally the demographic, social and psychological

characteristics of the individual attempting to fit into the host society. Berry and Kim

viewed assimilation as adopting the host culture's values and leaving behind those from

their own cultural background. Marginality becomes a preferred option for those rejecting

their own values and those from the host culture. Separation occurs when individuals

relate only to people from their own cultural background. Biculturalism or integration

incorporates the values from both the original and host culture as their own (Berry & Kim;

Phinney, Devich-Navarro, DuPoint, Estrada, & Onwughala, 1994).

The majority of studies on the acculturation process of migrants and sojourners

have been conducted in the US, justifying the need for studies focusing on the

acculturation profile of migrant and sojourning groups in Australia. Compared with

Australia, American society has historically encouraged the "melting pot" philosophy of

acculturation, where assimilation was advised as an acculturation strategy. However,

assimilation had a negative impact with the loss of culture and language; thus, migrants

preferred to keep a bicultural identity (Berry & Sam, 1997). On the other side of the

acculturation pendulum, there was a tendency to separate from the mainstream culture.

Phinney, Chavira and Williamson (1992) reported that Asian Americans separated more

from American culture and had less pride in ethnic identity than other groups such as

Hispanics in the US. On the other hand, Australian society has encouraged

multiculturalism since the 1960s. Australian multiculturalism encourages ethnic groups'

celebration of their unique cultures, language and values (Levey, 2001).

Migrants and other sojourners' (such as international students) perceptions of the

host culture as threatening or challenging may cause them to approach their interaction

with the host culture in different ways. As Bartlett (1998) reported, the challenges

imposed by the host culture and a highly competitive environment, affect individuals differently based on their own cultural background. Kasl (1983) argued that the precipitation of a stress-charged response to a cultural environment is caused less by the environment itself than by the individual's interpretation of cues from that environment as "risky".

1.2.4.5. Educational System Differences.

Ballard and Clanchy (1991) proposed a model of teaching, learning and the cultural attitudes that inform them, where an attitude to knowledge fluctuates from "conserving" to "extending", matched with learning approaches fluctuating between "reproductive" and "analytical". The Australian education system progresses from a predominantly conserving attitude to learning in primary school, towards an increasing emphasis on critical attitude in high school that continues into university education. Biggs (1994) also established a progression in learning styles in Western cultures from "surface" to "deep" learning.

Although there are many similarities between Western and Eastern education, there are, however, overt differences that affect international students. Some Asian students come from educational environments which are highly structured and teacher-directed and then enter Western cultures where there is high self-direction, active participation and emphasis on critical thinking (Biggs, 1994). There is a mix of authoritarian and student-centred teaching in some Asian cultures. Biggs refers to endless

going over and over a point, where repetition is used as a component in the process of understanding the topic being discussed. Teachers in some Confucian-heritage Asian cultures, such as China and Japan, perceive their role as presenting to students probing questions and allowing them to reflect on them (Baoyun, 1998). Biggs found that even though teachers in Asian cultures have larger classes, they apparently devote more time to each student, while the approach in Western cultures is more of a group focus. Interactions are mainly at the class level, encouraging mainly public questioning from students.

The central tenet of Eastern education is that it values reproduction of knowledge and memorisation of information, while Western education favours critical evaluation. Although this perception has been challenged by later research (Kirkpatrick & Mulligan, 1998), the Confucian and Taoist discourse tradition influences Eastern people to respond to text differently than Westerners. Indonesian students in particular have attributed their difficulties in Australia to differences in educational systems, encountering constant struggles with the critical learning process of reading and writing, and so remaining more dependent on the input expected from the instructor within the educational system (Meyer & Kiley, 1998).

Participation in class reflects some of the differences between Western and Eastern cultures (Wan, 2001). Lecturers in Western cultures frequently complain that Asian students do not speak in class. This apparently passive attitude of some Asian students is

indicative of their relationship with lecturers, who are perceived as the experts, and further, that students cannot disagree with what the text says (Biggs, 1987).

Lecturers complained about the descriptive nature of Asian international students' writing in English. In any account of Asian students' writing, there is a need to acknowledge that cultures differ in composing, organising and writing ideas (Couchman, 1997). When considering compositions written by international students from FLOTE background one can expect that some content and presentation of ideas in the text depart from Western approaches to writing. Therefore, any assessment of international students should consider such limitations.

The reading comprehension of international students has also been an object of attention. The difficulties experienced by international students in mastering the nuances of a new language involve an adjustment process that they need to go through first before being able to comprehend the meaning of a text. It is important to recognise that reading difficulties relate to the mismatch between background knowledge presupposed by the text and the background knowledge actually achieved by the reader (Koda, 1994).

1.2.4.6. Individualism vs. Collectivism.

Dating from the initial Hofstede (1980) work on individualism-collectivism, Indonesian and Chinese people differ on the various dimensions of values. In individualist cultures, people prioritise looking after themselves; while in collectivist cultures people

put the social collective before themselves. Australia was, according to Hofstede, largely an individualist culture. Ranked 47th out of 53 countries on individualism, Indonesia was largely a collectivist culture. Although there was no reference to China in the initial Hofstede study, further studies have confirmed the collectivistic nature of Chinese society (Bond, 1996).

The main difference between collectivistic and individualistic world perspectives is the emphasis placed on the "other" as separated from one's own experience (Brew, Hesketh, & Taylor, 2001). Collectivists define themselves in terms of belonging to a family, community, and social structure. On the other hand, individualists conceptualise themselves as separated and autonomous from others. Armstrong and Swartzman (2001) labelled these two orientations as independent (individualist) and interdependent (collectivist) construals of the self. These differing worldviews justify their goal orientation based on self-reliance or commitment to the group.

International students from collectivistic cultures experience high stress when faced with individualistic values in the host society, particularly in interpersonal relationships. International students, particularly from Asian countries, value closeness in relationships and become disconcerted and disillusioned when interacting with students from individualistic societies, such as Australia, which value independence and self-reliance (Cross, 1995). International students' tendency to mainly interact with co-nationals may be an expression of their disappointment with host-society values relating to social interactions (Yeh & Inose, 2003).

1.3. Influences on the Acculturative Stress Process for International Students.

Acculturative stress has an impact on the overall mental health of international students. The following section will present in detail the variables to be considered in this study, such as ethnic identity, coping, social support, daily hassles, acculturative stress and distress. The influence of each of these factors on the university and host culture experience of local and international students will be discussed in this section. In addition, this section will include description of demographic status, language competence and health status factors.

1.3.1. Ethnic Identity.

Ethnic identity can be briefly defined as the pride people embrace in relation to their racial and cultural identity (Sue, 1978). Phinney and Alipuria (1990) viewed ethnic identity as a multidimensional construct including feelings of pride, belonging, safe sense of membership, and positive attitudes towards a particular ethnic group. Phinney and Alipuria regarded ethnic identity as a progression from an undifferentiated, diffuse and non-explored ethnic identity, to one in which ethnic identity was achieved and had a distinctive status. As Nesdale, Rooney, and Smith (1997) reported, ethnic identity enhances the individual's self-confidence, and with this strength, sojourners feel encouraged to approach and nurture social support from other members of their ethnic group.

To a large extent, international students move into a new culture during their adolescence, which is also a transition in terms of ethnic identity formation and development (Branch, Tayal, & Triplett, 2000). Phinney (1992) presented a model for understanding the development of ethnic identity in adolescents. She proposed that ethnic identity evolves through various phases, beginning with adolescents who have not yet explored what ethnic identity represents for them. This is followed by a search and increasing awareness of ethnic roots and then final grounding in their own ethnic group.

Phinney et al. (1994) indicated that adherence to a particular ethnic identity did not greatly affect adjustment. Rotheram-Borus (1990), however, argued that for some minority groups, particularly in the US, having pride in their own ethnic status and separation as the acculturation strategy resulted in healthier adjustment when they felt were discriminated by the host population. Jayasuriya (1990) confirmed this view, reporting that separation was a resource used by ethnic minorities in Australia experiencing marginality, alienation, social discrimination, unemployment, etc. Jayasuriya concluded that based on the strength of ethnic identity, sojourners felt more comfortable about their ethnic attachment.

When viewing acculturation from a linear, bipolar perspective, sojourners sacrifice home cultural values and ethnic identity for the gain of adopting host society behaviours. Contrasting with this perspective of acculturation, Duan and Vu (2000) elaborated that sojourners acculturated at a functional level but still retained their cultural-ethnic identity.

This modality of acculturation was successful when the sojourner had close links with their own ethnic group.

Sodowsky and Maestas (2000) reported that strong ethnic identity permitted better coping with cultural clashes and produced a better and more integrated ego identity. Ethnic identity development should be primarily understood as a multidimensional process (Phinney & Alipuria, 1990), largely influenced by the social context (Yeh & Huang, 1996). Ethnic identity does not develop in isolation or result from internal processes, but as part of an adolescent's reaction and resulting interaction with the social environment.

Dubow, Pargament, Boxer and Tarakeshwar (2000) noted that ethnic identity was guided by self-perceptions and the perceptions of others towards us. Melucci (1996) argued that both auto-recognition (the way people define themselves) and hetero-recognition (the way others define them) influence the stability of identity. Faced with the challenges of preserving ethnic identity within their original culture, international students have to come to terms with hetero-recognition resulting from their interactions with the host society (Negy, Shreve, Jensen & Uddin, 2003). This adjustment is a difficult process, leading to their search for safe social interaction with other international students (Melucci). Some argued that ethnic identity has a significant influence on distress; however, there was a mediating role for self-esteem (Nesdale et al., 1997).

It is in this interaction with locals that international students learn about perceptions of host nationals towards their ethnic group (Negy, Shreve, Jensen & Uddin, 2003). Perceived conflict and discrimination from the host society result in self-protective measures by international students (Verkuyten, 1998). They attempt to regain their ethnic self-esteem and social auto-recognition by grounding themselves in their cultural values, which reinforce their ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is then an important construct underlying international students' interaction with the host society. As noted by Laroche, Kim and Hui (1997), ethnic identity is the force binding sojourners with their old roots, while acculturation launches them towards new roots.

This conflict between the new and the old is resolved when international students affirm their ethnic identity but also acknowledge the importance of coming to terms with the host nationals when they realise they are to remain in the host culture for some time (Sanchez, Spector & Cooper, 2000).

In Phinney's (1992) model, international students reach a higher level of ethnic identity by negotiating a bicultural value system. Furthermore, successful bicultural international students achieve a balance between their home and host culture (Sam, 2000). Saylor and Aries (1999) confirmed that ethnic identity became stronger over time from the beginning of university studies to the end of the particular year of studies. They concluded that grounded identification with their own culture did not imply low involvement with the host culture.

Considering the influence of the social environment in the development of ethnic identity, Searle and Ward (1990) found that more cultural distance from the host environment resulted in higher propensity to experience ethnic identity conflict. Similarly, grounded ethnic identification with home culture determined a low degree of identity conflict in the host culture. It was also assumed that strong identification with co-nationals was a protection against identity problems (Leong & Ward, 2000). Overall, ethnic identity related more strongly to emotional adjustment than academic adjustment (Kalsner & Pistole, 2003).

Generally, there is indication that ethnic identity awareness affects success in the host culture (Yeh & Hwang, 2000). Moroccan and Turkish high school students who settled in Holland were assessed on a number of dimensions, including ethnic identity (Van Der Veen & Meijnen, 2001). It was found that successful Moroccan and Turkish students had some doubts about their ethnic identity, but these were not significant enough to indicate that they had ethnic identity problems. This may be explained by the fact that successful students achieved even more highly than Dutch students and experienced more instances of having to think about their ethnic identity because of their high achievements compared with others in their own ethnic group. That may have increased their awareness about their ethnic background, which was not the case with less successful students (Van Der Veen & Meijnen).

1.3.2. Coping.

Coping does not represent a homogeneous concept and has been described as "strategies", "tactics", "responses", "cognitions" or "behaviours" (Zeidner & Endler, 1996). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined coping as "cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external or internal demands (and conflicts between them) that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person" (p.141). Lazarus and Folkman also claimed that coping changes through time and is not a trait. It is central to the understanding of coping that it is viewed as a multidimensional construct that evolves and changes over time (Raffety, Smith, & Ptacek, 1997). Coping is learned behaviour that becomes part of the individual's repertoire through daily interactions with the environment in their socialisation process (Bailey & Dua, 1999).

Meanwhile, Olah (1995, p. 495) defined coping as "encompassing all purposeful cognitive and behavioural actions designed to manage such external or internal changes. Coping in this sense is not restricted to successful outcomes but includes all purposeful attempts to handle demands, regardless of their effectiveness." The choice of coping style is then determined by the sojourner's personal and cultural experience. However, this may be complicated by the fact that the repertoire of cultural knowledge is no longer applicable nor easily transferred into the host society (Sanchez et al., 2000).

Further clarification of the dynamics of the Transactional Model of coping has been central to understanding the stress process. In their Transactional Model, Lazarus

and Folkman (1984) asserted that coping is a process of executing a response in the face of a perceived threat. The coping response follows a path, which begins with the threat itself, and awareness of all potential responses to the threat. In terms of adjusting to the host culture, coping is an intrinsic response to the acculturative stress process experienced when facing an unfamiliar society.

There is still debate regarding the determinants of coping. Some have indicated that they are traits (McCrae & Costa, 1986), personality predispositions (Fleishman, 1984) or responses to given situational demands (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Bailey and Dua (1999) proposed that culture itself may be a determinant of coping. They found that coping varies when a person moves from one cultural environment to another, and coping may be seen as an adaptation manoeuvre rather than a personality disposition. Therefore, sojourning becomes a moderating influence in the choice of coping strategies.

Sojourning and the resulting acculturative stress experience expose the dislocation between the familiar problem-solving methods of coping at home and the host cultural environment (Oberg, 1954). The choice of coping strategies during the sojourning process is determined by cultural background together with other relevant variables (Cross, 1995; Rokack, 1999). This association between coping and sojourning has been underlined by the work of Shaw et al. (1997), who acknowledged that strategies for coping with stress were similar for Americans and Chinese, but the difference rested in the fewer symptoms of distress for the Chinese due to the strength of cultural values as buffers against stress.

Although widely used in research, the notion of coping posed by the Transactional Model of stress has received some criticism. Doublet (2000) argued that the Transactional Model implied that an individual experiencing stress would be expected to cope. If coping was unsuccessful, the individual fell into despair and/or further stress. It was implicit in this assumption that there were some universal coping behaviours and that the individual's failure to respond with an appropriate coping behaviour caused distress. According to Doublet, there is no acknowledgment in the Transactional Model that people in some cultures may not exhibit a particular behaviour or simply did not care enough about the particular situation to produce a response or coping strategy.

In spite of the challenges and new opportunities created by sojourning in a host society, moving into the host culture affects sojourners' sense of identity and coping skills (Nwadiora & McAdoo, 1996). Berry and Kim (1988) indicated that significant dysfunction and psychopathology result when coping resources in the host environment appear to be inappropriate.

1.3.2.1. Emotion-Focused and Problem-Focused Coping.

Coping has also been defined in terms of the influences of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping as responses to the stressful situation. Compas, Connor-Smith, Saltzman, Thomsen, and Wadsworth (2001) pointed out that coping tries to restore the balance between the self and the stressful environment through purposeful actions

(problem-focused coping) or attempting to mitigate the negative emotions resulting from this stressful interaction between the individual and the environment (emotion-focused coping). Although Compas et al. subscribed to the above definition of coping, they also alluded to the simplification of the coping concept into the above dichotomy. Compas et al. stressed that rather than a one-dimensional model coping should be regarded as a multidimensional structured construct.

The Transactional Model of stress and coping indicates that emotion-focused coping is triggered when the individual assesses the stressful situation as uncontrollable. On the other hand, when the individual judges that the situation can be under control, problem-focused coping is delivered to deal with the stressful circumstances (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).

In a review of studies in child and adolescent coping and adjustment, Compas et al. (2001) found that problem-focused coping subscales such as problem solving, positive reappraisal and cognitive restructuring were better indicators of adjustment than avoidance or self-blame coping across several studies reviewed. Although it may be tempting to assert that problem-focused coping is more functional than other forms of coping, it may only mean that socially and behaviourally adjusted individuals are better able to create solutions to problems. According to Compas et al., if researchers want to address this difficulty, further assessment of previous adjustment to stress is advisable. This should also be the case for studies on acculturative stress, where adjustments prior to sojourn should be thoroughly investigated. This is the case for international students, who

face stress in an unfamiliar environment where effective means for coping with stress are not completely under their control anymore.

Compas et al. (2001) highlighted that coping strategies associated with emotion-focused coping such as cognitive and behavioural avoidance, social withdrawal, resigned acceptance, self-blame, and wishful thinking were associated with poorer adjustment outcomes in the literature reviewed. However, they guarded against assuming that emotion-focused coping is poorly correlated with adjustment. Poor outcomes may be related to an individual's poor skills in regulating their emotions rather than being the expression of emotions themselves.

An emphasis in the literature has been placed on the assumption that depending on the type of stress experienced, people may deliver a particular coping strategy. Particular coping strategies become more or less effective depending on the kind of stress affecting the individual (Kaplan, 1996). Furthermore, certain coping strategies beneficial for one individual may not be appropriate for someone else (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989). Specifically, sojourning in the host culture may require certain coping strategies more than others for international students. On occasions, even coping strategies that are generally inferred to be dysfunctional, may best be regarded as occasionally functional when dealing with certain kinds of stressors. For example, disengagement from the problem may at times be the best option to deal with stressors that threaten adjustment (Compas et al., 2001; Zeidner & Saklofske, 1996). Sometimes people tend to disengage from the stressful situation as a coping strategy because of its overwhelming impact on

their well-being and overall adjustment. As well, international students may prefer to block some stressors out of their consciousness (e.g., relationship stressors) while they deal with those more urgent to their welfare (e.g., accommodation difficulties).

Coping outcomes may influence a further choice of coping strategies. Being satisfied with a given coping strategy previously used (coping effectiveness) will influence its further use and resulting benefits for overall well-being (Beehr & McGrath, 1996). It is feasible then to assert that coping strategies may moderate the influence of stress on psychological adjustment (Aldwin & Revenson, 1987).

Matheny et al. (2002) used the Coping Resources Inventory for Stress (CRIS) (Matheny, Curlette, Aycock, Pugh, & Taylor, 1987), modelled on the Transactional Model of stress, to compare coping resources of American and Turkish students. They did not find differences by country in their overall coping resources; however, they found significant differences on some of the subscales. Turkish students were better at structuring (managing time and energy), and cognitive restructuring, while Americans were better at self-disclosure, acceptance and physical fitness.

Gender differences in coping have been extensively reported by research. While some studies indicated that women used more distraction, relaxation, and religion, and men used more direct-action strategies (Stone & Neale, 1984), other studies did not find significant differences in coping strategies by gender (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980).

Studies focusing on coping with exams share some similarities with studies focusing on coping with the acculturative stress experience. According to Raffety et al. (1997) students preparing for exams increased their use of problem-solving coping strategies, which reached their peak the day before the exam and fell lower during and after exams. Although support seeking and avoidance coping increased two days before exams, they underwent little change in the days leading up to exams, fell during exams and started to increase again after exams (Raffety et al.). Avoidance remained relatively unchanged all through exams, suggesting that it is a dispositional variable rather than one which is highly influenced by situational circumstances.

1.3.2.2. Types of Coping Strategies.

Greve and Strobl (2004) reported that assimilative coping concerns the individual's cognitive or behavioural attempts to change the environment to their own benefit. Similar but more narrowly defined kinds of coping strategies found in the literature were problem-focused, task-oriented, constructive, confrontative, information seeking, problem solving, seeking social support for instrumental reasons, and primary control coping. Accommodative coping refers to the individual's cognitive or behavioural attempts to change oneself in order to adapt to the environment (Greve & Strobl). Relevant accommodative categories of coping found in the literature were emotion-focused; emotion-regulative, person-oriented, self-adaptation, self-controlling, acceptance, passivity, seeking social support for emotional reasons, and secondary control coping. Avoidance coping is concerned with behaviours and cognitive acts that entailed

"leaving the field", either physically or psychologically. Relevant avoidance categories of coping from the literature are escape, behavioural disengagement, cognitive disengagement, escape fantasies, self-isolation, alcohol-drug disengagement, and active-forgetting coping.

Problem-solving coping may be associated with decreased levels of depression as noted by Catanzaro, Horaney, and Creasey (1995). They argued that problem-solving coping only makes a difference in levels of depression if the individual actually believes that these coping strategies might reduce it.

Students focused on achievement are more likely to assess occurrences in their lives as challenges rather than stresses. These students used more task-oriented approaches to coping, which ultimately determined a reduction in stress (Santiago-Rivera, Bernstein, & Gard, 1995). Additionally, coping strategies used in reaction to current stressors were a reflection of coping strategies people had used in the past (Terry, 1994).

Hwang, Scherer, Wu, Hwang, and Li (2002) found that planning, positive reappraisal and distancing were coping strategies found in both Western and Non-Western cultures. Similarly, they confirmed that it was possible to replicate the factors of the Ways of Coping scale across Western and Eastern cultures.

Coping strategies have been subdivided into many categories, from the dichotomous problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies of Lazarus and

Folkman (1984) to the 18 strategies of coping proposed by Frydenberg and Lewis (1993). Frydenberg and Lewis summarized the 18 categories into three, which were: (a) solving the problem: this implied attempting to deal with the problem oneself without requiring help from others; (b) reference to others: there was an orientation to deal with events using problem-focused strategies, but an effort was made to reach out for support; (c) non-productive coping: people used emotion-focused coping strategies that ultimately did not alleviate feelings of stress.

Humour is a coping strategy that may mediate the impact of stress on mood and anxiety. The beneficial effect of humour on mental health has been compared to gains resulting from exercise (Szabo, 2003). These benefits can be explained in terms of the distraction or "time out" relief from everyday problems that humour introduces to people's lives. Additionally, the physiological changes effected by humour and exercises are similar in nature.

Although religion has been frequently linked to mental disturbance and guilt, more contemporary studies link it to prosocial behaviour and fail to confirm that religious people are more emotionally disturbed than non-religious people. Taken in the context of a university population in the US, Johnson and Hayes (2003) found that 18% of students included in their sample presented some distress relating to religious and spiritual matters. Furthermore, 6% of that 18% experienced extreme distress resulting from religious concerns. Those students presenting considerable stress and religious concerns also reported relationship problems, uncertainty about values, sexual difficulties, suicidal

thoughts, and fears of being punished for their sins (Johnson & Hayes). The above study did not report religious and spiritual concerns in cross-cultural groups. It was anticipated that value conflict between sojourner and host culture was also prevalent at the spiritual level.

Reliance on substance use as a coping strategy often develops when there is a lack of adaptive coping (Cooper, Russell & George, 1988). As treatment for substance use progresses, more effort towards problem-focused coping is developed, together with a decrease in emotion-focused coping (Courbasson, Endler & Kocovski, 2002).

Postgraduate and undergraduate students differed in their approaches to coping with academic achievement. In a study of traditional and non-traditional students, which could be equated to undergraduate and postgraduate students respectively, Morris, Brooks, and May (2003) found that non-traditional students used more task-oriented coping. This was related to the various role commitments they performed in their lives and provided an indication of their levels of maturity.

1.3.2.2.1. Factor Analyses Performed on COPE Scale.

This section outlines research efforts to factor analyse the brief COPE scale for the benefit of statistical analyses. In the present study, considering that previous studies have resulted in several COPE factor solutions, this study conducted similar factor analysis to reach a better factor solution than the fourteen subscales of the current brief COPE.

Iwasaki (2001) used four dimensions of coping from the original Carver et al.'s COPE scale (1989). Iwasaki developed a four-factor model which resulted from performing a second-order factor analysis of the COPE scale. These four dimensions were as follows:

- Problem-focused coping (the combination of active coping, planning, and suppression).

- Social support and emotional-focused coping (the combination of instrumental and emotional social support and venting of emotions).

- The combination of acceptance, restraint, and positive reframing.

- Disengagement coping (the combination of denial, mental and behavioural disengagement, and religion).

Furthermore, Honey et al. (2003) conducted a principal-component factor extraction which resulted in four factors named: problem-focused coping (active coping, planning and positive reframing subscales), support-seeking coping (emotional and instrumental coping), venting coping (venting and self-blame), and avoidance coping (denial and behavioural disengagement). Honey et al. did not include the religion subscale, as it did not have high predictive validity.

Ward and Kennedy (2001) used the original COPE scale to ascertain the coping style of British expatriates in Singapore. After performing a second-order factor analysis, they found a four-factor structure:

- approach (planning, suppression of competing activities and active coping),

- avoidance (behavioural disengagement, denial, venting, positive

  reinterpretation loading negatively)

- acceptance (acceptance and restraint coping) and

- social support (seeking emotional and instrumental support).

In summary, the studies above highlight inconsistencies in efforts to factor analyse the coping subscales (Hasking & Oei, 2002). In view of these limitations in the literature of coping, the current study conducted a factor analysis on the coping subscales for further use in statistical analyses.

1.3.2.3. Western and Eastern Perspectives on Coping.

Although some cultural patterns of development are universal, children and adolescents in different cultures are raised with their own particular models to cope with stress and are further encouraged or even stimulated to use those strategies (Boekaerts, 2002).

In spite of a growing body of research in Western cultures reporting psychological and environmental factors related to coping resources, there is still a lag in the understanding of coping in Eastern cultures (Triandis, 1996). Western views of coping have traditionally dichotomised it into passive versus active; and internal versus external. Bond (1996) argued that dichotomising coping was a simplistic approach to understanding

this complex phenomenon. It was more relevant to view coping as part of the interchange of two factors: one's inner state and objective reality. In terms of actual cultural behaviour, it was simplistic to assume for example that the Japanese value resignation as a strategy for coping with adversity, when in actual fact it is just a tactical (i.e., a short-term) response. Similarly, Aldwin (1994) noted that cultures diverged in their emotion-focused coping as opposed to problem-focused coping in such instances as grief behaviour. For instance, while Americans controlled their grieving behaviour in public, Filipinos freely expressed their grief.

Although significant progress has been achieved in the cross-cultural understanding of coping, it is still a concept prevalent in Western cultures that has not found consensual support in Eastern cultures. Bond (1996) argued that one of the major criticisms of the Lazarus and Folkman model (1984) of coping was that their data relied on Western urban participants from affluent backgrounds and that coping (as the concept is known) was only applicable to individualistic societies. Bond further urged a focus on macrostructural factors such as cultural values and socio-economic environment, so research on the concept of coping might provide useful cross-cultural information.

The attempts of research to directly apply Western constructs of coping styles to Eastern contexts have been fraught with misconceptions (Sinha, Willson, & Watson, 2000). Chan (1995) reported that problem-solving coping was functional, and avoidance coping style was dysfunctional and largely resulted in poor adjustment. International

students' tendency to use more passive approaches to coping such as avoidance has often been misinterpreted as a sign of poor adjustment.

Coping strategy is likely to be influenced by the individual's background and whether they belong to an interdependent or independent self-construal cultural group. An independent, individualistic person responds to stress by taking direct action (Hofstede, 1991), while an interdependent, collectivistic individual subordinates their own goals to those of others when coping with stress (Cross, 1995).

Furthermore, problem-focused and emotion-focused coping are independent dimensions of coping, and people use both in different degrees instead of dichotomously as in Western cultures (Phillips & Pearson, 1996). Western cultures' stress on problem-focused coping is value-laden because individuals are supposed to be in control of their destiny (Phillips & Pearson). In particular, they found that the fatalistic approach to coping in Chinese culture was appropriate and did not lead to psychological problems, contrary to the belief in Western cultures that using passive coping strategies and external locus of control are dysfunctional. In spite of this, most coping scales were developed based on samples from middle-class Western societies and do not accurately reflect the experiences and cultural values of other cultures, and in particular, Eastern cultures (Bond, 1996).

Neill and Proeve (2000) used the coping strategies model from Frydenberg (1997) to assess the coping strategies used by Southeast Asian secondary international students in

Australia. They found that Southeast Asian secondary students preferred to use social-support coping strategies. The use of this technique has implications for counsellors working with these ethnic groups. Counsellors may encourage these students to continue using problem-solving strategies, while directing them to available support services when in distress. Further, counsellors may encourage strengthening social support as a coping strategy for collectivistic students while reinforcing reliance on themselves for individualistic students.

Coping strategies are tailored to the collectivistic or individualistic student background. International students from a collectivistic culture tended to use more emotion-focused and instrumental-focused support coping, while individualists used more active coping and planning, as per Carver'et al.'s (1989) model of coping. Bailey and Dua (1999) confirmed that Asian students from collectivistic cultures used more emotional or instrumental coping at the beginning of their sojourn, and after six months they employed more individualistic coping strategies such as active coping and planning. Bailey and Dua used six months as the cut-off period based on the model proposed by Brein and David (1971), who proposed that the first six months of settlement of international students were the most intense in terms of acculturative stress, and after that, the sociocultural stresses were controlled as the international student rapidly adjusted to the new environment. It was also shown in Bailey and Dua's study that international students living in Australia longer than six months tended to use less collectivistic coping strategies.

In summary, it appears that the Western accent on the dichotomy of emotional vs. problem focused coping and passive vs. active coping might be more relevant to Western populations, and the resulting approaches to coping do not reflect the strategies typically used in collectivistic non-Western societies (Phillips & Pearson, 1996). Furthermore, Somerfield and McCrae (2000) advocated more focus on specific responses to a particular stressful situation instead of universal coping styles. This new orientation in coping research requires a further understanding of the personality differences that guide the use of a given coping style to deal with stress. In other words, what works best for each person in dealing with stress requires approaching research from a more longitudinal, intrapersonal approach rather than traditional cross-sectional designs (Lazarus, 2000; Somerfield & McCrae).

1.3.2.4. Cross-Cultural Coping Strategies.

The choice of coping strategies is still heavily influenced by traditional values in Chinese culture (Bond, 1996). These values include belief in external locus of control, fatalism, and exhibiting appropriate conduct as demanded by a situation rather than the individual's expression of opinions or emotions. Coping styles based on Confucian self-cultivation and Taoist transcendence have been valued in Chinese culture. Macro social environment factors influence the presence of stress and, therefore, the development of coping strategies. Chinese Communist society, with its emphasis on social and political conduct, also determined the choice of coping strategies. Friends and social support

networks had, in this context, relatively less value as people conformed to the society's political values.

It has been found that the characteristics of the host social environment influence the type of coping strategies used by international students. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) noted that the demands imposed on individuals by their social circumstances determined the coping style of choice. In the context of sojourning, this indicates that due to anxieties brought on by inter-racial contact sojourners coped by withdrawing from social contacts, including interaction with host nationals (Bjorck, Cuthbertson, Thurman, & Lee, 2001). Alternatively, Mena, Padilla, and Maldonado (1987) indicated that sojourners used more direct action coping to reduce levels of stress caused by their sojourn. Their direct action coping strategy responded to the fact that they had little or no social support available in the host culture.

Occasionally, an interdependent self-construal individual may avoid direct action coping strategies as these are foreign to his/her experience and could compromise an already precarious interaction with the host society. Unfortunately, as observed by Cross (1995), this reluctance to use coping strategies prevalent in the host individualistic society may increase the probability of further distress. Aldwin (1994) expanded the notion that coping outside the boundaries of the prescribed host culture style caused greater stress in international students. This was the case for some ethnic groups such as Latin Americans, who avoided coping strategies that encouraged disharmony between group members. In

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other words, Latin Americans preferred coping strategies that subordinated personal to social gain.

Preference for an avoidant coping strategy in the host society may precipitate depression in the sojourner. Chan (1995) found that adolescents experiencing symptoms of depression and using avoidant coping strategies had lower levels of functioning. The author concluded that encouraging social support in these adolescents together with techniques to improve their self-esteem and using non-avoidant coping had an ameliorating impact on their depressive symptomatology.

Yeh and Wang (2000) researched the indigenous patterns of coping of Chinese, Filipinos, Korean and Indian undergraduate and postgraduate students in American universities. Although these Asian students preferred not to use professional counselling services as a support-seeking coping strategy to deal with psychological symptoms of distress, they sought family and network support as a coping strategy (Yeh & Wang). Members of these groups also engaged in social and familial relationship activities as strategies for coping with psychological distress. Furthermore, Asian groups tended to cope with distress on their own instead of approaching counselling services. This reluctance to use counselling services was associated with the stigma and shame attached to emotional expression, and help-seeking behaviour was viewed as a weakness because the individual put their own feelings before the needs of the group. Overall, Yeh and Wang confirmed the strength of the interdependent approach to coping given that Asian

groups preferred to seek advice from a religious leader who was perceived as an extension of their own family rather than professional counselling services.

Olah (1995) reported on the coping strategies used by adolescents in their country of origin experiencing different stressful circumstances. Olah identified assimilative coping as an effort to change the environment, accommodative coping as an effort to change oneself to fit the environment, and avoidance coping as removing oneself from the situation provoking stress. Adolescents from European countries such as Italy, Sweden, and Hungary preferred assimilative coping strategies, while those from India and Yemen preferred accommodative coping strategies and emotion-focused coping strategies. Olah found that consistent across all groups was the fact that people in low to medium anxiety-provoking situations more frequently employed constructive and assimilative coping styles, whereas high anxiety-provoking situations tended to mobilise avoidance.

Gender differences in choice of coping strategies were strikingly consistent across cultures. Female university students reported significantly more accommodative and emotion-focused coping solutions, while males reported significantly more problem-focused or assimilative solutions coping than their female counterparts. Problem focused coping has been defined as a direct action aimed to reduce stress, increase abilities or eliminate the demands associated with the stressful situation, while emotion focused coping aimed to regulate the emotions created by the stressful situation (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Hoalim (1994) reported no differences between Asian and Australian

students in health symptoms, and overseas students were less likely to use problem-focused coping.

Ward and Kennedy (2001) studied the coping styles of British expatriates in Singapore using the COPE scale (Carver et al, 1989). They found that using humour and approach coping predicted lower levels of depression. Avoidance caused higher levels of depression. Ward, Bochner and Furnham (2001) highlighted that sojourners found it overwhelmingly difficult to change the host culture so they resorted to using cognitive reframing strategies to reduce levels of stress imposed by their sojourn in a host culture. Ward et al. also showed that there were differences in coping effectiveness across cultures. As Frydenberg (1997) reported, ethnicity provided the socio-cultural background for developing coping strategies.

1.3.2.4.1. Indonesians and Chinese Coping Strategies.

In a study of coping and sports, Hoedaya and Anshel (2003) assessed the coping behaviours of Indonesians and Australians facing competitive sport encounters. They based their study on the coping strategies established by Carver et al. (1989). Active coping was viewed as undertaking actions to remove stressors, restraint coping as restricting oneself from taking actions until an appropriate opportunity was presented, venting of emotions as focusing on and exposing oneself to the emotions one is experiencing, and denial as refusing to admit to oneself that the stressor exists. Acceptance is the opposite of denial taking into account that the problem exists and

efforts are directed to change the stressful encounter. Carver et al. also reported on social-support-seeking coping for instrumental or emotional reasons. Seeking social support for instrumental reasons aimed for support to resolve the problem, while seeking social support for emotional reasons indicated a search for comfort or sympathy. Hoedaya and Anshel assessed coping strategies before and during the game and found cultural differences in coping. They reported that Indonesians used more active coping, seeking social support at the pre-game phase, while Australians used more restraint coping and acceptance. During the game phase, Indonesians used more active coping, restraint, venting emotions and denial, while Australians used acceptance more frequently. It is important to indicate that the frequency of using a coping strategy does not determine coping effectiveness, but the features of the confronting event do (Hoedaya & Anshel). Similarly, the frequent use of emotion-focused coping by international students at the beginning of their sojourn may become limiting as they try to deal with new stressors in their everyday adjustment to university and life in the host society.

Yeh and Inose (2002) found that Chinese immigrant youths exhibited different coping strategies than American students in the US. Yeh and Inose identified social support coping in terms of sharing difficulties with family and friends rather than professional counselling services; keeping to oneself by enduring the problem rather than confronting the problem; developing creative activities as expression of feelings and thoughts in societies where emotional expression can be seen as problematic in interpersonal relationships; and engaging in impulsive behaviour such as excessive drinking, smoking or drug use. Other coping strategies included seeking academic

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orientation such as approaching lecturer for advice to clarify academic information or requesting professional counselling support when experiencing difficulties. Chinese immigrant students used seeking social support, keeping to oneself, developing creative activities, and performing impulsive behaviour as coping strategies. The Chinese rated coping strategies such as searching for academic orientation and seeking professional support as used less frequently.

Overall, coping strategies are linked to the socio-environmental and cultural circumstances in which the individual lives. According to Lee (1985), in Chinese society, crowded housing oriented people to value multi-generation households. Accordingly, in Chinese society privacy was defined at the familial not individual level; and emotional interaction was avoided at the social but not at the familial level.

In addition, the Chinese belief in their ability to manipulate supernatural forces in their own favour through geomancy (Feng Shui) appears as a commonly used coping strategy. The Chinese also view fatalism as a way of accepting unfortunate circumstances in their life. Finally, the principles of moderation in life and detachment from worldly affairs are coping strategies familiar to Chinese culture (Lee, 1985).

1.3.3. Social Support.

Social support has been broadly defined as a variety of interpersonal resources that have an impact on an individual's adjustment and further performance (Caplan, 1974).

According to Caplan, it is important to establish the difference between objective and subjective dimensions of support. Objective support is the observable, actual support received which may also be quantifiable by others. Subjective support is the individual's perception of support received which may not reflect the actual level of support received by others.

Thoits (1982) emphasised the inherent needs for interdependence that were fulfilled through provision of social support. Thoits defined social support as the "degree to which a person's basic social needs were gratified through interaction with others" (p. 146). Needs included those "of affection, esteem or approval, belonging, identity and security" (p. 147).

Lin, Dean and Ensel (1986) defined social support as the perceived or actually received demonstrations of care by the overall community, social relations and intimate partners. Social support was experienced at various levels and was strongest at the core level of intimate relationships, with the more external being community, which gave a sense of belonging. The social network provides the bonding feelings, and finally the confiding partner support provides the feeling of binding (Lin et al.).

Vaux (1988) outlined the dynamic nature of social support and the need to understand it from a transactional perspective, which included resources, behaviours and appraisals. Vaux highlighted the active role of the individual in nurturing network resources, requesting supportive behaviour and assessing support relationships and

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experiences. For the purpose of social support assessment, Jou and Fukada (1995)

proposed four dimensions: firstly, social embeddedness which includes the number of

people in the social network; secondly, support demanded by the person; thirdly,

perceived support considered available for the person; and fourthly, actual support

currently available and received by the person.

Social support therefore exerts influence on health by fulfilling two independent

pathway roles (Cohen & Syme, 1985): firstly, the buffering-hypothesis role in which

social support becomes effective only for those going through stressful circumstances and

secondly, the main-effect-hypothesis role, by which social support benefits extend to

everyone, regardless of stress level. Social support has not been empirically proved as to

its benefits for people's health, other than showing that people with social support are

healthier than people without social support. In an effort to clarify the impact of social

support on individuals, two concepts have been developed: the buffering hypothesis and

the main-effect-hypothesis of social support. The buffering hypothesis of social support is

defined as only benefiting individuals experiencing stress, and the main-effect-hypothesis

of social support is defined as benefiting everyone's health, regardless of their stress

levels.

Social support has instrumental and affective functions. Instrumental functions

include providing money, goods, information, advice, and making suggestions. Affective

functions include providing love and affection that fulfil the need for love and esteem,

which in turn contributes to grounding identity (Vaux, 1988). From a different

perspective, there appears to be a circular approach to social support that labels it helpful

for the recipient, which is not always the case (Schreurs & de Ridder, 1997). On

occasions, social support can bring negative consequences for the person experiencing a

stressful circumstance.

According to Stroebe, Stroebe, Abakoumkin, and Schut (1996), social support has

a number of functions, including its role mediating between the stressor and stress

reaction by mitigating the stressful response; secondly, social support interrupts a

pathological reaction by reducing the stress response or inhibiting the physiological

pathological process. Thirdly, social support helps the individual to recover more quickly

from the stressful experience. The buffering effect of social support may, however, be

jeopardised by the persistence of stressful life events (Lepore, Evans & Schneider, 1991).

Social support serves as a buffer against stress from environmental circumstances.

However, there are internal psychological factors which influence the direction and

intensity of the buffering role ascribed to social support. This explains why some people

are satisfied with minimal social support, while others require constant and relentless

social support to buffer stress (Bartlett, 1998). Rowlinson and Felner (1988) studied the

adjustment of adolescents and found that social support did not serve as a buffer for stress

resulting from daily hassles or major life events.

1.3.3.1. Social Support and International Students.

It has been reported that loss of social network significantly influences the psychological well-being of international students. It is important overall to appreciate that sojourning in the new culture brings deep feelings of loss related to not being able to interrelate with friends and family as closely as before. Therefore, international students find it difficult to interact with host nationals, as they believe it will be difficult to substitute those relationships in the new culture (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994).

Sojourners' efforts to achieve social support are influenced by levels of intergroup anxiety. The nature of the relationship between groups has been related to intergroup anxiety. Stephan and Stephan (1985) argued that the direction of the relationship between the sojourner and host groups was related to factors such as previous experience with people from the host culture (amount of previous contact), previous knowledge of the host culture (awareness of behaviours in the host society such as prejudice, discrimination, and host culture expectations), and situational issues like group composition, relative status, etc.

The importance of family support is particularly relevant within Eastern ethnic groups that have a strong reliance on family links. Furnham (1997) showed that sojourners' lack of social support from family and friends put them more at risk of developing physical and mental illness. Miranda and Matheny (2000) cautioned, however, that the familism peculiar to Latin American families (also found in Asian cultures)

worked against the process of acculturating to the host society because attachment to the family was so strong that it prevented sojourners from mixing with host nationals. International students who only rely on distant support such as family back home are vulnerable to adjustment problems; thus, enhancing the distant support in addition to increasing their local network in the host society will significantly progress the adjustment of international students (Copeland & Norell, 2002). On the other hand, a low level of family functioning resulted in higher levels of acculturative stress, and closeness was more important at the emotional rather than physical contact level (Hovey & King, 1996).

The buffering or moderating role of peer and family support on adjustment and psychological well-being has overall been, to date, the object of extensive research in the stress and coping literature, with varied findings (Rodriguez, Mira, Myers, Morris, & Cardoza, 2003; Solberg & Villarreal, 1997). While Solberg and Villarreal reported a buffering role for support with regard to stress, studies on Latino students adjusting to a US college reported that the support of friends rather than family predicted stress levels (Rodriguez et al., 2003). These results did not confirm the mediating role of social support; however, they indicated that Latino students relied more on friends than family, as age, experience and affinity with friends allowed the latter to better relate to their own stress experience. According to Rodriguez et al., it is uncertain if Latino students rely more on family for other than college concerns; or whether these findings can be generalised to the overall ethnic population. The results above indicate that peer and family support may have a more protective than buffering role in the life of college students (Rodriguez et al.). On the other hand, high family support has been associated

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with more adjustment problems expressed through physical symptoms (Zaleski, Levey-Thors & Schiaffino, 1998). This is particularly more troublesome for students at the beginning of their university studies, as they are attempting to establish their role and independence from family (Zaleski et al.).

The buffering role of social support has been further questioned in cross-cultural research with Chinese living in China (Liang & Bogat, 1994). Liang and Bogat found that received support resulted in a poorer adjustment, while perceived support was beneficial for their adjustment. These authors explained this behaviour as a result of the Chinese tendency to refrain from emotional expression. Thus, when experiencing emotional difficulties, Chinese who seek support may expose their vulnerability and consequently risk rejection.

Similarly, Jou and Fukada (1995) reported that Chinese college students who showed poorer adjustment were those who demanded greater support; better adjustment was evidenced by those students who perceived more actual support. Overall, they concluded that the buffering role of social support was confirmed, as students who perceived high support had better adjustment despite experiencing high levels of stress.

Similar findings to the above have been reported regarding actual and perceived support as predictors of psychological well-being (Martinez Garcia, Garcia Ramirez, & Maya Jariego, 2002). In their study of social support comparing Peruvian, Moroccan and Spanish women living in Spain, they found that predictions of higher psychological well-

being were found among those in the two groups of immigrant women who had Spanish friends in their network. This poses some questions as to the nature of social networks that international students from China and Indonesia tend to develop. Reports have stressed the tendency of Chinese and Indonesian international students to socialise with fellow nationals instead of local students. Although international students remain for a limited term in the new culture, they benefit and gain better adjustment by having a network of friends who are not only from their own cultural group but also the local group, which may better introduce them to the norms and values relevant in the host society (Berry, 1997).

1.3.4. Daily Hassles.

Kanner, Feldiman, Weinberger, and Ford (1987 p. 3) defined hassles as "the irritating, frustrating, distressing demands that to some degree characterize everyday transactions with the environment". Daily hassles had not been given the importance they should have had in the literature. Hassles are more influential in the aetiology of psychological and somatic symptoms than major life events (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Pearlin & Lieberman, 1979; Rowlinson & Felner, 1988).

The prevalence of daily hassles in people's lives may explain the presence of further psychological distress. In a prospective study of mothers with postnatal depression, Honey et al. (2003) found that those mothers who experienced a higher antenatal number of daily hassles reported lower postnatal mood.

Jung and Khalsa (1989) compared black and white American college students on the level of their daily hassles, social support and coping with depression. They found that black students reported more hassles in their everyday life, whereas white students gained more social support from friends than family. The opposite was the case for black students, who considered family support more prominent than friends' support. Jung and Khalsa also reported a relationship between avoidance and higher levels of depression for black students. Greater severity of hassles was related to more active coping for white students. Although black students received more familial and social support, this did not contribute to higher self-esteem or reduction of depression. On the contrary, white students experienced less depression while receiving social support from friends.

Patterns of life stressors are different in Chinese cultures. Typical stressors for them were arguments between parents and children, anxiety about children's academic success at school and in-law difficulties (Bond, 1996). Describing stressors typical in the adjustment of Asian students in Australia, Barker, Child, Gallois, Jones, and Callan (1991) listed the following problems: attaining close social relationships, making new friends, participating in tutorials, and confidence in English skills (related to their different learning styles). It was of particular relevance that Asian students were aware of the differences of Australian norms from their own, and would behave accordingly. For example, they approached lecturers if they believed they were given low marks – something which they never did in their own culture.

1.3.5. Acculturative Stress.

Acculturative stress was defined by Berry, Kim, Minde, and Mok (1987, p. 492) as a "generalized physiological and psychological state….brought about by the experience of stressors in the environment, and which requires some reduction….through a process of coping until some satisfactory adaptation to the new situation is achieved". To qualify as acculturative stress, changes experienced by the individual occur as part of the acculturation process (Berry, 1994). Acculturative stress results in lowered mental health status, with the sojourner experiencing anxiety or depression, psychosomatic symptoms, feelings of alienation, identity dislocation, and difficulties performing everyday activities (Berry). Sanchez et al. (2000) further defined acculturative stress as a state of disequilibrium caused by the sojourner's inability to control the social host environment.

From a cognitive perspective, Pedersen (1995, p. vii) defined culture shock as "an internalized construct or perspective developed in reaction or response to the new or unfamiliar situation". Further, he qualified culture shock as being a process, not a single event, and occurring simultaneously at different levels while the sojourner interacted with a complex environment. Pedersen indicated the dimension of culture shock in a multicultural context "is a more or less sudden immersion into a nonspecific state of uncertainty when the individuals are not certain what is expected of them or what they can expect from the persons around them" (p. 1). Coping was considered an integral part of the process as the sojourner learned new coping strategies, which impacted on the success of future endeavours; and also because coping had a direct impact on the severity of

cultural shock as the sojourner learned or failed to cope. Pedersen went further and stated that it was difficult to accurately assess culture shock due to its complexity and multifaceted nature. Finally, the relevance of clearly identifying and monitoring levels of acculturative stress cannot be overstated, as it could lead to depression and suicidal ideation (Hovey & Magana, 2003).

Acculturative stress triggers several symptoms of psychological distress in international students. Brislin (1981) reported that sojourners experiencing acculturative stress complained of irascibility, preoccupations with health and somatic symptoms, anger against people from the new culture, being suspicious of people in the new culture, symptoms of anxiety and depression, homesickness and isolation.

The traditional view of acculturative stress or, as previously termed, culture shock was popularised by the work of Oberg (1954). Oberg reported that sojourners went through a "U-curve" while trying to settle in a new culture. The culture shock process took place in four phases:

- a honeymoon phase coloured with excitement at being in the new culture;
- a disenchantment phase, where the sojourner acknowledges the difficulties accompanying settlement in the new culture;
- a resolution phase characterised by the sojourner's beginning to organise a new repertoire of behaviours to manage the process of settling in the new culture;

- a readjustment phase or effective functioning, where the sojourner reaches a new level of adjustment accompanied with feelings of being comfortable in the new culture (Oberg, 1954).

Based on the stress and coping model Ward et al. (1998) challenged the "U-curve" assumption of culture shock. They reported that stress of a moderate intensity was experienced at the beginning of the sojourn, rather than the initial state of euphoria proposed by Oberg (1954). This acculturative stress linked to the sojourn experience was more pronounced at the beginning of the sojourn and decreased over time. After approximately six months more "non-cultural" difficulties (e.g. exams, relationships, etc.) became relevant in the sojourner's psychological adjustment within the host society.

Furnham and Bochner (1986) pointed to concerns with the U-curve model of culture shock. Firstly, there are many dependent variables to consider as part of the adjustment process such as depression, loneliness, and homesickness. Secondly, the concept of U-shape was uneven in the research literature that tested this hypothesis, considering that people's participation in studies started at different points following their entry to the host society, where they went through culture shock at different rates. Thirdly, instead of the focus being placed on intrapersonal variables, focus should shift to include interpersonal variables such as discrimination.

Acculturative stress influences the coping strategies used by sojourners. Feelings of anxiety emerge when sojourners cannot use the problem-solving strategies commonly used in their own culture (Yeh & Inose, 2002).

Berry (1994) indicated that as a result of the acculturation process significant changes took place in the sojourner's life. Sojourners experienced personal and ethnic identity changes, and psychological and social problems became prevalent.

When reporting on adjustment problems experienced by international students, person-environment transactions were an appropriate model for understanding problems experienced by minority students (Prillerman, Myers & Smedley, 1989). Within these boundaries, populations in a position of vulnerability, such as international students settling in a host culture, benefited from a model of stress, coping and adaptation (Cervantes & Castro, 1985).

Acculturative stress may be influenced by cultural distance, though the effect of the latter is not always stressful. In some cases, it elicited excitement rather than stress (Arthur, 2001). Although some of the current research literature on stress outlines cultural differences as precipitants of acculturative stress, there are some reports indicating that the host culture may elicit attraction instead of stress (Furnham, 1987). Very, Lubatkin, and Calori (1996) reported that cultural differences encouraged attraction which can be explained as a result of globalisation, as people were more aware of cultural patterns of behaviour different from their own.

Smart and Smart (1995) outlined some of the negative consequences of acculturative stress. They reported that if acculturative stress became lengthy in duration, was pervasive, and was experienced intensely, it impacted on decision-making processes and decreased job performance and health status. Smart and Smart also claimed that acculturative stress resulted in role submission, which occurs when the sojourner becomes reactive to stereotyping and seeks to fulfil expectations from the host culture. The sojourner is then submerged in role compliance and persistently tries to fit the role ascribed by the host society.

How sojourners respond to the acculturative stress experience is also influenced by their own background history of stress and coping (Berry, 1997). Thompson, Norris, and Hanacek (1993) reported that social and coping resources employed in the past indicated a degree of resilience to the stressful experience. In other words, a sojourner's personal history marked reactions to stress in their current experience.

Liebkind (1996) offered a multi-angled view of acculturative stress which included many determinants, such as socio-demographic features, pre-sojourn experiences, and level of acculturation attained in the host society. Thus, acculturative stress was, according to Liebkind, influenced by low socio-economic-status and the host society's orientation towards cultural diversity, generational status and age.

1.3.5.1. Influences on Acculturative Stress.

Literature on acculturative stress has shown a steady interest in establishing predictors of successful adjustment. Searle and Ward (1990) identified psychological and sociocultural predictors of adjustment in the host society. Psychological adjustment was influenced by personality, life-change factors and social support; while sociocultural adjustment was impacted by cultural distance, cultural knowledge and level of contact with host nationals.

As regards changes over time, Liebkind (1996) confirmed that stressors that affect sojourners on first entering the host culture, are more relevant to their mental health than those experiences occurring in their original culture or previous to resettlement.

Researchers have argued that first-generation migrants experience more acculturative-related stresses than later generations. Padilla, Wagatsuma, and Lindholm (1985) accounted for these higher levels of stress by making reference to the migrants' relatively low acculturation, given that they experienced more difficulties in their interpersonal relationships within the host culture. Second-generation migrants experienced stresses of a different nature than first-generation migrants due to the conflict of staying with their traditional parents' values or alternatively moving towards host-culture values. These conflicts were less pronounced in later generations, and consequently diminished stress response.

Sodowsky and Lai (1997) focused on the moderating variables influencing acculturative stress. They contended that traditional cultural orientation, adolescence, old age, presence of non-white Americans in the social support network, lack of a close family relationship, reduced income, and high levels of perceived prejudice, impaired mental health and exacerbated acculturative stress in international students.

As for the influence of age on acculturative stress, adolescents tended to react to little annoyances experienced in their everyday life while adults were able to discriminate between daily life stressors and severity of those problems, which had an impact on the level of response they presented in the face of these daily annoyances (Dumont & Provost, 1999).

Daily hassles are undoubtedly more prevalent at the beginning of a sojourning process and thus may have an impact on the levels of acculturative stress and psychological adjustment of international students at that time (Berry, 1994). Sim (2000) observed that the availability of social support, particularly from friends or parents, did not influence levels of maladjustment resulting from daily hassles. Sim argued that when levels of daily hassles were low, parental support correlated with the adjustment of adolescents. This has not been confirmed by empirical research with international students, although Levitt, Guacci-France, and Levitt (1993) indicated that as adolescents developed more reliance on friends than family, and adolescent international students acculturated more into the host society, the impact of daily hassles was more related to relationships with friends.

Acculturative stress levels can predict levels of further adjustment that international students experience in the host society. In a study of Canadian technical advisors commissioned to work overseas, Kealy (1989) found that people who had experienced more acculturative stress as a result of their sojourn, were better able to effectively perform their job in the host society. The implication was that those sojourners who were able to take the intercultural challenges on directly, with all implied frustrations and gains, were later better equipped to perform effectively in the host society, though they experienced more emotional suffering at the beginning of their sojourn (Ying & Liese, 1991).

Acculturative stress may impact international students irrespective of their preparation to interact in the host culture. Redmond and Bunyi (1993) reported that stress affected international students independently of their knowledge of the host culture or English proficiency. Furthermore, international students who experienced greater awareness of cultural differences were more affected by stress.

Perceptions of discrimination can negatively affect the acculturative stress process of sojourners. Chavez, Moran, Reid, and Lopez (1997) indicated that children who were more sensitive to adjustment and discrimination issues experienced in the host culture, presented more signs of acculturative stress.

The experience of culture shock increases in intensity according to the increase in cultural distance. Sodowski, Maguire, Johnson, Ngumba and Kohles (1994) confirmed that differences in values and culture shock were less pronounced in European than African and Asian migrants trying to settle in American society.

1.3.6. Psychological Distress.

Depression has been observed to afflict an appreciable sector of the university population from predominantly Caucasian background (Fagan, 1994), while anxiety has seemed more prevalent among international students (Lay & Nguyen, 1998).

Surveys of psychological well-being in university students, predominantly Caucasian, have found that 38% scored in the positive well-being range, 34% in moderate distress and 28% experienced severe distress (Dill & Henley, 1998). Causes of distress and mental health problems have been attributed to various factors. Some studies have indicated that 7% of suicide attempts were related to academic problems, while 75% were associated with social and personal problems (McDermott, Hawkins, Littlefield & Murray, 1989).

Psychological distress may also be influenced by length of time living in the host culture. Lay and Nguyen (1998) found that more recent immigrants or sojourners experienced more symptoms of distress compared with those who had lived for a long time in the host culture.

In-group pressures may impact the levels of psychological distress for university students. The shift away from dependence on parents towards further reliance on peer interaction may smooth the difficult transition to university for adolescents and predict less psychological distress. According to Lay and Nguyen (1998), students from individualistic cultures valued peer approval; however, in-group harmony played an even more paramount role for international students from collectivistic cultures.

1.3.7. Demographic Variables.

Demographic variables such as age, ethnicity, gender, parents' educational background, work circumstances, health and socio-economic status have been reported to mediate the acculturative stress experience of international students. Reports have indicated that younger female international students and those from lower socio-economic background reported more depressive symptoms associated with their sojourn (Hovey & King, 1996). International students from a socio-economic status (SES) similar to local students found less of a severe transition to the host society and consequently developed less emotional distress resulting from their sojourn (Ying, 1988).

Garcia-Vazquez, Vazquez, and Huang (1998) reported that the father's education was an important indicator of sojourner's achievement. Latin Americans in particular tried to live up to their father's expectations, reinforcing traditional male values prevalent in some Latin American societies. Garcia-Vazquez et al. also found that combining working

and studying had a significant impact on stress levels. This was understandably the consequence of trying to focus on various activities, with the undesired outcome of lowered academic achievement and increased stress levels. Overall, Garcia-Vazquez et al. indicated that the pressures of achieving like their own parents, and social role pressures influenced the higher stress levels experienced by males. Lower levels of stress for female students were related to their being more willing to enlist support from others in times of high stressors.

1.3.8. Language Competence.

One of the more reliable indicators of acculturation and adjustment to the host society is the command of English and self-rated mastery of English. International students with more skills in English have been found generally to experience less stress (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1987; Yeh & Inose, 2003). This confirms the views of Kim (1988), who emphasised that language confidence was an important mediator of cultural contact, identity and adjustment. Clement, Noels, and Deneault (2001) contended that contact with the second-language community per se (in this case, the host culture language) made sojourners feel they belonged to the host community. Second-language competence increased confidence in the feeling of belonging to and membership in the host culture. Garcia-Vazquez et al. (1998), however, did not reach the conclusion that English language proficiency is linked to less stress. The sample chosen in their study may have influenced the results, as it did not represent new sojourners; they were college students who had previously completed high school education in the United States.

Peer and family interaction have been associated with English language proficiency and psychological distress in the host culture. Although newly arrived international students experienced dissatisfaction with English proficiency, it was actually the balance between: (1) the pressures of fulfilling academic demands in English and the urge to fit in with new host university peers and (2) being included within their own network of conationals who speak their own native language, which assisted adjustment in their host culture (Lay & Nguyen, 1998). Additionally, being able to communicate with family in their heritage language protected international students from experiencing depression. Overall, according to Lay and Nguyen, international students challenged depression in the host culture by meeting academic English language requirements, engaging in host peer interactions, keeping alive one's native language, interacting with a support network of co-nationals and keeping in contact with family back home. Furthermore, fluency in English has been reported to influence levels of trait anxiety. Chinese university students in Canada who were less fluent in English reported highest trait anxiety (Lin, Endler & Kocovski, 2001).

1.3.9. Health Status.

Associations have been established between physical health, quality of network and the prediction of mental health for Asian and Caucasian students (Vandervoort & Skorikov, 2002). Physical health status was a stronger predictor of mental health than quality of social network for international students, while the opposite was the case for

local students in a US college. Physical health problems perhaps affected the psychological functioning of international students more than local students. International students, particularly those from Asian cultures, endorsed monistic perspectives, asserting a strong association between mental and physical health. Moreover, Asians' collectivistic backgrounds view impairments in physical health as implying an inability to fulfil social duties, which brought shame to the individual (Vandervoort & Skorikov).

1.4. Chinese and Indonesian Cultural Backgrounds.

Cultural distance (Hofstede, 1980) plays a significant role in the acculturative stress experience of international students. Acculturative stress is reported to impact those sojourners whose social, psychological and cultural background differs from those in the mainstream culture (Pedersen, 1995; Ryan & Twibell, 2000). From the above it follows that the adjustment of Indonesian and Chinese international students, from collectivistic societies, to individualistic Australia is complex. A background description of cultural features of both groups therefore seems appropriate to promote awareness of their family structures, and social values, and how those impact on their pattern of adjustment as international students in Australia.

1.4.1. Chinese Culture.

This section will briefly outline family life in China, Chinese values, their views on mental health and features of sojourning Chinese in Western cultures.

1.4.1.1. Chinese Families.

The family rather than the individual is the central unit in Chinese society (Ekblad, 1996). A person's identity is mirrored by their family. The family not only explains the past but also offers meaning to the future for individual family members. Therefore, Chinese people make great efforts to preserve family traditions. If a family member experiences difficulties, the whole family responds in an attempt to protect the family unit (Ekblad). Familism represents a deeply engrained subset of family values that provide encouragement and societal protection to marriage in Chinese culture.

Males enjoy preferential treatment within the family unit in Chinese society. However, this preferential status also comes with drawbacks, as males are under more pressure to succeed in studies and work. Male academic achievement is interpreted as a family accomplishment. This state of affairs can become unbearable for many males and cause significant stress (Hongyan, 2003). Females in China are also under pressure, but this is related more to their conduct and finding an appropriate husband (Soong & Soong, 1981).

The sense of obligation to protect and care for elders in Chinese culture may be defined as filial piety. Filial piety is a central characteristic, ruling the relationship between parents and children and by extension, with other members of the community. It covers the provision of both material and spiritual support for parents in such diverse spheres as taking care of them financially in old age, or bringing honour and not disgrace

to the family (Ho, 1996). Although filial piety has been prevalent in Chinese culture for several centuries, it is now gradually on the decline, and these intergenerational patterns of social behaviour are gradually being eroded by more individualistic types of social behaviour (Ho). Filial piety is now being substituted in modern China by respect rather than obedience and a reduced reliance by elders on the young for financial assistance (Yue & Ng, 1999).

1.4.1.2. Chinese Values and Lifestyle.

The modernisation process in China has resulted in a complex societal structure that precludes assigning a given set of values to all members of the society. It has become more difficult to maintain the dichotomy between traditional Eastern and Western values (Bond, 1996). In terms of values, Chinese society is culturally high in hierarchy and discipline. Individuals identify themselves by their belonging and subordination to the social structure (Bond).

Apart from the complexities of Chinese society, peasants and urban dwellers have generally led different lifestyles. Peasants subscribe to a strong and united collective with a central role for the family. On the other hand, life for urban dwellers has been characterised by a period of work in rural areas for the youth, overcrowded housing, long working hours for both men and women, low salaries and instability at work (Parish, 1981).

Garrott (1995) conducted a study on the values of Chinese university students and found that present-day Chinese shared more features with their counterparts in individualistic cultures than the collectivistic values assigned to traditional Chinese. Present-day Chinese also scored low in solidarity with others, harmony with others, and respect for tradition, all-important indicators of collectivism. They particularly ranked high on self-cultivation, perceived as a measure of individualism.

In contrast, the construction of the self in traditional Chinese culture entailed values promoting the family as a central structure, submission to societal roles, adherence to hierarchical relationships, acceptance of authority, and the preservation of stability in all areas of life (Pratt, 1991; Tam & Bond, 2002). It was the collective that influenced the development of identity. One's own identity was linked to the fulfilment of duty, adherence to anticipated roles and loyalty to elders and figures of authority (Keung Ma, 1990).

Overall, Chinese values are unique, including specific respect for elders, preservation of family kinship, maintaining a tight-knit work network, respect for hierarchy within society, encouragement of further education, and preserving harmony in relationships with others (Irwin, 1996).

1.4.1.3. Traditional Medicine and Psychiatric Disorders in China.

For many centuries, emotional states and internal body organs' functions were linked to psychological disorders in traditional Chinese medicine. Emotional excesses or

incongruence in the presentation of emotions were associated with psychological distress in Chinese culture. It was not the presence of emotions (such as happiness, anger, worry, desire, sadness, fear and fright), which was prohibited in Chinese culture, but rather excess in the expression of these emotions. As a result, the Chinese discouraged the expression of emotions, while the opposite was more prevalent in Western society. Similarly, internal body organs (heart, liver, kidney, lung, and gallbladder) were connected to emotional states. The presence of a given emotion was thought to influence the functioning of the internal organ associated with that emotion and therefore, affected overall psychological status (Lin, 1981). The most frequent presentation of psychological disorders for Chinese living in Western cultures was through somatisation, as the bodily expression of emotional discomfort (Lin, Kleinman, & Lin, 1981). Hence, somatic symptoms may be a more socially acceptable expression of emotional distress.

Men and women from different socio-economic levels differ in their presentation of psychological disorders in Chinese culture. According to Lee (1981), people of low SES are more readily able to express their emotional distress than those from high SES. In particular, women from low SES are more likely to express their psychological distress than men in Chinese society (Lee).

1.4.1.4. Chinese Students in Australia.

Chinese students abroad share personality characteristics which may have influenced their decision to study overseas. Klein, Miller, and Alexander (1981) reported these students were more independent even while living in China and hence perceived

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themselves as more self-confident, healthier, more sociable and different from their co-nationals. Chinese international students also expressed their commitment to academic achievement and remained deeply devoted to their families while studying abroad.

According to Klein et al. (1981), Chinese international students justified their perceived isolation from host nationals and apparent atypical behaviour as a survival mechanism to adjust to the host society. They found themselves comfortable staying in the safe network of co-nationals. The Chinese took this stand to remain focused on their study goals, to block discrepant values, and experience some emotional stability in an already complex adjustment to the host society (Klein at al.).

The fact that many Chinese who settled overseas subscribed to the values of diligence and self-reliance, reflects more the insecurity they experienced in their lives rather than traditional Chinese values (Baoyun, 1998).

1.4.2. Indonesian Culture.

This section describes life and values in Indonesia, culture and motivation to study abroad.

1.4.2.1. Indonesian Values.

Historically, Indonesian traditional society viewed socialization as commencing in the home. Children professed obedience and respect to the dominant authority i.e. the

father, while the mother provided the nurturing (Kartodirdjo, 1984). Indonesian traditional values included: (1) social solidarity (rukun) which prevented people from overt emotional expression of conflict in social interactions, (2) the paternal authoritarian power over family members, and (3) valuing others because of who they are, e.g., their ability to establish intimate connection, rather than what they do, e.g., their ability to perform specific tasks (Mulder, 1994).

The new post-colonial Indonesian identity is still in the process of taking shape and is based not in Javanese authority but the hybrid multicultural influences that diverse regions bring to enrich Indonesian society (Mulder, 1994).

1.4.2.2. Indonesian Ways of Life.

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population of any nation in the world, with about 90% of its population practicing Islam (Schwarz, 1999). Other religions represented in Indonesia are Christianity, Confucianism and Hinduism (Baoyum, 1998). Confucianism has been present in Indonesia for centuries and followers of Confucianism consider it a philosophy of life rather than a religion.

Indonesia has tried, since independence, to build a nation despite the continuous threat of political and economic collapse. Schwarz (1999) argued that the political orientation of Indonesian leaders reduced the chances for economic prosperity in global trade. Military takeovers and further army intervention in internal affairs have added to the complexity of Indonesia's political circumstances. Compounding this state of affairs,

separatist movements in areas such as Aceh, Timor, and Irian Jaya have demanded

control, while Islamic militancy thrives on religious hegemony.

1.4.2.3. Life in Indonesia and Motivation to Study in Australia.

The majority of Indonesian students come from large cities. Fathers of indigenous

Indonesian students come from a broad base of occupations such as teaching, business,

management, and farming. As was the case in traditional Indonesia, holding a public

office is still a significant incentive and a symbol of prestige. Hence, Western education

for many Indonesian international students provides the window of opportunity to enable

them to hold official positions on returning home to Indonesia (Kartodirdjo, 1984). As

reported by Lakshmana Rao (1976), Indonesians in Australia were concerned with their

lack of fluency in English, separation from family, homesickness and adjustment to a

different educational system in Australia.

It is important to remind the reader that Indonesia was the largest source of

international students for Australia until 2000 (McInnes, 2003). Following the Indonesian

economical downturn, the events of September 11, 2001, and the Bali bombing of 2002,

the Indonesian presence in Australian education has decreased significantly to become the

eighth main source of international students for Australia (IDP, 2003).

1.5. Summary of Relevant Findings from Current Literature.

Understanding the adjustment stresses experienced by university students from the

transactional model perspective (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) allows a more fulfilling

exploration of the often complex dynamic interplay between person and environment, whether interest is in the cognitive, affective or behavioural aspects of the stress experience (Daniels & Guppy, 1997) or in the coping responses introduced to deal with the threat.

International and local students experience significant adjustment difficulties when they enter university. At the beginning, pressures to fit within the new social environment and non-academic concerns tint their university experience. Reports have highlighted that distress and depression are frequent occurrences in university populations. Stressors highlighted by literature appear to be of an interpersonal and intrapersonal nature. The interpersonal relates to academic concerns and relationships-with-others issues, and the intrapersonal relates to changes within the student, such as health status and problems outside university. Overall, being female (Misra et al., 2000), from low SES (Hudd et al., 2000), rural background, and/or having low financial income may predict distress at university. Although local and international students share similar university adjustment difficulties, international students are also affected by cultural distance from the host society and the degree of acculturative stress experienced. Stressors experienced by international students also include educational differences (Aubrey, 1991), proficiency in the English language as an indicator of levels of acculturation and success in studies (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1987; Yeh & Inose, 2003), and high family expectations of academic achievement (Chemers et al., 2001; Clark Oropeza et al., 2001). It has also been proposed that overall adjustment stressors are central in the lives of students at the beginning of their sojourn (or for local students at commencement of studies), and that

only after the first four to six months do academic stressors become central in their lives (Woosley, 2003).

Acculturative stress impacted all international students, regardless of their preparation to interact in the host culture (Chavez et al., 1997). It is the central tenet of this study that international students experience significant stress at the beginning of their sojourn (Ward et al., 1998). Therefore, it is proposed to explore the stress-coping model in explaining the acculturative stress experience of these two particular groups of international students as against the traditional "U-curve" view of culture shock proposed by Oberg (1954).

Chinese and Indonesian students have increased their participation in Australian education, justifying the need to further understand the dynamics of their adjustment and problems in Western societies. As a society, China has preserved traditional collectivism together whilst incorporating individualism into their modernisation, but Indonesia remains mainly collectivistic, struggling with civil unrest and financial crises. The different social dynamics of these two cultures need to be recognised in order to ascertain their students' conditions within Australian society.

Due to their collectivistic, interdependent stance towards social interaction (Brew et al., 2001), Chinese and Indonesian students may find it difficult to incorporate the independent approach to life manifested by individualistic Australians and tend to socially mix only with co-nationals (Yeh & Inose, 2003). Overall possession of collectivististic

cultural values introduces an element of distress in international students at the beginning of their interaction with the host society. This stress may only be resolved over time when viewed from the perspective of the stress-coping transactional model of adjustment.

A number of factors contribute to jeopardise the adjustment of international students in Australia. It is likely that international students may experience more everyday stresses than local students in their process of settling into university life (Neil & Prove, 2000). This has been observed with Black students experiencing more daily hassles than White students in a US university (Jung & Khalsa, 1989). International students experience daily hassles, but these daily hassles may be of a different nature and intensity than those experienced by Australian students (Barker, 1991). Neil and Prove showed that international students in Australia do not have access to the same social support structures available in their home country. Like local students, international students experience the conflicts peculiar to late adolescence during their sojourn in addition to their experience of an unfamiliar social environment and (possibly) language.

Ethnic identity develops and shapes international students' confidence in the host culture. Authors in the field differ in their perception of ethnic identity as a resource for international student adjustment in the host society (Nesdale et al., 1997; Sanchez et al., 2000). Ethnic identity is viewed as part of the developmental process experienced by adolescents (Branch et al., 2000). Similarly, ethnic identity is affected by the nature of the receiving society (Jayasuriya, 1990) and cultural distance from host society (Searly & Ward, 1990). Despite the several influences, what is conclusive is the value of a strong

ethnic identity for self-esteem (Nesdale et al., 1997). Thus it is reasonable to consider that international students remain acculturated at the daily functional level but keep firm their original ethnic roots and identity (Duan & Vu, 2000).

Social support has an evident influence on local and international students' adjustment to university life. Social support has likely a moderating influence between stressors and stress reaction, mitigating the stressful experience (Stroebe et al., 1996). Peer and family support in particular may have a protective role in students' life (Rodriguez et al., 2003).

Researchers in acculturative stress found that English proficiency influenced stress levels (Robertson et al, 2000), homesickness (Ali et al., 2003), and overall initial appraisal of their interaction with the host society (Chen, 1999). Initial impressions of the host society included academic differences (Ballard & Clanchy, 1991; Stoynoff, 1997) and value differences (Clark Oropeza et al., 2001; Miyamoto & Kuhlman, 2001). The diverse influences on the acculturative stress of international students also include financial pressures, discrimination and loneliness (Yeh & Inose, 2002). Overall, the initial interaction with the host society, including psychological and socio-cultural issues (Ward et al., 2003), will influence further adjustment. The fact that these adjustments are more critical at the beginning of their entry into the host society, matches the transactional model, which would argue that stress is higher at the beginning of international students' sojourn.

Coping strategies have been broadly investigated, beginning with the initial

dichotomy of emotion-focussed and problem-focussed coping (Lazarus & Folkman,

1984). From this initial dichotomy, many categories of coping have been developed

(Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993). Although some researchers have indicated that certain

coping strategies may contribute to maladjustment (Compas et al., 2001), others have

highlighted that successful coping strategies are influenced by the kind of stressor

affecting the individual (Kaplan, 1996). Furthermore, Carver et al. (1989) cautioned that

coping strategies beneficial for one individual may not be appropriate for someone else.

Although there is some agreement on universal approaches to coping (Cantarazo et

al., 1995), differences have been noted between Western and non Western approaches to

coping (Aldwin, 1994; Boekaerts, 2002; Triandis, 1996). Bond (1996) stated that coping,

as the concept is known, is only applicable to individualistic societies. Bond urged an

understanding of coping based on cultural values and socio-economic environment. Cross

(1995) confirmed that coping was influenced by the background culture. Sojourners from

a collectivistic culture may subordinate their own goals towards group goals when using

coping strategies.

The next section will present the overall findings from the pilot study.

1.6. Pilot study.

1.6.1. Introduction.

Seventeen international students from Indonesia and eighteen from Mainland China were requested to complete a questionnaire. The purpose was to determine the appropriateness of its use with a sample of international students enrolled in undergraduate studies in Australia. A further objective was to obtain information about their acculturative stress experience through an in-depth, one-to-one interview. Twenty-six of the students who completed the questionnaire, agreed to take part in an in-depth interview. Participants for both the self-completion questionnaire and in-depth interviews were recruited from lectures during summer courses conducted by the School of Business at Macquarie University. Some of the participants in the pilot study had been in Australia longer than three months, and they were also more likely to have a more proficient command of the English language than it was expected from those who will participate in the main study. However, these limitations of the pilot study were far outweighed by the invaluable insight they were able to give to the cultural appropriateness of this questionnaire, due to their own experiences and the gift of hindsight.

1.6.2. Purpose of the Pilot Study.

The purpose of the pilot study was to test the methodology in a small number of respondents before the main study was implemented in a large sample of international

students from mainland China and Indonesia. In particular, it was important to test the questionnaires to ensure the questions were clear to the respondents. Furthermore, the pilot study provided the opportunity to measure the realibility of the scales.

The main criteria for participation in the pilot study were that international students from Indonesia and China had resided in Australia for three months or less. Students from mainland China and Indonesia were the focus for the pilot study for the following three main reasons: (1) they are two of the largest sojourning groups in Australia; (2) they are culturally distant from Western cultures such as Australia; and (3) English is not their first language. The pilot questionnaire included demographic questions and measures of acculturative stress, social support, coping strategies, ethnic identity, daily hassles, English language proficiency, and mental and health status. Scales used in this questionnaire were previously used in cross-cultural studies; however, it was important to confirm the appropriateness of using the instruments with these particular ethnic groups. Considering this questionnaire will be presented to international students at entry level, and four and eight months after settling in Australia, it was critical to determine the reliability of using this instrument over time.

This pilot study also aimed to investigate how students from mainland China and Indonesia experienced their sojourn process by encouraging them to re-tell their personal stories of sojourn in Australia via face-to-face, in-depth interviews.

1.6.3. Research Objectives.

The following were the research objectives for the pilot study:

- To determine whether the questions asked during the pilot phase were culturally appropriate to mainland Chinese and Indonesian international students.

- To confirm whether the wording of the questionnaire captured the language nuances for participants from Indonesia and China.

- To determine reliability of the specific scales presented in the questionnaire.

The in-depth one-to-one interviews intended to cover the following objectives:

- To identify the personal issues related to the experience of new arrivals into Australian society and university life.

- To recognise themes emerging with relevance to the main study.

- To determine the feasibility of conducting either in-depth, one-to-one interviews or focus groups during the main study.

- To obtain verbal feedback from participants on how they found the questionnaire.

1.6.4. Methodology.

1.6.4.1. Sample Size and Description.

Seventeen students from mainland China and 18 from Indonesia took part in the pilot study. The Indonesian student sample comprised five males and 13 females, and the mainland Chinese students comprised eight males and nine females. Twenty-six of these students later participated in an in-depth interview. From this further sample of 26

students, eight females and seven males were from mainland China, and three males and

eight females from Indonesia. All subjects matched the following selection criteria:

- 17-25 years old;

- First Language Other Than English (FLOTE) students;

- came from overseas to study in Australia; and

- all were studying towards undergraduate degree at Macquarie University.

1.6.4.2. Scales administered.

The pilot study included completion of a questionnaire with a further sub-sample

of these participants included in an in-depth, one-to-one interview. An outline of

instruments administered to participants with reliability scores is presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Instruments administered for Chinese and Indonesian international students, number of
items and Cronbach's alphas

Scales administered to Chinese and Indonesian International Students	k	α
The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM)	12	.87
Network Orientation Towards Support (NOS Scale)	20	.61
The Social, Attitudinal, Familial, Environmental (SAFE scale)	26	.88
Coping Orientations to Problems Experienced (Brief-COPE scale)	28	.68
Brief College Student Hassles Scale (BCSHS)	20	.90
The Hopkins Symptom Checklist (HSCL-21)	21	.91

For a detailed description of the instruments used in the pilot study, please refer to the methodology section Chapter Two describing instruments used in this study.

Following introductions and confidentiality agreements, pilot respondents were invited to complete the questionnaire and further encouraged to share their views about the cultural appropriateness of the questionnaire. A further subsample agreed to participate in an in-depth interview where participants expanded on their acculturative stress experiences since arriving in Australia.

1.6.4.3. Themes of sojourn in depth-interview.

Themes presented to participants during in-depth interviews were based on the main factors of acculturative stress identified by Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994). The questions formulated were as follows:

1) Pre-arrival factors, expectations and feelings about their sojourn. Questions formulated were for example, "What led to your decision to come to Australia? How was your experience when you first arrived in Australia?, Is it what you expected?"

2) Perceived discrimination:
   "Have you experienced unequal treatment? If so, please provide examples and how you cope"

3) Social isolation:

"Please describe if you feel you are treated differently in social situations? If you feel you are, how do you cope?"

4) Threat to cultural identity:

"Do you feel you are losing your cultural identity? If so, please describe how so and how you cope"

5) Inferiority:

"Do you feel you are made to feel inferior in this society? If so, please describe how you feel and how you cope"

6) Homesickness:

"Explain your feelings of homesickness if you get homesick? If so, how you cope"

7) Fear:

"What are your fears if any, since arriving to this country? How do you cope?"

8) Anger/Disappointment:

"What are the negative stereotypes about your culture that people in this country make? If so, how do you cope?"

9) Mistrust:

"Is it hard to make trustworthy friends here? If so, how do you cope?"

10) Communication problems:

"Do you find it difficult to communicate in English? If so, how do you cope?

Participants for the pilot study were recruited towards the end of November, and through December before the end of second semester 2001. In addition to this, recruitment also took place during the summer course in January 2002. Following

approval from the Ethics Committee to conduct this pilot study, the researcher approached

the International Office at Macquarie University. The International Office agreed to place

an advertisement on the student noticeboard. Only one student replied to the

advertisement. Similarly, the researcher approached the Sydney Institute of Business and

Technology (SIBT), which agreed to place an advertisement on international students'

electronic portal. Due to Christmas holiday constraints, the researcher resumed

recruitment of participants during the summer courses at Macquarie University. The

researcher approached individual lecturers from business undergraduate units attracting

large number of international students.   With lecturers' permission, the researcher

attended lecture theatres and invited those students fulfilling the criteria for participation

to complete the questionnaire in their own time. The researcher also invited students to

schedule a time for a further interview after they had completed the questionnaire. Due to

a low response rate, the researcher introduced a $10.00 monetary incentive for all those

who returned the questionnaire and also participated in an in-depth interview. Thirty-five

students returned the questionnaire, and 21 of these also agreed to an in-depth interview.

1.6.5. Results.

1.6.5.1. Reliability of scales administered and scales' items responses.

Scales administered showed medium to high reliabilities as is illustrated in Table

1. Most people responded to the questionnaire in an average of 15-20 minutes.

Participants did not find it difficult to follow directions to complete the questionnaire.

Most participants considered that the seven sections included in this questionnaire were all relevant to their sojourn to Australia and university life. The majority of participants did not object to the wording in the questionnaire; however, two participants were unable to grasp some expressions in Section 6, the 21-Item Hopkins Symptom Checklist (HSCL) (see Appendix B). Two of the participants considered information in Section 3, the Network Orientation Scale (NOS) too personal to be disclosed (see Appendix B). One respondent found questions repetitive and another found the questionnaire too long. Many participants found the questionnaire appropriate and "interesting" as one put it. One also indicated that it reflected the problems experienced by overseas students. A small number of participants stated that the questionnaire required advanced knowledge of the English language therefore; it would be difficult for someone who had just arrived in Australia. One of the participants who raised these concerns had been in Australia for about two months; however, he was able to fill in the questionnaire appropriately regardless of his opinion.

Some of the participants wanted to see issues regarding coping with university life included in the questionnaire. One respondent indicated a desire for the questionnaire to include sections on specific aspects of communication such as connecting, communicating, and starting a conversation etc. Another student advised that the questionnaire should include items regarding social relationships with people from other nationalities in a multicultural society. A respondent suggested rewording the "daily hassles" expression in Section 7 as it was hard to understand (see Appendix B). Further,

some participants found some items on the daily-hassles and ethnic-identity scales hard to understand and suggested presenting more examples to illustrate the typical answers.

Some of these recommendations contributed to the revised questionnaire used in the main study. Not all these recommendations could be incorporated, as they would modify the nature of the scales included in the questionnaire.

1.6.5.2. Findings from responses to one to one in-depth interview.

Participants were willing to volunteer information of their sojourn experience to Australia. Some participants indicated that the interview should include questions to address issues on discrimination, differences in education system, everyday difficulties students face when first arriving in the host society, inquiring more about students' job plans after completing their studies, and opportunities to mix with local students. Participants also suggested including in the interview international students' feelings associated with living in a Western culture, their parents' expectations and how this added a heavy load on their settling in Australia. A respondent suggested a further discussion on Chinese men's difficulties, and exploring more about the international students' tendency of mixing only with people from their own background. Some participants suggested that less personal questions should be posed to new international students because they generally felt uncomfortable about disclosing personal information to strangers and were not confident about their communication in English.These suggestions were considered and contributed to modification of the in-depth discussion guide.

1.6.5.2.1. Decision to come to Australia.

One respondent from Indonesia indicated that the situation for young people was quite difficult back home, which had a great bearing on their decision to leave home. Other participants indicated the decision to come to Australia was part of a family decision. One indicated that education is less expensive here than in US or Europe, another stated that quality of life is better here, and a third suggested that job prospects were very difficult back home, as factors precipitating their decision to come to Australia.

1.6.5.2.2. Personal experience when they first arrived in Australia.

A respondent indicated feelings of loneliness, fear of being in a strange place, and difficulties with language as some of her personal difficulties when she first arrived in Australia. Another respondent found it hard to adjust to the new educational system. A third respondent indicated feelings of contentment of being in a "good country" where she felt accepted by others. A fourth respondent indicated feelings of despair and wanting to go back home as he found adjustment to the new culture too difficult. A fifth respondent felt living in Australia represented a great experience due to its ethnic mix. One respondent felt very impressed by the nice weather and clean beaches. One indicated that it was not a shock as she had already been exposed to Australia on a previous visit.

Some of the participants were not overtly distressed when they first arrived in Australia as some relatives and friends were already living here. One participant found

Australia boring as she was used to a 24-hour lifestyle in a large city in China. Another indicated that they first settled in Adelaide, which was quieter than Sydney. This participant also complained that limited ethnic groups in Adelaide encouraged racism and discrimination, which she also found prevalent in Sydney. The first issue many participants noticed is the friendliness of people in Australia.

1.6.5.2.3. Expectations.

Four participants had all their expectations fulfilled and rapidly made friends with people from their own ethnic background due to the multicultural nature of the suburb where the respondent lived. Some responded that they just followed their parents' decision to come to Australia and had not fulfilled their own expectations. One noted that instead of finding a more Western kind of society, he was glad to discover that it was a multicultural society. One respondent felt disillusioned as people her age had nothing to do in their spare time here. According to this respondent, Australia was better for children or retired people but not youths. One did not expect such severe restrictions on smoking.

1.6.5.2.4. Discrimination.

Two complained of being discriminated against by other students because they found it difficult to communicate in English. Another found that in Australia they received better treatment than back home where there were more inequalities than Australia. One found discrimination at the beginning; however, when she was able to grasp the English language, she found it easier to relate to others on equal terms. One

confided that he felt discrimination due to his Muslim background, as he came from Indonesia.

1.6.5.2.5. Cultural Identity.

One respondent stated that culture influences character and that did not allow him to express opinions. One student asserted that the turning point on cultural identity was attending a new school where exposure to Chinese students was greater, and this gave an opportunity to build solid friendships with people from his own nationality. Another respondent felt great about his ancient and rich culture, which filled him with pride. Another felt afraid of showing his cultural identity, as he believed that people only saw the external side, not the essence of people. A respondent found that being from an Indo-Chinese background made his cultural identity more complex and richer as he felt proud of both ethnic heritages.

Cultural identity was not relevant for one participant who felt it was more important to proceed fairly and rightfully in your relationship with others regardless of what culture people come from.

1.6.5.2.6. Homesickness.

Participants felt that they were gradually overcoming feelings of homesickness. One responded that homesickness was prevalent during the first month of settlement in

Australia. One found that she had to phone family frequently back in China as she felt homesick. One missed the food and the friends back home.

1.6.5.2.7. Fears in host society.

One respondent stated fears about constant car accidents, being in certain suburbs considered dangerous, and not being able to trust anybody. Another expressed his greatest fear as failing to live up to his parents' expectations. A third one feared not being able to cope with the studies and living environment. A fourth indicated fear of not being able to communicate in English. A respondent found that competition in his career was very hard here in Australia, which made him worried as he planned to stay here after completing his studies. He found that the pace of business back home in Jakarta was more manageable. One was doubtful about the future and was fearful about job prospects here or going back home to Jakarta. Fear about achieving in her studies was presented by one respondent initially during her stay in Australia. These fears were later relieved as she became more familiar with the education system. A constant issue presented by participants was fear of safety in Australia. However, another compared Australia with home and other countries such as US and European countries and found it was safer here.

1.6.5.2.8. Making friends.

One respondent presented fears of being introverted which limited her chances of making new friends. Two participants found it easier to make friends from their own

cultural background. They found that was all they needed for a socially acceptable life in Australia. A third found friends to be superficial and not close. Some found that the kindness of people in Australia was remarkable and made their staying in Australia more satisfying. One found it difficult to establish an appropriate interaction with lecturers, whom he found quite removed and distant. One respondent indicated that respecting others' values and accommodating to this culture was enough to gradually gain friends in Australia.

1.6.5.2.9. Communication in English.

Several participants found that English was not a barrier in their communication with others. Others, however, found English proficiency a barrier to interaction with people in Australia.

1.6.5.2.10. Trustworthy friends.

One indicated that her only friends were her family members and found it hard to open up to other people. Two participants found it difficult to trust even people from their own country while staying in Australia. They revealed they only trusted old friends from childhood or those from school days. It was hard to make trustworthy friends here in Australia and could not compare the quality of those friendships with those formed while living in China.

1.6.6. Discussion.

Scales administered in this study showed medium to high reliabilities. Although a small number of participants did not agree with the wording on some scale items, most agreed with the form and content.

In depth interviews allowed participants to present their views on various themes associated with their experience settling in Australia. Participants found difficulties with the education system in Australia and the fact that education in Indonesia allowed more guidance and support from lecturers to students. Larger societal issues were also brought to the fore. Although participants found the climate and the unpolluted environment appealing, and were satisfied to arrive to a coutry wich had a good ethnic mix some felt discriminated against because they found it difficult to connect with people in Australia due to their lack of English language proficiency and rejection of particular aspects of their own cultural background, such as being Muslim.

There was a sense that universities can further assist international students to improve their progress in their studies. Participants recommended a more directive education; teaching new students study habits and making them understand differences in educational systems. Overall, participants suggested providing new international students with practical advice on how to succeed socially and academically in this country. The implicit issue was related to supporting them to manage expectations in the transition

from parents' aspirations and how those match with their outlook and overall life in Australia.

1.6.7. Limitations.

One of the main limitations of the pilot study was that some participants had been in Australia longer than three months and were generally older, which was not equivalent to the proposed sample for the main study. The main phase of the study was targeted to students who had been in Australia less than three months.

Another limitation of the pilot study was the non-random approach taken to recruit participants. They were recruited in lecture theatres and in front of the Library, where most students tend to gather around between breaks in their classes.

1.6.8. Outcomes from the Pilot study.

The pilot study provided a preliminary opportunity to administer the questionnaire and conduct in-depth interviews with international students from China and Indonesia participating in the main study. The pilot study confirmed that the questionnaire was appropriately worded for administration to respondents from culturally diverse backgrounds such as China and Indonesia. The reliability of the scales in the questionnaire was also found to be adequate. Only the wording of some scale item was changed without affecting the content of the issues presented in scale questions. The pilot

study also confirmed that the questions formulated in the in-depth interview were easily understood by participants and elicited information related to their acculturative stress experience.

In summary, after conducting the pilot study, it was found that only minimal changes needed to be incorporated before commencing the main study.

1.7. Synthesis and development of a new model.

This study investigated the difficulties experienced by international students using the stress and coping model first identified by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). Of a particular interest is ascertaining how effectively international students cope with acculturative stress from their arrival in Australia to eight months of residence in the host culture, and the impact of demographic and psychological variables on their ability to cope. This was achieved by measuring levels of distress as an indicator of how well they were coping.

In addition to daily hassles, this study adhered to the stress-coping transactional model that views acculturative stress as contributing to maladjustment in international students. Similarly, the number and intensity of daily hassles may cause maladjustment for local students. This model proposes that coping strategies mediate the impact of these stressors and contribute to coping effectiveness or adjustment. It is also assumed that developmental and gender factors (e.g., age, female vs male), environmental factors

(cultural distance), ethnic identity, social support (perceived and received support), and time of the experience (first arrival in Australia for international students, first experience at university for local students and how its differs after four and eight months of experiencing this process) will moderate the process of coping effectiveness.

Coping effectiveness in this study is formulated as a repertoire of resources that allow the individual to manage a stressful situation with an adaptive and functional outcome. In this model, coping effectiveness results in decreased levels of distress experienced by local and international students, with local students facing daily hassles adjusting to university life and international students facing daily hassles and acculturative stress.

Within this context, certain coping strategies may be more adaptive than others. Coping strategies such as emotion focused coping, avoidance, and self-blame may not work when an individual is experiencing high levels of distress. However, the effectiveness of coping strategies can differ depending on the time since the international student first experienced acculturative stress (Hanson, Buckelew, Hewett & O'Neil, 1993). Some coping strategies may be appropriate at the beginning of sojourn, while others become predominant later in the process of settlement. Cross-cultural differences may also influence the benefits of coping strategies used in stressful situations. In other words, some coping strategies used by international students in dealing with stressful events may contribute to coping effectiveness although the same strategies may not work for local students.

Levels of stress will also be associated with the degree of international students' awareness of their experience and understanding of stressors. Ethnic identity would be one filter in this appraisal of the host society causing international students to feel out of place in the host country. It is likely that grounded ethnic identity protects international students from distress stemming from the adjustment process in the host society.

Coping resources also have a direct relationship with strength of ethnic identity. International students with a weaker ethnic identity may be more vulnerable to distress as they expose themselves to Western values without the strength of a grounded ethnic identity. At some stage in this process, international students may, for example, wonder whether to define themselves as Chinese or Chinese Australian.

Ethnic identity has an important value in the stress-coping model being proposed to assess the acculturative stress experience. International students with a grounded ethnic identity may present more pride and confidence in their own culture, and they may become less affected by negative events influencing their adjustment in the host culture.

Age and level of study may also impact levels of stress and coping effectiveness for both local and international students. Younger students have the flexibility of their youth, while older students possess the maturity and perspective to construe circumstances in their own favour. Similarly, undergraduate students may find the

university experience overwhelming while postgraduate students benefit from the familiarity already gained within the university system.

Gender is also an important contributor to this model. Females may use more social support coping and be more comfortable with emotion-focused coping rather than the problem-focused coping more familiar to male students. In particular, female international students may have more restrictions in their coping strategies as they sojourn from patriarchal societies to a gender-equality based society in Australia.

Competency in the English language has an intrinsic advantage for international students acculturating into the new society. English competence has a contributing influence to coping effectiveness. Being able to communicate satisfactorily with others, understanding lectures, using transport and other services can be liberating and partially ease the acculturative stress and daily hassles for international students.

Nationality can also play a role on the levels of distress experienced in the host culture. Cultural distance from Western cultural practices can accelerate feelings of alienation and lack of belonging in the host culture. That is, sojourning from collectivistic cultures to individualistic Australian society may contribute to feelings of alienation experienced by international students. The experiences of largely Muslim students from Indonesia and Buddhist, Taoist or Confucian Chinese students may add a layer of opportunities or restrictions to their process of settlement in Australian society.

Self-ratings of physical and mental health may also influence adjustment to university life and host culture. Students suffering physical health problems may experience them as an additional stressor, and this may foster diminished levels of coping effectiveness. In some Asian cultures people find it difficult to express emotional discomfort, which may be translated to somatisation of their distress and frequent health complaints. Local students may find it more acceptable to attend counselling to address their mental health difficulties, while in some Asian cultures high stigma is associated with revealing mental health difficulties.

Perception of social support may have a positive impact on the student even over the actual receiving of such support. In this context, international students who find themselves removed from family and friends may still be able to function in the host society as they rely on home country family and friends for support. However, pressures from daily hassles and acculturative stress will hinder international students' efforts to search for social support as a protective structure to deal with the new society. Gender will be particularly relevant in the search for social support, as females will find it more appropriate to reach for support than males.

Coping has an important place in the process of coping effectiveness. Certain coping strategies may be more acceptable for students who are unable to exert some control over their environment. The upsurge of social tensions following the Bali bombing may lead some Indonesian students to use avoidance or denial coping as strategies to deal with political events and social environment beyond their control. Similarly, heavy

academic pressures on local students may contribute to denial or self-blame as coping strategies when unable to succeed in the university academic environment.

There are, however, personality and cultural traits which will influence students' coping, and some of these traits may be entrenched in their ways of approaching new experiences in the university environment. Anxious individuals may rely more on social support to venture into new experiences, just as stubborn individuals will use denial more frequently to safeguard their own initial perceptions.

In overall terms, there are no universals in coping. Students may be influenced by their individual differences, personal, family and cultural variables in their process of selecting a coping strategy that is better adjusted to their particular life experience (Somerfield & McCrae, 2000). However, considering that coping resources buffer the impact of stress, international students possessing more coping resources would likely suffer less distress than others.

Considering these factors, the following model was developed for this study. It was predicted that acculturative stress levels, ethnic identity, social support, coping strategies and persistence of daily hassles will predict coping effectiveness. As bellow, the possible moderating influence of other variables such as age, gender, level of study, nationality (being Chinese or Indonesian), length of time living in Australia, self-rating of health, self-rating of emotional status and English proficiency were also investigated (see Figure 1).

This study was based on the stress and coping model proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). As indicated in Figure 1, the stresses measured by the acculturative stress experience (SAFE) scale in international students, and daily hassles (BCSHS) affecting both international and local students are predicted to trigger distress (HSCL-21). Subject to the coping strategy used (COPE), the strength of their ethnic identity (MEIM) and nature of orientation to network of support (NOS), coping effectiveness (as indicated by scores on HSCL-21) is an indicator of adjustment or further distress for both local and international students.
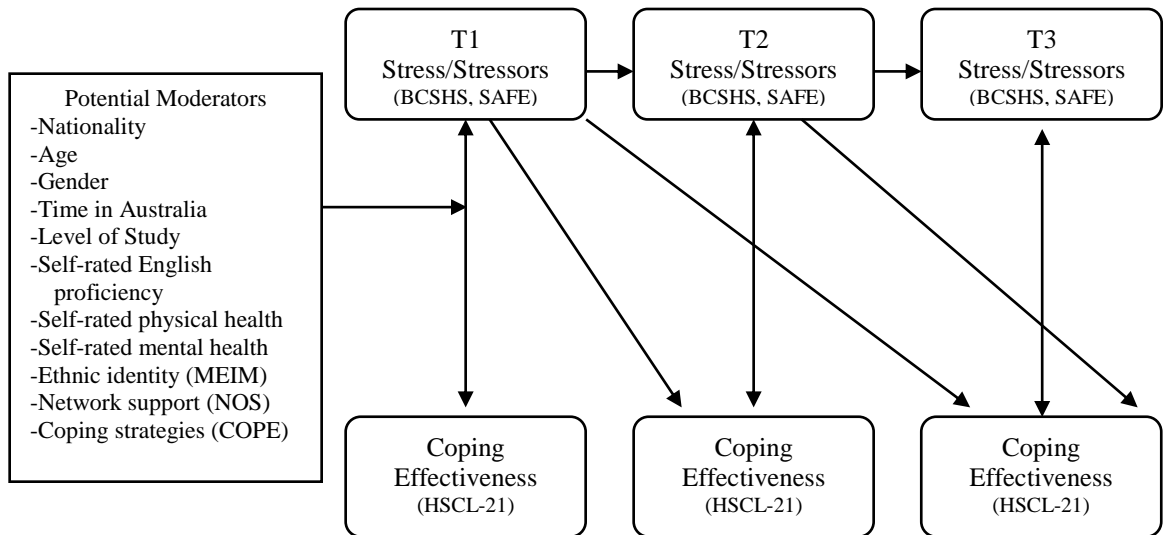
Figure 1. Study design. Influence of stress and potential moderators on psychological distress and corresponding coping effectiveness.

There are a number of covariates or moderators in this model. Variables such as ethnic identity, network orientation towards support, and coping strategies may have a moderating influence on the relationship between stress and distress. Demographic variables included as moderators comprise nationality, gender, age, and levels of study, English language proficiency, and self-ratings of physical and mental health.

A multifaceted influence was predicted between stress and coping effectiveness through the three waves of assessment. As indicated by Hypotheses B8 and B9, T1-stress triggers a coping effectiveness response that may predict levels of T2 distress. The same association can be developed between T2-stress and coping effectiveness and the prediction of distress levels at T3. There is also a reciprocal influence between T1-stress and the strength of coping effectiveness in T1, which may explain coping effectiveness at T2. Similarly, T2-distress is predicted to influence the strength of T3 coping effectiveness.

The next section presents the hypotheses tested based on univariate, bivariate or multivariate level of analysis required. They are grouped in two categories. The first-category hypotheses concerns changes over time and comparisons between some or all groups of students and are tested by analyses of variance. The second-category hypotheses concerns correlates and predictors of acculturative stress and distress and are tested by correlations and multiple regressions.

1.8. Hypotheses.

To facilitate analysis of the data, the hypotheses were grouped into two different categories. Each hypothesis was thus analysed in its respective section of the Results section under the following categories:

A. Changes over time, comparisons between local and international students, and between Chinese and Indonesians,

B. Distress: Correlates, and concurrent, predictive and moderating-effects analyses

A. Changes Over Time, Comparisons Between Local and International Students, and
   Between Chinese and Indonesians

1.8.1. Comparisons between Chinese and Indonesian international students

There are a number of factors which influence comparisons between Indonesians and Chinese international students. Chinese students sojourned from a country with a more homogeneous monolithic cultural background, while Indonesians have been subjected to several cultural influences including Chinese and Indian as well as indigenous Indonesians etc., which have shaped their ethnic mix, various cultural heritages and historical background. The next factor is related to level of maturity achieved by postgraduate students. A larger number of Chinese students attending Australians universities, and therefore available to participate in this study, were undertaking

postgraduate studies. Being older when sojourning to the host culture provided those students with more life experiences than undergraduates. Similarly, postgraduate students have experienced first hand, a university experience in their original country which places them in a more advantageous position than students who enter university for the first time. The third factor may be linked to political issues and the current social climate, i.e., misunderstanding of Indonesian Muslim people by Western society following September 11 in the USA and the Bali bombing in 2002.

Hypothesis A1: Ethnic identity scores will be lower for Indonesians compared to Chinese at T1, T2 (four months later) and T3 (eight months later).

Hypothesis A2: Acculturative stress will be higher for Indonesians compared to Chinese at T1, T2 and T3.

1.8.2. Comparisons between Local and International Students

There is a rationale for comparing local and international students from China and Indonesia. Chinese and Indonesian students come from collectivistic societies, while Australians are individualistic. Both international student groups are culturally distant from Australian and Western values and both speak a first language other than English. Consequently, it was predicted they would present significant differences. Hence, Australians were assigned a control group role in this study to identify differences with international students.

Hypothesis A3: Social support will be lower for Indonesian and Chinese students compared to Australians at T1, T2 and T3.

Hypothesis A4: Daily hassles will be higher for Indonesians and Chinese compared to Australians at T1, T2 and T3.

Hypothesis A5: International students will experience more nonacademic daily hassles than local students at the beginning of their studies (T1); however, both groups (international and local students) will experience more academic daily hassles at T2 and T3.

Hypothesis A6: Psychological distress will be higher for Indonesians and Chinese compared to Australians at T1, T2 and T3.

Hypothesis A7: International students will experience high to moderate distress levels compared with local students resulting from acculturative stress at T1. Acculturative stress will decline at T2 and T3. The shape of these results will differ from the "U" curve shape predicted by the traditional "honeymoon" perspective of culture shock.

Hypothesis A8: Indonesian students who move to Australia for university studies will not be significantly different to those who study at Indonesian universities.

Hypothesis A9: Chinese and Indonesians, who come from cultures with a stigma surrounding mental illness, will be more reluctant to admit suffering from emotional difficulties than Australian students.

Hypothesis A10: Chinese and Indonesians, who come from cultures with less reliance on professional support for emotional difficulties, will find it more difficult to seek counselling compared to Australians.

Hypothesis A11: Acculturative stress will be higher for undergraduate than postgraduate international students at T1. However, because undergraduate students are more flexible in adjusting to change, no differences will be shown at T3.

Postgraduate international students sojourn to Australia with the experience and maturity gained through their undergraduate studies. They are consequently equipped to manage new interactions in the host society with skills gained in dealing with life experiences and previously learned skills managing university pressures. Adjustment to the host society may then be experienced without intense stressful reactions. Undergraduate students who do not have such life experiences will, however, show flexibility in approaching new experiences. Although they may initially experience more distress associated with the acculturative stress experience, they may also rapidly adjust to the new environment.

Hypothesis A12: Postgraduate international students will use more problem-focused coping, while undergraduate international students will use more avoidance coping at T1, T2 and T3.

This hypothesis aims to confirm that due to postgraduate international students having previously experienced to the university system, they consequently have learned academic skills that enable them to approach studies at a postgraduate level from a more problem-solving perspective.

Hypothesis A13: International students from Indonesia and China will use more support-seeking, avoidance, religion, self-blame, humour and substance-use coping strategies than Australian students at T1, T2 and T3. International students will also use less problem-focused coping than Australian students, particularly at T1.

Hypothesis A14: International students will use avoidance coping more than local students as they have more limited control over their situational circumstances, at T1, T2 and T3.

It was highlighted that when people experience high levels of stress, they use more emotion-focused coping and avoidance coping (Ptacek & Pierce, 2003). In view of the above, international students from mainland China and Indonesia will use more avoidance coping than local students.

B. Distress: Correlates, Concurrent, Predictive and Moderating-Effects Analyses

Hypothesis B1: Students from families with lower income will experience more distress than those from wealthier family backgrounds.

Hovey and King (1996) reported that students who come from families with lower income experience more symptoms of depression and overall distress while trying to adjust to university life. It is hypothesised that disregarding the culture background, students who come from families with lower income will experience more distress than those who come from wealthier family backgrounds.

Hypothesis B2: Higher levels of study reached by their parents will result in less distress for both local and international students.

Hypothesis B3: International students' self-ratings of confidence in English will correlate negatively with distress and acculturative stress at T1, T2, and T3.

International students who feel more comfortable with their English proficiency will find fewer difficulties in their interaction with the host culture, adjusting to university life and comprehension of lectures.

Hypothesis B4: The more highly international students score on ethnic affirmation, the less distress they will experience, while the more highly they score on ethnic search, the more distress they will experience at T1.

Considering that ethnic affirmation is a grounding phase of the ethnic identity process, people who are at the ethnic search phase (i.e., ethnic identity exploration phase) will be more affected by distress than those who are in the phase of ethnic affirmation. Therefore, when an international student is in the ethnic affirmation stage, less distress is experienced; whilst those at the ethnic search phase experience more distress at T1.

Hypothesis B5: The importance of ethnic identity with culture of origin will be particularly relevant at T1, when stressors are more diverse and greater; therefore, higher scores on ethnic identity (identification with culture of origin) at T1 will be linked with lower distress, particularly at T1.

Ethnic identity is a protective resource against the stresses associated with adjusting to a new culture. Therefore, the more grounded ethnic identity an international student has, less subsequent distress is experienced, in particular at T1 when stresses are more varied and intense.

Hypothesis B6: Higher positive orientation towards support will result in less distress, while negative orientation towards support will result in more distress for both local and international students.

The perception of a positive orientation towards support will provide international and local students with the confidence that they can access support when needed. Therefore, higher positive orientation towards support will result in less distress, while a negative orientation towards support will result in more distress for both local and international students. A positive orientation towards support is a protective force in managing stressful experiences through the adjustment process to the new host culture and university life.

Hypothesis B7: Problem-focused coping will correlate negatively with distress at T1, T2 and T3, while support-seeking, avoidance, substance-use, self-blame and humour coping will correlate positively with distress at T1, T2 and T3.

Hypothesis B8: Acculturative stress, ethnic identity and daily hassles experienced by international students at T1 and T2 will predict levels of distress at T2 and T3 and will do so over and above significant demographic, moderating and other psychological variables.

Hypothesis B9: Daily hassles experienced by international and local students at T1 and T2 will predict levels of distress at T2 and T3 and will do so over and above demographic, moderating and other psychological measures.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

International students from mainland China and Indonesia were selected to participate in this study. Chinese in particular comprise the largest number of international students attending Australian universities (IDP Australia, 2003). They are also at risk due to their cultural distance from Australian culture (both are collectivist) and First Language Other than English (FLOTE) status. A sample of local students was also included in this study.

Barker et al. (1991) urged researchers to include Australians when sampling international students in studies of cross-cultural adjustment in international students. This strategy helps to clarify whether the problems experienced by international students are due to their being sojourners, new university students or a combination of both. Local students also face many similar problems, such as financial uncertainty, academic pressures, living arrangements, social isolation, etc. (Ballard & Clanchy, 1984). Hence, this study includes a sample of Australian-born students for comparison purposes.

A pilot study was conducted to ascertain the cultural relevance of scales used in this study. See page 86 for further insights into the purpose of the pilot study and how the subsequent outcomes impacted the resulting methodology for the main study.

This section presents details of the recruitment process, study design, and instruments used in this study.

2.1. Recruitment.

Participants in this study were local and international students currently enrolled in a university program in Australia. Students were recruited based on their enrolment in foundation (preparation), undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Students attending special direct-entry English programs at the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR) based at Macquarie University were also included in the overall sample. These students had already been offered a place at university; however, they were required to attend an English course to improve their language skills sufficiently to cope with the university's academic requirements.

The recruitment process took place in two waves during 2002 and 2003. Recruitment for both years followed the same approach as outlined below.

2.1.1. Recruitment at Macquarie University.

Local students and international students from mainland China and Indonesia were recruited at Macquarie University. The strategy for recruitment during the first semester 2002 was based on direct presentation of the questionnaire to international students either on orientation day (day before the actual beginning of the semester), or through the

researcher introducing this study in individual classes within three days of the start of classes. During the second semester 2002, and both first and second semester 2003, participants were recruited through mail-outs to randomly selected students.

2.1.1.2. Recruitment at Macquarie University through Direct Invitation to Participate in this Study.

International students from mainland China and Indonesia were invited to participate in this study during Macquarie University Orientation Day 2002. Considering the low response rate resulting from recruitment during the Orientation intake, the researcher approached lecturers individually for permission to introduce this study in classes that attracted large numbers of international students.

Students from NCELTR were invited to take part in this study. At least two intakes of international students, predominantly from China, from all programs at NCELTR took part in this study. Teachers encouraged their students to complete the questionnaire in class, or if sufficient time was not available, they were asked to take it home and to return the questionnaire to the teacher in the next class. Scheduling a specific time for students to complete the questionnaire in class insured a high return rate and also allowed the researcher to be available for questions if students had queries about the questionnaire.

International students from the Sydney Institute of Business and Technology (SIBT; on the Macquarie University campus) were also invited to participate in this study during the first semester of 2002. SIBT students were completing an alternative pathway to entry to Macquarie University.

Accommodation managers from the two residential colleges affiliated to Macquarie University (Dunmore Lang and Robert Menzies Colleges) were also invited to encourage international students from the target groups to participate in this study. Accommodation managers agreed to support this study by forwarding the questionnaire to international students meeting the selection criteria for the specific target groups. Students completing the questionnaire returned it directly to the researcher in a confidential sealed envelope.

Local students were recruited through direct invitation to local students attending large classes of undergraduate Business units at Macquarie University or through waves of mail-out organised through the Management Planning and Information Unit (MPIU) following approval from the Academic Registrar at Macquarie University. The researcher approached lecturers who gave their permission to introduce the study in their classes, after which students volunteered to complete the questionnaire in their own time and returned it to the researcher or lecturer.

2.1.1.3 Mail-Out to Students.

All local students participating in this study were recruited from Macquarie University. As indicated above, students were recruited either through attending large classes of undergraduate Business units at Macquarie University or random mail-outs to students. A mail-out two weeks after the beginning of each semester was sent to a random sample of 200 local students during both first and second semesters 2002-2003. Similarly, a mail-out to international students from the targeted groups was organised at the beginning of second semester 2002 and both first and second semester 2003.

2.1.2. Recruitment from Other Universities.

The researcher approached the research ethics committees at several universities to obtain approval to undertake this research with international students from mainland China and Indonesia. The universities approached were Australian Catholic University (ACU)-Sydney Campus, Central Queensland University-Sydney Campus, University of Sydney, and University of Western Sydney in New South Wales; Curtin University of Technology and Edith Cowan in Western Australia; La Trobe, Monash, and Swinbourne Universities in Victoria; and Griffith and University of Queensland in Brisbane. International students from these universities completed hard copies of the questionnaire or online versions depending on the arrangements in place with the corresponding institution. International students from foundation programs at private institutions such as

Taylors College in Melbourne, Perth and Sydney were presented with hard copies of the questionnaire.

2.1.3. Approaches to Attract Volunteers to this Study.

Volunteers were approached by direct, face-to-face contact at Central Queensland University – Sydney Campus, NCELTR, Taylors College Melbourne (where the Deputy Principal sat with students to complete the questionnaire) and Taylors College Sydney. Volunteers were attracted through mail-outs at Australian Catholic University (ACU)-Sydney Campus, Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, La Trobe Foundation Course, La Trobe University, Macquarie University, Queensland University, and Taylors College Perth. E-mail contacts were organised at Griffith University, Monash Foundation Course, Monash University, University of Sydney, and University of Western Sydney.

As previously indicated, three main approaches were adopted to attract volunteers to this study: (1) a mail-out to students; (2) personal attendance of the researcher at lectures to encourage students to complete the questionnaire in class; and (3) e-mails to students with links to the web page where the questionnaire could be completed online. As indicated in Tables 2 and 3, the response rate was best when directly approaching students in class, which highlights the benefits of face-to-face contact. The next most effective was the online approach, which confirms anecdotal reports by researchers at Monash University that every student has email access through which they maintain contact; this is particularly the case with international students who have family overseas.

Table 2

Overall number of questionnaires distributed to university or college students and number of actual respondents by level of study and nationality

University or College	Type	Total surveys Distributed	Indonesia U/G	Indonesia P/G	China U/G	China P/G	Australia U/G	Australia P/G	Total U/G	Total P/G	Total N	%
Macquarie University	MO	450	17	10	58	53	131	8	206	71	277	60.9
NCELTR	FF	200	0	2	18	102			18	104	122	61.0
University of Sydney	e-M	400	37	49	30	157			67	206	273	68.3
University of Western Sydney	e-M	30	1	1	0	5			1	6	7	23.3
ACU-Sydney Campus	MO	20	3	1	2	0			5	1	6	30.0
Central Queensland-Sydney	FF	30	0	4	1	1			1	5	6	20.0
Queensland University	MO	300	4	23	9	17			13	40	53	17.7
Griffith University	e-M	200	3	3	2	15			5	18	23	11.5
Monash University	e-M	150	28	19	12	17			40	36	76	50.7
Monash foundation	e-M	50	11	0	1	0			12	0	12	24.0
La Trobe University	MO	30	6	0	0	0			6	0	6	20.0
La Trobe foundation	MO	10	0	0	1	1			1	0	1	10.0
Curtin University	MO	200	13	4	7	1			20	5	25	12.5
Edith Cowan University	MO	30	0	1	1	2			1	3	4	13.3
Taylors College Sydney	FF	100	28	0	38	0			66	0	66	66.0
Taylors College Melbourne	FF	60	9	0	3	0			12	0	12	20.0
Taylors College Perth	MO	20	0	0	5	5			5	0	5	25.0
TOTAL		2280							479	495	974	42.7

Type of questionnaire distributed: MO = mail out questionnaire, FF = face-to-face administration of questionnaire, e-M = email distribution of questionnaire.

Level of study: U/G =Undergraduate student; P/G = Postgraduate student.

Table 3

Chi-square of return rates by method of distribution of questionnaires

Method	Number distributed	Number not completed	Number completed	% completed
Face to face	390	184	206	52.82
e-mail	830	439	391	47.10
Mail out	1060	683	377	35.57
TOTAL	2280	1306	974	42.72

The third approach through mail-outs was also successful, but less so than the other approaches, as seen in Table 3. The chi-square analysis for the difference between those who did not complete against those who completed the questionnaire was significant ($\underline{X}^2$ (2, 974) = 44.95, $\underline{p}$ = .00).

As the principal researcher was based in Sydney, and in particular at Macquarie University, it was easier to establish contacts and follow through with staff and students who attended universities or colleges in metropolitan Sydney.

2.1.4. Follow-Up.

When completing the hard copy of the questionnaire, participants provided the information in their own time and returned it in a sealed postage-paid envelope to the researcher. The online questionnaire was organised to increase the participation rate for

this study at the first follow-up and also to reduce the costs of postage. In view of the positive response to the online questionnaire during the first follow up, the entry questionnaire was modified for administration online.

2.1.5. Incentives for Students Completing Questionnaires.

Numbers assigned to names for all those participants who returned completed questionnaires on the four and eight months follow-ups were entered in a draw for a fifty-dollar ($50.00) gift voucher at Grace Bros. Shops.

2.1.6. In-Depth Interview.

A subsample (N=20) of Indonesian (N=10) and Chinese (N=10) students were further invited to take part in an in-depth interview to elicit qualitative data regarding their acculturative stress experience. This subsample was recruited from all those who completed the entry questionnaire or those responding to an advertisement placed on a student notice board at Sydney University. Additionally, at Macquarie University (NCELTR), Sydney University and Taylors College, all those international students who completed the questionnaire in class under researcher supervision were invited to take part in a one-to-one interview and informed of a $20.00 incentive for participation. A number of students approached the researcher expressing their willingness to take part in the in-depth interview. Volunteer international student participants from Indonesia and China

were interviewed for approximately 30 to 45 minutes each at entry, four and eight months into their sojourn.

2.1.7. Involvement of Indonesian Students Attending Universitas Indonesia.

A modified version of the questionnaire was given to students attending Universitas Indonesia in Jakarta for the purpose of capturing the adjustment issues faced by Indonesian students in Indonesia. This was done in order to determine the extent to which stresses experienced by Indonesian students in Australia exceeded those for students attending university in their home country. To satisfy validity and reliability purposes of the questionnaire, a culturally sensitive translation of the instrument into the Indonesian language by a psychologist with a Masters degree obtained in Western Australia was performed. Three main issues were considered in the translation of the instrument into Indonesian language, these being:

- Content equivalence aiming to rigorously assess each item of the instrument with the purpose of warranting that the phenomenon being studied is equivalent in each culture (Liang & Bogat, 1994). The fluently bilingual Indonesian researcher (who is a personal acquaintance of the author of this study) went through all items of this questionnaire with the view of assuring content equivalence.
- Semantic equivalence required a back-translation of the instrument (Brislin, 1970). For this purpose, the Indonesian researcher translated the questionnaire into Indonesian, following which an independent person (with a postgraduate degree in psychology obtained in Australia and currently living in Indonesia) translated the

instrument back into English. The back translation was satisfactory. The final

phase of assessing each of the items in the English version by another independent

researcher was not followed due to financial limitations.

- Conceptually equivalent instruments require measuring the same theoretical

  concepts in each culture. In cross-cultural translation of instruments this aim is

  achieved by comparing the correlation scores of an instrument that has been

  already used in both cultures with the measure being translated. If the correlation

  level is high this satisfy the validity criteria of equivalence of instruments.

2.2. Ethical Issues.

The research ethics committees at Macquarie University and other participating

universities were approached to ensure that this research was conducted in accordance

with the ethical requirements for working with human participants.

In the process of gaining ethics approval from the Macquarie University Ethics

Committee, it was stressed that the principal researcher would not have direct access to

students' personal details for those participating in this study through the mail-outs or

email contacts. At Macquarie University and other participating universities, contacts

were organised through the Management Planning Information Unit (MPIU), international

offices or academic registrar offices as it suited the respective university.

These offices approached students on behalf of the researcher to protect the confidentiality of potential participants to this study. A note indicating the nature of this study was sent to a random sample of students who met the criteria for this research asking them to initiate contact with the researcher should they wish to participate. After the students were contacted by mail-outs (organised by the appropriate office) and volunteered to participate, they completed the questionnaire, which included their authority to be contacted through email or postal addresses for follow-up assessments. To ensure confidentiality, the principal researcher was the only person who had access to students' responses.

Participants were presented with an information sheet that explained the purpose of the study and were also advised that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw their participation at any stage of the study. The information sheet and questionnaire for local students is included in Appendix A, international students in Appendix B and Indonesian students from Universitas Indonesia in Appendix C. Considering that students participating in this study may face the risk of feeling distressed following interviews and completing questionnaires which inquired about their acculturative stress and mental wellbeing, the researcher advised students to contact the Macquarie University Counselling Service or the equivalent at their own university if necessary. When the questionnaire was presented online, subjects were invited to complete their full name and date of completion. Subjects completing the questionnaire online received assurance that their identification details will be removed from their files to ensure confidentiality.

The ethics committees were also given assurance by the principal researcher that data and instrumentation would be destroyed within five years following the final submission of the PhD thesis. The questionnaires will remain with the researcher in a secure locked filing cabinet in his office. It was explicitly confirmed that only the researcher has access to the materials.

International students disclosed personal information to international offices in the process of gaining entry to study in Australian universities. Considering that International Offices submitted the questionnaire to international students on behalf of the researcher, it is reasonable to assume that international students were satisfied with the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses to this study. Private information provided by international students such as financial and behavioural status is protected by their established relationship with the International Office. This was also confirmed in the face-to-face administration of this questionnaire in class. The researcher was introduced by the lecturer, a trusted agent in their university experience, and this resulted in an overwhelming response to completing the questionnaire.

Similarly, international students were not influenced by demand characteristics, as they perceived that confidentiality was protected by the International Office's endorsement of this study. Therefore, they did not expect to answer the questionnaire in order to please the researcher. The questionnaire was also previously piloted to confirm clarity of expression and reliability of instruments. Thus, it is feasible that it did not cause

confusion or further misinterpretation of the questions by the respondents. It is consequently unlikely that the questionnaire demanded certain responses from respondents.

2.3. Study Design.

A longitudinal panel approach to the acculturative stress experience of international students was selected to understand the course and nature of changes at different stages of their settlement in Australia (Raudenbush, 2001). This was a multiple-wave prospective panel design where the data collection points were established at the beginning of their studies at university and less than three months in Australia (trying to match it also as close to the time when subjects arrived in Australia) (T1), after four months (T2), and after eight months (T3) of their sojourn (De Vaus, 2001).

The value of approaching this study from a panel perspective has been strongly advocated by several researchers in this area (Cross, 1995; Kealy, 1989; Ward et al., 1998). They commended the benefits of this method in contrast to research with international students that traditionally employed cross-sectional perspectives. Cross-sectional methods cannot claim that subjects' changes over time were due to individual changes or that inter-group differences were influenced by pre-existing differences between groups (Ying & Liese, 1991).

This longitudinal study ascertained the influence of variables such as:

- ethnic identity using the Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) developed by Phinney (1992),

- acculturative stress measured by the Social Attitudinal Familial Environmental (SAFE) scale developed by Mena et al. (1987),

- stressors such as daily hassles measured by the Brief College Student Hassles Scale (BCSHS), developed by Blankstein, Flett, and Koledin (1991),

- social support assessed by the Network Orientation Scale (NOS) developed by Vaux (1985),

- coping measured by the Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced (COPE) scale and developed by Carver et al. (1989), and

- coping effectiveness as assessed by the Hopkins Symptom Checklist 21 items (HSCL-21) and adapted by Green, Walkey, McCormick, and Taylor (1988). This scale was used as a measure of distress.

2.4. Instruments.

Using Western-developed scales to measure stress variables in Eastern populations is by all accounts a hazardous activity. This is particularly the case when measuring factors in a scale where dimensionality differences between Eastern and Western approaches need to be taken into consideration (Hwang et al., 2002).

In view of the above, all efforts were taken to include instruments previously used in cross-cultural research and with sound psychometric properties. This section describes the instruments used with details of their psychometric properties.

2.4.1 The Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) (k = 12)

This is a scale for the assessment of ethnic identity developed by Phinney (1992; see Section 2 of Appendix B). In the current study, this scale was only presented to international students. The MEIM is a 12-item scale with responses ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree. Based on recent research (Roberts et al., 1999), the MEIM assesses factors such as ethnic behaviours (social relationship with own group and participation in cultural traditions), affirmation and belonging (attachment and attitudes towards own group, pride at belonging to one's own ethnic group) ethnic identity achievement (awareness, understanding and commitment to own ethnic group) and attitudes to other ethnic groups.

The overall MEIM has a reliability alpha of .90 for college students as established by Phelps, Taylor and Gerard (2001). The reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) for samples of university students as established by Phinney (1992) are .86 for affirmation subscale, .80 for ethnic identity achievement and .74 for orientation towards other ethnic groups.

2.4.2. The Network Orientation Scale (NOS) (k = 20)

The Network Orientation Scale developed by Vaux (1985) was modelled on the views introduced by Tolsdorf (1976). Tolsdorf's concept of a negative network orientation highlighted the person's belief that it was inappropriate, inadvisable or even dangerous to draw on network resources. People with negative orientations were less

inclined to seek support and had smaller support networks, whilst people with a positive

network orientation expressed nurturing attitudes, trust and affiliation. Overall, this

measure assessed a set of given negative expectations that impacted on network

mobilisation. NOS was useful in research appraising the transactions established between

the individual and his/her support network.

The NOS is a 20-item scale which measures the following factors related to social

support:

- Independence-availability: An assessment of own feelings and evaluation of needs
  for developing social support

- History: An exploration of previous experience of seeking social support

- Mistrust: Personal attitude towards others and assessment of trust

Negative network orientation was associated with smaller supportive networks,

scarce demonstrations of supportive behaviour from others, and more negative

perceptions of support. Positive network orientation was linked to affiliation, trust,

nurturance and a feminine sex-role orientation.

The NOS has shown good criterion validity and internal consistency (Vaux, 1985).

This scale has been used in several cross-cultural studies (Vaux, Burda & Stewart, 1986)

in an attempt to assess internal consistency. The above authors conducted a study with

five samples to assess the reliability and validity of NOS, obtaining a mean alpha of .74

and ranging from .60 to .88. It showed good stability in two out of three tests administered over one, two and three weeks intervals ($r = .85, .87$ and .81).

Subjects responded on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). Scores for the positive items were reversed and then totalled to obtain a negative orientation network score. As a result, a higher score means that there was a negative, and a lower score a positive orientation towards one's network of support (see Section 2 of Appendix A for local students and Section 3 of Appendix B for international students).

2.4.3. The Social, Attitudinal, Familial, Environmental (SAFE) Scale (k = 26)

Developed by Mena et al. (1987) the SAFE is an accurate measure of acculturative stress affecting four broad areas of immigrant interaction with the host society. These areas of challenging interaction, as hypothesised by Mena et al. were as follows:

- the quality of new arrival's social life in the host culture
- the new arrival's opinion about their original culture
- their relationship with their own family and particularly with their parents, and
- features of the new environment.

There are two versions of this scale currently being used for research purposes: the original 24-item (Mena et al., 1987) and the 26-item version (Hovey & King, 1996) used in this current study (see Section 4 of Appendix B). In the current study, this scale was

only presented to international students. Responses were presented on Likert scales with levels of stress ranging from 0 (have not experienced) to 5 (extremely stressful). No items are reverse-scored, and all items are summed to produce an overall score.

The SAFE has been used in cross-cultural studies. It has been administered to Asian American and international students, showing a high reliability score of .89 (Mena et al., 1987). Further, Fuertes and Westbrook (1996) administered the SAFE to Hispanic college students in the United States, and their results show the SAFE to be a reliable and valid measure of acculturative stress (Cronbach's alpha for the overall SAFE scale = .89). Hovey (2000) advocated the use of the SAFE as a specific sensitive measure of acculturative stress rather than a general measure of stress.

2.4.4. Coping Orientations to Problems Experienced (COPE) (k = 28).

The COPE scale was developed by Carver et al. (1989). It was selected for this study because it is not so heavily influenced by the dichotomy of problem vs. emotion-focused coping strategies as proposed by Lazarus (1991). Although the Carver et al. coping scale was inspired by the model of stress proposed by Lazarus, its theoretical underpinnings are rooted to their own model of behavioural self-regulation. This measure tries to reflect the multidimensional structure of coping and acknowledges the heterogeneous range of coping strategies presented in response to stress (Carver et al.). A coping scale which allows a classification of internal and external coping strategies was

shown to be more appropriate for the assessment of coping with Chinese groups (Shek & Cheung, 1990).

The original COPE scale was developed in reaction to empirical approaches measuring the coping construct. According to Carver et al., (1989) there was a need to develop a theoretically based coping scale, as most of the previous instruments were empirically based. The full 52-item version of the COPE has been used in several cross-cultural studies, as well as the 28-item version used here (Carver et al., 1989; Honey et al., 2003; Surmann, 1999). An Italian version of the COPE confirmed a similar factor structure for the Italian population (Sica, Novara, Dorz, & Sanavio, 1997).

The COPE scale measures how people cope with stress in their lives. As such the COPE can be used as a situational measure assessing changes in coping over time and in varying circumstances. It has been recommended as a tool for measuring coping through the acculturative stress process (Fillion, Kovacs, Gagnon, & Endler, 2002). The COPE assesses the extent to which a particular coping strategy is used (Carver, 1997). It is presented on Likert scales ranging from 1 (I have not been doing this at all), 2 (I have been doing this a little bit), 3 (I have been doing this a medium amount), and 4 (I have been doing this a lot) (see Section 3 of Appendix A for local students and Section 5 of Appendix B for international students).

There are two items for each of the 14 subscales as computed without reversing of scores, as follows:

- Acceptance

- Active coping

- Behavioural disengagement

- Denial

- Humour

- Planning

- Positive Reframing

- Religion

- Self-blame

- Self-distraction

- Substance abuse

- Use of emotional support

- Use of instrumental support

- Venting

The COPE was used to assess coping in Canadian breast cancer patients (Fillion et al., 2002). It showed good construct, convergent, and criterion validity when correlated with other instruments assessing strategies for coping with illness. The COPE factor analysis resulted in eight factors which were then named active coping, disengagement coping, using emotional support from husband/partner, emotional support from friends, humour, using religion, self-distraction, and substance-use coping. Furthermore, COPE results confirmed that specific coping strategies were associated with specific mood

states. In particular, disengagement was highly associated with anxiety, depression and anger (Fillion et al.).

2.4.5. Hopkins Symptom Checklist -21 Items (HSCL-21) (k = 21).

The HSCL-21, adapted by Green et al. (1988), was selected for this study due to its sensitivity to assess distress in populations from different ethnic backgrounds. Cepeda-Benito and Gleaves (2000) found that the discriminant validity of the three factors assessed by the HSCL-21 (the psychological, performance and somatic distress factors) were appropriate to capture the diverse ethnic presentation of psychological distress. As Fabrega (1995) reported, some Asian and Latin American groups somatise their psychological distress more than Western groups do.

The HSCL-21 is based on the HSCL-58 first developed by Derogatis, Lipman, Rickels, Uhlenhuth, and Covi (1974). It was originally developed as a measure of neurotic symptoms. Cepeda-Benito and Gleaves (2000) reported that the HSCL-21 appears to be a valid and reliable measure of psychological distress across ethnic groups with an internal consistency of .80. These authors used confirmatory factor analysis to measure the invariance of the HSCL-21 across three ethnic groups and found them equivalent, thus supporting the construct validity of this measure and concluding that the HSCL-21 keeps its three-factor structure across diverse ethnic groups of college students. The HSCL-21 has been used in cross-cultural studies (Chi-Ying Chun, Bemak, & Wong, 2000). The

simplified HSCL-21 version has therefore demonstrated the advantages of brevity and a stable factor structure.

Participants indicate their ratings on a Likert scale from 1 (not at all experienced) to 4 (extremely distressing). The HSCL-21 provides a general score of psychological distress and three subscales of seven items each (see Section 4 of Appendix A for local students and Section 6 of Appendix B for international students). Green et al. (1988) described the following subscales and reliabilities for the HSCL-21:

- General Feelings of Distress (GFD, alpha = .86),

- Somatic Distress (SD, alpha = .75) and

- Performance Difficulty (PD, alpha = 85).

The reliability for the total scale was .91. The GFD and PD have been used alone, obtaining a reliability score of .80 (Birman, Trickett, & Vinokurov, 2002).

2.4.6. The Brief College Student Hassles Scale (BCSHS) (k = 20).

This instrument, developed by Blankstein et al. (1991), was selected because it is a university-specific assessment tool. It was developed to assess the daily hassles experienced by university students. The 20-item BCSHS (see Section 5 of Appendix A for local students and Section 7 of Appendix B for international students) described hassles by their persistence and duration during the past month. Subjects responded on 7-point Likert-type scales that ranged from 1 (no hassle, not at all persistent) to 7 (extremely

persistent hassle, high frequency and/or duration). A number of areas were explored, including academic, future security, work, financial, environmental, household, family and personal appearance.

This instrument has two main attributes: (1) brevity and (2) specificity to the university population. The authors indicated that this instrument has good internal consistency for research purposes (alpha= .81).

2.4.7. Self-Rating of Confidence in the English Language (K = 4).

English knowledge and usage influences international students' confidence to adjust in the host culture. Brislin (1981) noted that language competence is one of the most important skills for successful adjustment in a host culture. It has been reported that including a few questions about confidence in English may provide a satisfactory indication of the acculturation level (Norris, Ford, & Bova, 1996; Wallen, Feldman, & Anliker, 2002). In the current study, this competency in English was assessed by asking international students to rate their level of English proficiency in such skills as speaking and reading. A four-item rating scale based on the findings of Wallen et al. was presented to participants. These questions did not relate to actual ability but the international student's perception of English language competency (see items 7, 8, 15, and 16 of Section 1, Appendix B).

2.4.8. Self-Ratings of Health Status (K = 2), Emotional Well-Being (K = 1) and Willingness to Visit a Counsellor (K = 1).

In the present study, self-ratings of students' health status (Hudd et al., 2000), and number of recent visits to a medical practitioner were used as indicators of students' overall health status (see items 15 and 16 of Section 1, Appendix A for local students and items 17 and 18 of Section 1, Appendix B for international students). A self-rating item on mental well-being (see item 17 of Section 1, Appendix A for local students and item 19 of Section 1, Appendix B for international students) and willingness to see a counsellor for emotional difficulties (see item 18 of Section 1, Appendix A for local students and item 20 of Section 1, Appendix B for international students) were also included. Students' reporting willingness to see a counsellor provided an index of acceptance for seeking professional help with mental health problems. It is also acknowledged that many students prefer to approach peers, mentors, academics, religious leaders and university administrators when experiencing emotional difficulties.

2.5. Longitudinal Perspective on the Study of Acculturative Stress.

Longitudinal panel research serves a number of purposes in the study of the acculturative stress experience. Firstly, it allows stress to be studied using the same measures administered at different points of the stress process, with the potential to test causal hypotheses. Secondly, by introducing a constant and fairly short time lag between administrations; the several facets of the acculturative stress experience are better comprehended. Thirdly, predictions about the time course of the acculturative stress

experience can be made by enlisting participants from the beginning of their university studies and studying their changes over time (Zapft, Dormann, & Frese, 1996).

Furthermore, according to Ryan and Twibell (2000), a longitudinal design is central in assessing the impact of stressful experiences (in this case the acculturative stress experience) so that predictive inferences can be drawn with the view of designing intervention strategies that may facilitate the better adjustment of international students in the new culture.

To understand stresses experienced by sojourners through their adjustment in the host culture, a longitudinal approach is constantly recommended in the literature (Eshel & Rosenthal-Sokolov, 2000; Ward, et al., 2001). According to Eshel et al. sojourners require several months to come to terms with the complexities of being in a new cultural environment, acknowledging the personal impact of being in the host society and developing a comfortable and realistic evaluation of the process they had been through.

The intensity of the acculturative stress experienced by sojourners led to a more confident adjustment in the host society. De Verthelyi (1995) conducted a study of acculturative stress on spouses of international students, confirming that experiencing stress at the beginning of the sojourn resulted in a more positive acculturation to the host society. Stress and other symptoms of psychological distress were followed by positive changes in mood after 3-6 months of arrival in the host culture. This confirmed Kim's view (1988) that in time, sojourners became more contented with their new surroundings.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

3.1. Overview.

The initial section of the Results presents the steps conducted in the preparation of the data. It includes information on the selective attrition of participants and how this impacted the analysis of the data, outliers, distributions of the variables, information about reliability of measures and decision to use the total scores for ethnic identity (MEIM), and psychological distress (HSCL-21) in view of the high correlations between subscales. The overall daily hassles score did not separate academic from non-academic stressors; therefore, items were sorted into the above two subscales and correlations were calculated. Correlations between the 14 subscales of the brief COPE were also calculated, leading to further factor analysis of the scale.

Next, some descriptive data are presented. Descriptive statistics are presented in relation to two groups of variables: first, participants' socio-demographic data and second, statistics on self-ratings of proficiency in the English language, overall health, mental well-being and willingness to see a counsellor for emotional difficulties are presented. The socio-demographic data includes frequency distributions for the overall sample at intake and all those who completed the three waves of assessment.

The Results section continues with hypotheses testing with details of the various levels of analysis of data, namely univariate, bivariate and multivariate levels. The univariate level of analysis includes changes over time on variables of interest such as ethnic identity, acculturative stress, network orientation towards support, coping, daily hassles and psychological distress. A factor analysis was performed on the subscales of COPE, and a description of changes over time for the new subscales is presented. As part of the univariate level of analysis, a within-subjects analysis was performed to appraise changes over time for only those participants who completed the three waves of assessment.

Bivariate analyses with concurrent correlations were also conducted. Correlations were calculated between acculturative stress and psychological distress, and between acculturative stress, psychological distress and daily hassles. Finally, the results of a multivariate level of analysis are reported, including concurrent predictive and moderating effect analyses using model-reduction regression analyses.

3.2. Preparation of Data.

3.2.1. Distribution of Data.

The frequencies of all variables were examined to assess for the presence of outliers. No transformation of the data was needed, and no violations of normality were detected. In view of the normality of the distributions, parametric statistics were used to

perform all further analyses. Information on means, standard deviations, theoretical and observed range and alpha scores for Indonesians are presented in Table 4, for the Chinese in Table 5, and for Australians in Table 6. The seven last variables in tables 4, 5 and 6 are the results of Factor Analysis performed on the original 14 subscales of the COPE scale as can be seen on table 13, 14 and 15.

As noted in the methodology section, scoring of the Network Orientation Towards Support (NOS) resulted in higher scores for participants who had a more negative orientation towards support. However, to keep it congruent with other scales used in this study, total NOS scores were inverted in such a way that higher scores represented a more positive orientation towards support.

Due to the nature of information requested from participants on the substance use subscale, the distribution was not normal, as the majority reported using few or no substances. Hence, the substance use COPE subscale was dichotomised into use/non-use of substances from the original four levels of substance use. Following this procedure, scores on this subscale still heavily concentrated on denial of any such use; however, this did not interfere with further analysis of the data.

Table 4

Means, standard deviations, theoretical and observed ranges and alpha scores for Indonesian participants at T1, T2, and T3

Scales			Indonesians								
			T1 (N = 277)			T2 (N = 79)			T3 (N = 41)		
	α	TR	M	SD	OR	M	SD	OR	M	SD	OR
Ethnic search	.65 - .71	5 - 25	15.30	3.30	5-25	15.99	3.27	7-25	16.46	3.07	11-25
Ethnic affirmation	.83 - .86	7 - 35	24.80	4.48	7-35	25.46	4.62	15-35	25.54	4.39	17-35
Ethnic identity	.81 - .85	12 - 60	40.11	6.88	19-57	41.44	7.06	25-60	42.00	6.40	30-56
Academic hassles	.75 - .78	5 - 49	19.66	6.60	5-35	20.18	6.78	5-35	19.78	6.80	5-32
Non-academic hassles	.85 - .87	15 - 105	47.80	16.98	15-98	47.25	14.79	18-74	49.71	15.73	18-80
Daily hassles	.89 -.91	21 140	67.39	22.07	21-125	67.40	19.97	21-125	69.49	21.40	28.110
Acculturative stress	90 - .91	0 - 130	44.11	19.81	6-114	45.35	20.39	3-104	44.63	19.14	6-77
Distress	.93 - 94	21 - 84	44.94	13.48	21-80	45.69	13.61	21-76	43.46	14.22	21-76
Network of Support	.63 - 69	20 - 80	45.98	5.08	28-63	46.23	4.70	30-59	45.20	5.17	31-59
Problem focus	.76 - .83	8 -32	24.95	3.86	13-32	24.92	3.70	16-32	25.18	3.76	13-31
Support seeking	.79 - .81	4 - 16	11.38	2.65	4-16	11.51	2.32	4-16	12.10	2.64	7-16
Avoidance	.69 - .76	4 - 16	6.21	1.79	4-12	6.26	1.87	4-12	6.62	2.26	4-13
Substance use	.88 - .89	2 - 8	1.10	0.31	1-2	1.10	0.31	1-2	1.15	0.37	1-2
Religion	.77 - .84	2 - 8	6.28	1.75	2-8	6.36	1.81	2-8	6.56	1.50	4-8
Self-blame	.60 - .63	2 - 8	4.56	1.60	2-8	4.62	1.44	2-8	4.80	1.40	2-8
Humour	.77 - .80	2 - 8	4.79	1.67	2-8	5.10	1.73	2-8	4.92	1.68	2-8

Note. First column presents the scales. Find subscales in normal font and scales in bold font. Last seven in the list are subscales of coping.
OR: Observed range and TR: theoretical range. The alphas reported are from the lowest to the highest across T1, T2 and T3.

Table 5

Means, standard deviations, theoretical and observed ranges and alpha scores for Chinese participants at T1, T2, and T3

| Scales | Chinese | | | | | | | | |
| | T1 (N = 558) | | | T2 (N = 152) | | | T3 (N = 69) | | |
	M	SD	OR	M	SD	OR	M	SD	OR
Ethnic search	16.26	2.99	7-25	16.75	2.99	9-25	16.53	2.86	10-23
Ethnic affirmation	26.46	4.17	10-35	26.72	3.95	14-35	26.70	3.72	18-35
Ethnic identity	42.73	6.35	20-60	43.47	6.24	26-59	43.23	6.06	31-58
Academic hassles	17.97	6.06	5-35	18.16	6.33	5-35	17.68	6.33	7-33
Non-academic hassles	44.70	15.72	15-105	48.48	16.10	16-89	46.59	14.81	17-71
Daily hassles	62.66	20.38	20-140	66.64	21.26	23-121	64.28	19.83	31-99
Acculturative stress	42.07	17.82	3-96	42.80	16.12	7-86	44.93	16.85	9-99
Distress	40.38	10.35	21-79	41.28	11.49	21-75	42.54	11.28	24-76
Network of Support	46.83	4.50	26-68	46.72	4.08	30-61	47.41	4.86	36-62
Problem focus	24.42	3.87	8-32	24.33	3.10	9-32	24.14	3.57	16-32
Support seeking	10.90	2.24	4-16	11.59	1.81	4-16	11.29	2.17	4-16
Avoidance	6.36	1.94	4-15	6.84	1.81	4-12	7.29	2.39	4-13
Substance use	1.10	0.30	1-2	1.22	0.42	1-2	1.28	0.45	1-2
Religion	3.93	1.60	2-8	4.12	1.59	2-8	4.35	1.76	2-8
Self-blame	4.57	1.47	2-8	4.48	1.21	2-8	4.42	1.32	2-8
Humour	4.42	1.46	2-8	4.41	1.58	2-8	4.46	1.52	2-8

Note. First column presents the scales; subscales in normal font and scales in bold font. Last seven in the list are subscales of coping.
    OR: Observed range. The alphas reported are from the lowest to the highest across T1, T2 and T3.

Table 6

Means, standard deviations, theoretical and observed ranges and alpha scores for Australian participants at T1, T2, and T3

| Scales | Australians | | | | | | | | |
| | T1 (N = 139) | | | T2 (N = 60) | | | T3 (N = 37) | | |
	M	SD	OR	M	SD	OR	M	SD	OR
Academic hassles	17.51	5.91	5-31	18.02	6.29	7-32	18.83	6.98	6-33
Non-academic hassles	45.50	16.72	15-87	47.12	18.79	17-88	49.25	16.09	19-86
Daily hassles	62.84	20.83	23-109	65.03	23.29	28-120	67.97	21.33	25-114
Distress	38.73	12.05	21-76	37.27	10.60	21-68	41.16	13.15	21-73
Network of Support	43.80	6.23	27-62	42.92	6.03	29-55	42.81	5.91	31-61
Problem focus	22.24	3.98	11-31	22.73	3.70	15-29	22.51	4.34	15-31
Support seeking	11.89	2.38	4-16	11.03	3.24	5-16	11.49	2.60	7-16
Avoidance	5.32	1.27	4-13	6.14	2.20	4-12	6.22	1.80	4-10
Substance use	1.27	0.45	1-2	1.32	0.47	1-2	1.41	0.50	1-2
Religion	4.24	2.02	2-8	4.32	2.12	2-8	4.19	2.12	2-8
Self-blame	4.32	1.56	2-8	5.08	1.61	2-8	5.16	1.69	2-8
Humour	4.05	1.53	2-8	4.14	1.58	2-8	4.22	1.57	2-8

Note. First column presents the scales. Find subscales in normal font and scales in bold font. Last seven in the list are subscales of coping.
   OR: Observed range. The alphas reported are from the lowest to the highest across T1, T2 and T3.

3.3. Selective Attrition.

A grand total of 974 participants completed T1, 291 participants completed T2 and 148 completed T3. The large attrition rate through T2 and T3 compared with T1 poses the concern whether attrition is an indication of reluctance to participate in this study, transience in accommodation (hence high failure rate of follow-up questionnaires to reach participants), excessive academic or stress pressures interfering with students' willingness to complete this study or basically a random decision to withdraw from participation in this study.

Considering that the sample at intake was much larger than the one who responded to the three waves of assessment, analysis to control for selective attrition was undertaken. The purpose was to determine if the sample responding only at T1 was different to the sample responding at T2 and T3 other than by chance. Multiple analyses of variance were conducted, and there were no significant sample differences between students who did only T1, T1 and T2, and T1-T3. All together, 24 ANOVAS were conducted, and at a significance value of .05, the accepted alpha level was .05/24 = .002. No value was smaller or equal to .002, which showed that the 24 ANOVAS were nonsignificant. Hence, the reasons why some participants did not follow through at T2 and T3 had no systematic bearing on the variables of interest in this study. Therefore, the whole data sample was kept for further analyses (see Table 7).

Table 7

MANOVAS comparing students who completed only T1 and/or T2 and T3

Variables of interest		df	SS	MS	F
Ethnic Search	Between Groups	2	54.62	27.31	2.80
	Within Groups	830	8096.85	9.76	
Ethnic affirmation	Between Groups	2	109.08	54.54	2.91
	Within Groups	830	15583.52	18.78	
Ethnic identity	Between Groups	2	304.73	152.37	3.47
	Within Groups	830	36419.27	43.88	
Network Orientation	Between Groups	2	46.68	23.34	1.05
	Within Groups	832	18436.21	22.16	
Acculturative stress	Between Groups	2	441.75	220.87	.64
	Within Groups	830	284733.31	343.05	
HSCL-PD subscale	Between Groups	2	23.47	11.73	.65
	Within Groups	832	15057.76	18.09	
HSCL-GFD subscale	Between Groups	2	63.66	31.83	1.48
	Within Groups	832	17883.04	21.49	
HSCL-SD subscale	Between Groups	2	24.39	12.20	.64
	Within Groups	832	15848.22	19.05	
HSCL Distress Scale	Between Groups	2	258.15	129.07	.95
	Within Groups	832	113416.05	136.32	
Daily Hassles	Between Groups	2	1197.24	598.62	1.35
	Within Groups	831	368341.48	443.25	
Self-disclosure coping	Between Groups	2	1.84	.92	.45
	Within Groups	832	1711.71	2.06	
Active coping	Between Groups	2	7.07	3.54	1.99
	Within Groups	832	1473.37	1.77	
Denial coping	Between Groups	2	4.97	2.49	1.56
	Within Groups	832	1329.04	1.59	
Substance-use coping	Between Groups	2	4.49	2.24	2.50
	Within Groups	832	745.95	.89	
Emotional support coping	Between Groups	2	8.33	4.16	2.18
	Within Groups	832	1592.18	1.91	
Instrumental-support coping	Between Groups	2	1.10	.55	.29
	Within Groups	832	1546.68	1.86	
Behavioral disengagement	Between Groups	2	7.64	3.82	2.63
	Within Groups	832	1208.74	1.45	
Venting coping	Between Groups	2	1.82	.91	.48
	Within Groups	832	1565.78	1.88	
Positive-reframing coping	Between Groups	2	7.57	3.79	2.07
	Within Groups	832	1518.63	1.83	
Planning coping	Between Groups	2	10.33	5.16	3.06
	Within Groups	832	1406.08	1.69	
Humour coping	Between Groups	2	3.023	1.51	.56
	Within Groups	832	2232.39	2.68	
Acceptance coping	Between Groups	2	20.93	10.46	5.90
	Within Groups	832	1480.15	1.78	
Religion coping	Between Groups	2	15.97	7.98	2.19
	Within Groups	832	3039.19	3.65	
Self-blame coping	Between Groups	2	.06	.03	.014
	Within Groups	832	1729.76	2.08	

NOTE: Test significance established as it follows: .05/ 24 = .002.

*$p < .05$.   **$p < .01$.   ***$p < .0001$.

3.4. Reliability of Measures.

All measures used in this study showed moderate to high levels of reliability (see Table 8).

Table 8

Cronbach's alphas for measures used in this study

Scale	k	T1	T2	T3
Ethnic Identity (MEIM)	12	.83	.85	.83
Network of Support (NOS)	20	.66	.69	.63
Acculturative Stress (SAFE)	26	.90	.91	.90
Brief Coping (COPE)	28	.82	.80	.81
Daily Hassles (BCSHS)	20	.90	.91	.89
Distress (HSCL-21)	21	.93	.94	.93

3.5. Correlations between Subscales.

In the following section correlations between subscales of ethnic identity, daily hassles, distress and COPE are described which justified the decision to use the total score for further data results analysis and the calculation of a factor analysis on the COPE scale.

3.5.1. Correlations between Ethnic Identity Subscales.

The two subscales of the ethnic identity scale, namely ethnic search and ethnic affirmation correlated highly with the overall scale. Therefore, the overall score was used to calculate further correlations. The same pattern was observed for T1, T2, and T3 (see Table 9).

Table 9

Correlation between subscales of Ethnic identity for T1, T2, and T3

Ethnic Identity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Ethnic search (T1)		.57	.84	.47	.33	.43	.47	.37	.46
2. Ethnic affirmation (T1)			.92	.35	.55	.52	.40	.49	.51
3. Ethnic identity overall score (T1)				.45	.51	.54	.48	.48	.54
4. Ethnic search (T2)					**.60**	**.86**	.58	.45	.56
5. Ethnic affirmation (T2)						**.93**	.37	.66	.60
6. Ethnic identity total score (T2)							.52	.65	.66
7. Ethnic search (T3)								**.58**	**.85**
8. Ethnic affirmation (T3)									**.92**
9. Ethnic identity total score (T3)									

a. All correlations were significant at $p < .01$.
b. Contemporaneous correlations are in bold.

3.5.2. Correlations between Academic and Non-Academic Daily Hassles Subscales.

The daily hassles scale produces an overall total score which ignores the distinction between academic/non-academic concerns relevant to Hypotheses A5. Five items from the overall scale were identified as representing academic concerns, while 15 were considered to be other than academic concerns (see Table 10 for correlations between these subscales of daily hassles.)

Table 10

Correlation between academic and non-academic subscales of daily hassles

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Academic worries (T1)		.52**	.54**	.69**	.35**	.48**
2. Academic worries (T2)			.62**	.36**	.65**	.42**
3. Academic worries (T3)				.36*	.45**	.77**
4. Non-academic worries (T1)					.50**	.61**
5. Non-academic worries (T2)						.49**
6. Non-academic worries (T3)						

**Correlations significant at p < .01.

*Correlations significant at p < .05.

3.5.3. Correlations between Distress Subscales.

The HSCL-21 total score (Distress scale) was highly correlated with its three subscales, namely Psychological Distress (PD), General Feelings of Distress (GFD) and Somatic Distress (SD). Therefore, further correlation analysis only used the HSCL total instead of the subscales. The same pattern was observed for T1, T2, and T3. (see Table 11).

3.5.4. Correlations of Subscales of Coping.

Correlations were high for groups of subscales of COPE. Active coping correlated highly with positive reframing, planning and acceptance; denial correlated with behavioural disengagement; emotional support with instrumental support; while venting, religion, self-blame, humour, self-distraction, and substance abuse stood alone (see Table 12). In view of high correlations between the 14 subscales of the brief COPE, a factor analysis was conducted which resulted on a seven-factor solution that is presented in Tables 13, 14 and 15.

Table 11

Correlations between subscales of HSCL-21 for T1, T2, and T3

HSCL-21 Distress Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Performance difficulty (T1)	α = .83	.70	.62	.88	.58	.39	.35	.50	.57	.35	.44	.52
2. General feelings of distress (T1)		α = .87	.63	.90	.39	.50	.33	.47	.41	.51	.33	.48
3. Somatic distress (T1)			α = .85	.85	.40	.29	.45	.43	.45	.29	.58	.51
4. HSCL overall score (T1)				α = .93	.54	.47	.44	.55	.56	.46	.53	.60
5. Performance difficulty (T2)					α = .86	.66	.64	.87	.71	.46	.54	.66
6. General feelings of distress (T2)						α = .88	.63	.88	.53	.69	.38	.61
7. Somatic distress (T2)							α = .89	.87	.56	.48	.68	.66
8. HSCL overall score (T2)								α = .94	.69	.63	.62	.74
9. Performance difficulty (T3)									α = .83	.66	.70	.90
10. General feelings of distress (T3)										α = .87	.55	.84
11. Somatic distress (T3)											α = .88	.87
12. HSCL overall score (T3)												α = .93

All correlations were significant at $p < .01$.

Table 12

Correlation between subscales of T1 brief-COPE

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Self-disclosure		.18**	.13**	.04	.25**	.24**	.14**	.24**	.30**	.25**	.22**	.22**	.20**	.30**
2. Active-coping			-.04	-.14**	.26**	.28**	-.17**	.18**	.40**	.46**	.19**	.38**	.18**	.15**
3. Denial				.26**	.02	.017	.50**	.20**	-.025	.00	.11**	-09**	.10**	.29**
4. Substance use					.05	-.04	.26**	.08*	-11**	-.03	.10**	-15**	-.04	.16**
5. Emotional support						.61**	.05	.36**	.30**	.21**	.17**	.24**	.16**	.16**
6. Instrumental support							.02	.39**	.33**	.28**	.18**	.30**	.21**	.16**
7. Behavioural disengagement								.20**	-.07*	-.06	.04	-.10**	.07*	.30**
8. Venting									.24**	.18**	.24**	.22**	.11**	.26**
9. Positive reframing										.42**	.34**	.46**	.25**	.09**
10. Planning											.17**	.43**	.23**	.30**
11. Humour												.29**	.15**	.17**
12. Acceptance													.19**	.16**
13. Religion														.22**
14. Self-blame														

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

3.5.4.1. Coping Factor Analysis. COPE Subscales T1, T2 and T3.

A principal components analysis with varimax rotation was used to examine the factor composition of the COPE subscales at T1. Eight components, illustrated by the scree plot, with eigenvalues greater than 1 were found. These eight factors explained 45.8% of the total variance. Of the eight factors three were similar to those reported by Honey et al. (2003). In the current study it was decided to keep seven of the eight factors. The names for the three factors which Honey et al. had found to have multiple loadings of different coping strategies were maintained. Active coping, planning, positive reframing and acceptance comprised Problem-focused Coping. Acceptance was not included in Honey et al.'s Problem-focused factor but was included here, as it shares similarities with this factor. The second factor was Support-seeking Coping (emotional and instrumental support), the third Avoidance Coping (denial and behaviour disengagement). The stand-alone subscales of the original 28-item COPE scale constituted the other four factors. These factors are Humour, Religion, Self-blame, and Substance Use (see Table 13). For T2 nine factors explained 50% of the total variance, and similarly for T1, seven factors were grouped together (see Table 14). For T3, eight factors explained 54% of the total variance (see Table 15). The factor structure appears to be robust across T1, T2 and T3.

Note that following the recommendations of Briggs and MacCallum (2003), the ordinary least squares (OLS) method was used for parameter estimation of the above factor analysis. This method was preferred over the maximum likelihood (ML) method

due to the fact that there were many minor factors that could not have been recovered by

the ML method because all factors were not equally strong.

Table 13

Items and Factor loadings for T1 seven-factor solution for the brief COPE scale (N = 974)

Item	Factor loading						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I take action to make the situation better	.65						
14. I try to come up with a strategy about what to do	.60						
12. I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive	.52						
2. I concentrate my efforts on doing something about the situation I'm in	.51						
25. I think hard about what steps to take	.46						
24. I try to learn to live with it	.42						
10. I get help and advice from other people		.72					
23. I try to get advice or help from other people about what to do		.68					
15. I get comfort and understanding from someone		.63					
5. I get emotional support from others		.62					
8. I refuse to believe it has happened			.64				
16. I give up the attempt to cope			.62				
3. I say to myself "this isn't real"			.61				
6. I give up trying to deal with the problems			.60				
26. I blame myself for things that happen				.70			
13. I criticise myself				.42			
27. I pray or meditate					.77		
22. I try to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs					.76		
28. I make fun of the situation						.79	
18. I make jokes about it						.72	
4. I use alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better							.96
11. I use alcohol or other drugs to help get me through							.77

Table 14

Items and Factor loadings for T2 seven-factor solution for the brief-COPE scale (N = 291)

Item	Factor loading						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I try to learn to live with it	.56						
14. I try to come up with a strategy about what to do	.53						
12. I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive	.49						
7. I take action to make the situation better	.47						
17. I look for something good in what is happening	.45						
25. I think hard about what steps to take	.36						
2. I concentrate my efforts on doing something about the situation I'm in	.34						
23. I try to get advice or help from other people about what to do		.74					
5. I get emotional support from others		.71					
10. I get help and advice from other people		.68					
15. I get comfort and understanding from someone		.58					
16. I give up the attempt to cope			.66				
6. I give up trying to deal with the problems			.60				
8. I refuse to believe it has happened			.48				
3. I say to myself "this isn't real"			.47				
26. I blame myself for things that happen				.71			
13. I criticise myself				.55			
27. I pray or meditate					.99		
22. I try to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs					.69		
28. I make fun of the situation						.88	
18. I make jokes about it						.72	
11. I use alcohol or other drugs to help get me through							.88
4. I use alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better							.86

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Table 15

Items and Factor loadings for T3 seven-factor solution for the brief-COPE scale (N = 148)

Item	Factor loading						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I try to come up with a strategy about what to do	.71						
12. I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive	.66						
7. I take action to make the situation better	.63						
17. I look for something good in what is happening	.63						
24. I try to learn to live with it	.62						
2. I concentrate my efforts on doing something about the situation I'm in	.55						
20. I accept the reality of the fact that it has happened	.52						
25. I think hard about what steps to take	.44						
15. I get comfort and understanding from someone		.74					
10. I get help and advice from other people		.70					
23. I try to get advice or help from other people about what to do		.67					
5. I get emotional support from others		.64					
6. I give up trying to deal with the problems			.71				
8. I refuse to believe it has happened			.64				
16. I give up the attempt to cope			.61				
3. I say to myself "this isn't real"			.56				
13. I criticise myself				.78			
26. I blame myself for things that happen				.54			
27. I pray or meditate					.90		
22. I try to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs					.75		
28. I make fun of the situation						.72	
18. I make jokes about it						.71	
11. I use alcohol or other drugs to help get me through							.88
4. I use alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better							.83

3.6. Socio-Demographic Data.

The demographic data are summarised in Tables 16 and 17. Table 16 presents demographic data and Table 17 information on English proficiency, ratings of health, mental health and willingness to see a counsellor.

3.6.1. Demographic Data.

A grand total of 974 students completed the first wave of assessment. This grand total was broken down as follows: a total of 277 (28.4%) Indonesians, 558 (57.3%) Chinese and 139 (14.3%) Australians completed the first wave of assessment. International students from Indonesia and China were recruited from 12 Australian universities, while local students were only recruited at Macquarie University.

A grand total of 291 participants completed the second wave of assessment. This grand total was broken down as follows: 79 (27.1%) Indonesians, 152 (52.2%) Chinese and 60 (20.6%) Australians completed this phase of assessment. A grand total of 148 completed the third wave of assessment. 41 (27.7%) Indonesians, 70 (47.3%) Chinese and 37 (25.0%) Australians completed this phase of assessment. The questionnaire included a question on generation status in relation to the place where they were born. 95% of local Australian students participating in this study reported that they were at least second generation born in Australia

The majority of Indonesians and Australians were younger than 23 years of age, while Chinese were in their majority 23 years old or older. For the three groups participating in this study, a noticeable majority were female and single. Australians were mostly undergraduate students; Indonesians were more evenly divided with a slightly higher number of undergraduate students, and Chinese were predominantly postgraduate students.

Most Indonesians and Chinese depended financially on their parents, while Australians depended financially on either their family, income from their own work or Commonwealth government student support schemes. All three groups belonged to families in which most parents had completed university degrees. Indonesians and Chinese lived generally in large cities before they decided to study in Australia (see Table 16).

Table 16

Socio-demographic profile of participants per nationality

Characteristics	Indonesian		Chinese		Australian	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Age						
<23	168	60.6	180	32.3	122	87.8
>=23	109	39.4	378	67.7	17	12.2
Gender						
Male	107	38.6	175	31.4	38	27.3
Female	170	61.4	383	68.6	101	72.7
Level of Study						
Undergraduate	160	57.8	188	33.7	131	94.2
Postgraduate	117	42.2	370	66.3	8	5.8
Months in Australia						
<=3 months	148	53.4	270	48.4	0	0
>3months	129	46.6	288	51.6	139	100
Source of income						
Austudy/Abstudy	2	0.7	0	0.0	20	14.4
Family	220	79.4	507	90.9	65	46.8
Job	13	4.7	42	7.5	54	38.8
Ausaid/Scholarship	4	1.4	3	0.5	0	0.0
Other	38	13.7	6	1.1	0	0.0
Marital Status						
Single	243	87.7	505	90.5	129	92.8
Married	33	11.9	52	9.3	9	6.5
Other	1	0.4	1	0.2	1	0.7
Father's education						
Primary	26	9.4	17	3.0	9	6.5
Secondary	87	31.4	100	17.9	29	20.9
University	164	59.2	441	79.0	101	72.7
Mother's education						
Primary	37	13.4	41	7.3	7	5.0
Secondary	110	39.7	132	23.7	48	34.5
University	130	46.9	385	69.0	84	60.4
Residence in country of origin						
City 1-10million	238	85.9	511	91.7	--	--
Town 50-999,999	31	11.2	40	7.2	--	--
Town <50,000	8	2.9	5	0.9	--	--
Remote	0	0.0	1	0.2	--	--
TOTAL	277	100%	558	100%	139	100%

3.6.2. Number of Visits to GPs, Self-Rating of English Language Proficiency, Health and Mental Status.

Brief self-statements about reading and speaking English provided a general indication of the level of acculturation for international students. Although this did not provide scaled information on their level of acculturation, it was an estimate of it. Most Indonesian and Chinese students spoke a language other than English both before their sojourn in Australia and at home in Australia; however, most indicated English as their preferred language in Australia. The majority of Indonesians and Chinese participants reported confidence in their English reading skills. As an overall measure of acculturation, international students articulated their confidence and positively rated their speaking and reading English skills.

The vast majority of Indonesians, Chinese and Australians reported three or fewer visits to a general practitioner on issues related to their health in the last three months. An overall rating of their health indicated that they felt positive. When asked about the presence of psychological problems, Indonesians were more likely to say they had no psychological concerns, while Chinese and Australians reported that on occasions they had experienced psychological difficulties. Further, when asked if they would seek professional help for emotional problems, a majority of Indonesians, Chinese and Australians indicated their willingness to approach counsellors for support in time of emotional needs being present in their lives (see Table 17).

Table 17

Proficiency in English, ratings of physical and mental health per nationality

Characteristics	Indonesia		China		Australia	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Language back home						
English	4	1.4	4	0.7	139	100
Other	273	98.6	554	99.3	--	--
Language in Australia						
English	117	42.4	199	35.6	--	--
Other	160	57.6	359	64.4	--	--
Preferred language						
English	246	88.8	527	94.4	--	--
Chinese	1	0.4	31	5.6	--	--
Indonesian	30	10.8	0	0	--	--
Read English						
Good	242	87.3	392	70.2	--	--
Not good	35	12.7	166	29.8	--	--
GP's visits						
<=3	274	98.9	549	98.4	124	89.2
>3	3	1.1	9	1.6	15	10.8
Health						
Good	255	92.1	494	88.5	111	79.9
Not good	22	7.9	64	11.5	28	20.1
Psychological problems						
Not at all	149	53.8	201	36.0	61	43.9
Sometime	120	43.3	346	62.0	71	51.1
Always	2	0.7	7	1.3	6	4.3
Not know	6	2.2	4	0.7	1	0.7
Professional help						
Disagree	99	35.7	195	34.9	63	45.3
Agree	177	63.9	362	64.9	75	54.0
Not know	1	0.4	1	0.2	1	0.7

3.6.3. Difficulties in Conducting Structural Equation Model (SEM)

The author did not conduct SEM because the sample of 148 (41 Indonesians, 70 Chinese and 37 Australians) at T3 was not large enough, requiring at least 100 respondents per wave of data collection (Farrell, 1994; Hox, & Maas, 2001; Schnoll, Fang, & Manne, 2004). Only 15% of the 974 T1 respondents to the study participated in all three waves; therefore, attrition from one wave to the next was enormous (Schnoll et al., 2004). SEM is best suited to analysis of quantitative variables that are free to vary over time (Farrell, 1994). Of the three comparisons, the only one that made sense was T1-T2 because sufficient sample was available. However, it did not seem viable or effective to analyse T1-T2 alone as the result may not have shown a similar pattern as T1-T3 or T2-T3 and hence have been misleading.

The available data allowed for an examination of the proposed stress-coping model by using regression analysis to test the hypotheses (Ferrer & McArdle, 2003). Importantly, regression analysis, like SEM, offered a powerful tool to understand cause-effect relationships (Burkholder & Harlow, 2003). However, SEM provides more flexibility in the analysis of cause and effect, in such a way that a variable can be both cause and effect. Similarly, regression analysis, as per SEM, allowed the author to determine the relevance of the stress-coping model over time. It was not the purpose of this study to test the value of competing theoretical models, which has been shown to be an advantage in conducting SEM analysis (Farrell, 1994).

3.7. Hypothesis Testing.

3.7.1. Level of Analysis A: Changes Over Time, Comparison between Locals and International Students, and Between Chinese and Indonesians.

This section will report on: (1) changes over time and comparisons between international students in ethnic identity and acculturative stress by nationality (Indonesian and Chinese students) and gender; and (2) changes over time and comparisons between local and international students on Network Orientation Towards Support, daily hassles, distress and coping by nationality (Indonesians, Chinese and Australians) and gender. This section will also compare Universitas Indonesia students with Indonesian students in Australia. Furthermore, this section compares local and international students on patterns of presentation of emotional difficulties and professional help-seeking for emotional problems.

3.7.1.1. Ethnic Identity (Hypothesis A1)

Hypothesis A1: Ethnic identity scores will be lower for Indonesians compared to Chinese at T1, T2 and T3.

On studies with Asian Americans in the US, Kim-Ju and Liem (2003) found an ethnic identity mean of $M = 3.23$. Further, Gurung and Mehta (2001) found an ethnic identity mean of $M = 3.54$. In a study of ethnic identity comparing Asian Americans,

Latino Americans and African Americans the M = 2.93 (SD = 0.79) for Asian Americans

placed them as lower in ethnic identity than African Americans (M = 3.43, SD = 0.41)

and at a similar level to Latino Americans (Utsey, Chae, Brown, & Kelly, 2002). In the

current study, Indonesians scored lower than Utsey study while Chinese scored higher

than the African American group which in Utsey's et al. study showed high ethnic identity

(see Table 18).

Table 18

Means for Ethnic Identity on Utsey's et al. study and current study at T1, T2 and T3

		Indonesians'current study	Chinese's current study	Utsey's et al. study
		M	M	
Ethnic Identity	T1	3.34	3.56	3.43
	T2	3.45	3.62	
	T3	3.50	3.60	

The total of the ethnic identity scale score was used for this analysis. This

approach was taken as the correlations between the search and affirmation subscales were

high, as well as each of the subscales with the total score for ethnic identity. The same

patterns of moderate to high correlations were repeated for T1, T2 and T3 (see Table 9).

A 2 x 2 x 3 ANOVA design was used to assess means across time with gender,

nationality (Indonesia or China) and time as independent variables and ethnic identity as

the dependent variable. There was a significant interaction effect for time by nationality, $F_{(2, 104)} = 3.22$, $p = .042$. No significant main or interaction effects were found for time or gender.

A pairwise comparison showed Chinese (M = 42.88) scoring significantly higher on T1 ethnic identity ($p = .005$) than Indonesians (M = 38.61). There were no significant differences for T2 and T3 (see Figure 2).
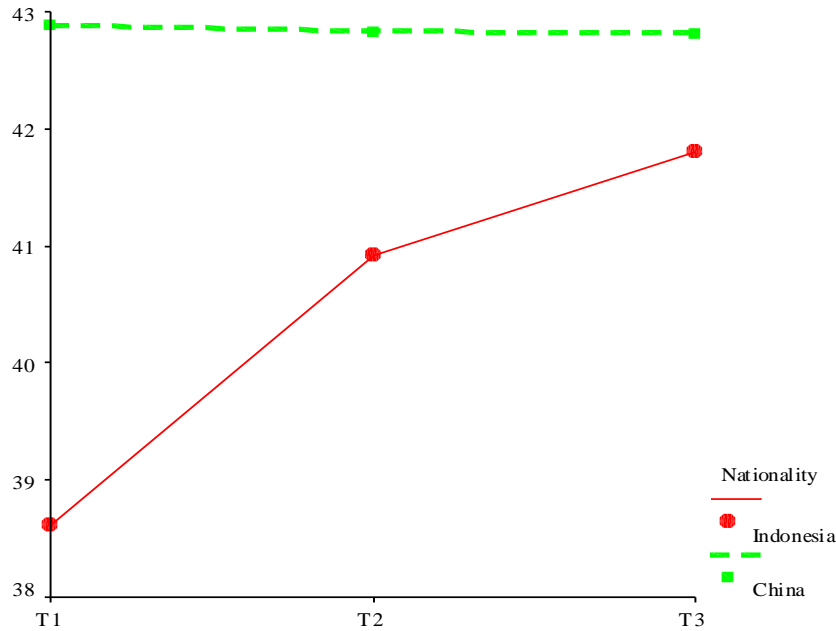
Figure 2. Ethnic Identity for Indonesian and Chinese students at T1, T2 and T3.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed at T1 only.

3.7.1.2. Acculturative Stress (Hypothesis A2).

Hypothesis A2: Acculturative stress will be higher for Indonesians compared to Chinese at T1, T2 and T3.

Previous studies on Mexican migrant farmworkers using the SAFE showed M = 2.35 (Hovey & Magana, 2002), which was higher than those obtained in this study for Indonesians and Chinese (see Table 19). Although the Hovey and Magana sample was quite different to the one used in this study, it provides a reference point. To date, there are no published reports of SAFE using Asian samples.

Table 19

Means for Acculturative Stress on Hovey & Magana's study and current study at T1, T2 and T3

		Indonesians (current study)	Chinese (current study)	Hovey & Magana's study
		M	M	
Acculturative Stress	T1	1.70	1.62	2.35
	T2	1.74	1.65	
	T3	1.71	1.72	

A 2 x 2 x 3 ANOVA design was used to assess mean differences across time with gender, nationality (Indonesia or China) and time (T1, T2, and T3) as independent

variables and acculturative stress as the dependent variable. There were no significant

main effects or interactions for time, gender or nationality (see Figure 3).
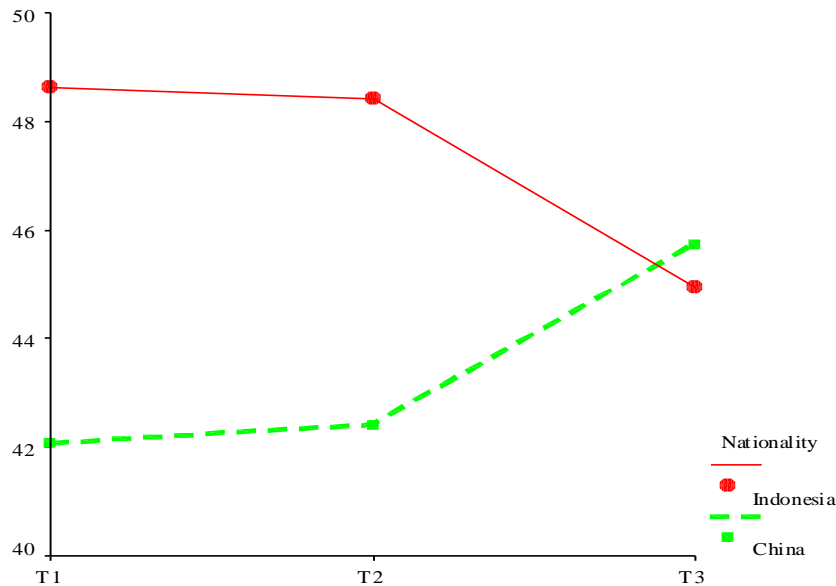
Figure 3. Acculturative Stress for Indonesian and Chinese students at T1, T2 and T3.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was not confirmed.

3.7.1.3. Network Orientation Towards Support (Hypothesis A3).

Hypothesis A3: Social support will be lower for Indonesian and Chinese students

compared to Australians at T1, T2 and T3.

NOS scores were inverted so higher scores indicated a more positive orientation

towards support, to maintain consistency with other scales used in this study. However,

for the purpose of comparing this study's means to those previously reported by Tata and

Leong (1994) the original score results were used. Tata and Leong found a M = 44.80 and SD = 5.39, Cronbach alpha = .74 for the NOS. For this study, Indonesians (M = 45.98, SD = 5.08) and Chinese (M = 46.83, SD = 4.50) showed a higher negative orientation towards support. Australians on the other hand showed a more positive orientation towards support (M = 43.80, SD = 6.23).

A 2 x 3 x 3 ANOVA design was used to assess mean differences across time with gender, nationality (Indonesia, China and Australia) and time as independent variables and Network Orientation Towards Support (NOS scale) as the dependent variable. There were significant effects for nationality, $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 7.39, $\underline{p}$ = .001 and time, $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 171.06, $\underline{p}$ = .000 (see Figure 4).

There were significant mean differences across time intervals on NOS pairwise comparisons. T1 (M = 23.50) was significantly higher ($\underline{p}$ = .000) than T2 (M = 15.81) and significantly higher ($\underline{p}$ = .000) than T3 (M = 17.08). T3 was also significantly higher ($\underline{p}$ = .003) than T2.

There were significant mean differences on T1 NOS pairwise comparisons. A pairwise comparison showed Australians (M = 26.13) scoring significantly higher on NOS ($\underline{p}$ = .010) than Indonesians (M = 22.54), and significantly higher ($\underline{p}$ = .001) than Chinese (M = 21.82). There were no significant differences between Indonesians and Chinese.

There were significant mean differences on T2 NOS pairwise comparisons. A pairwise comparison showed Australians (M = 17.62) scoring significantly higher ($\underline{p}$ = .006) than Chinese (M = 14.35). There were no significant differences between Indonesians and Chinese or Indonesian and Australians.

There were significant mean differences on T3 NOS pairwise comparisons. A pairwise comparison showed Chinese (M = 14.73) scoring significantly lower ($\underline{p}$ = .045) than Indonesians (M = 16.99), and significant lower ($\underline{p}$ = .000) than Australians (M = 19.52). There were no significant differences between Indonesians and Australians.
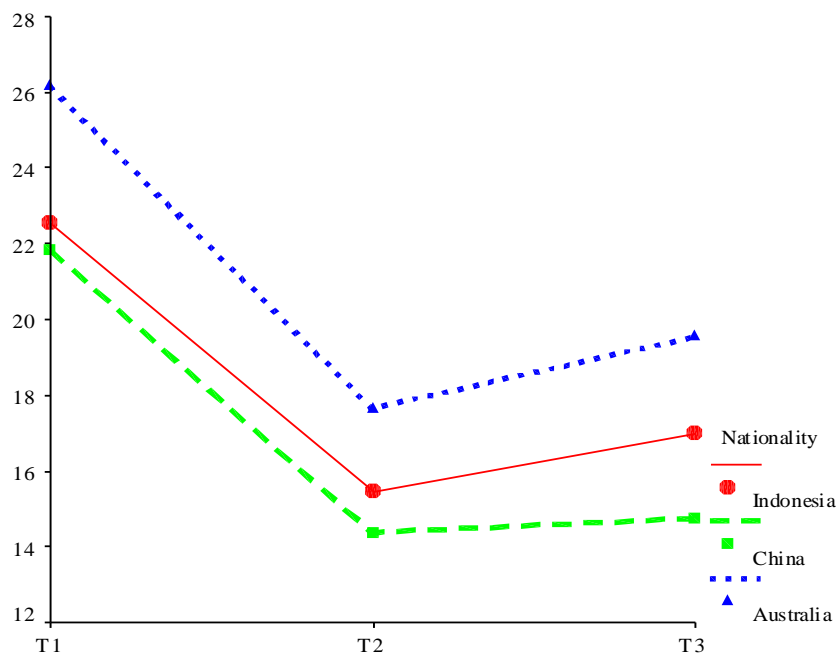
Figure 4. Network Orientation Towards Support for Indonesian, Chinese and Australian students at T1, T2 and T3.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed.

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3.7.1.4. Daily Hassles (Hypotheses A4 and A5).

Hypothesis A4: Daily hassles will be higher for Indonesians and Chinese compared to Australians at T1, T2 and T3.

A 2 x 3 x 3 ANOVA design was used to assess mean differences across time with gender, nationality (Indonesia, China and Australia) and time as independent variables and Daily Hassles (CSBHS scale) as the dependent variable. There were no significant between-subjects effects for nationality or gender. There were significant within-subjects effects for time, F (1, 139) = 3.69, p = .026. No significant interactions were found for time by gender or time by nationality (see Figure 5).

There were significant mean differences across time intervals on daily hassles. T1 (M = 60.75) was significantly lower (p = .017) compared to T2 (M = 65.58) and significantly lower (p = .024) than T3 (M = 65.63). There were no significant differences between T2 and T3.
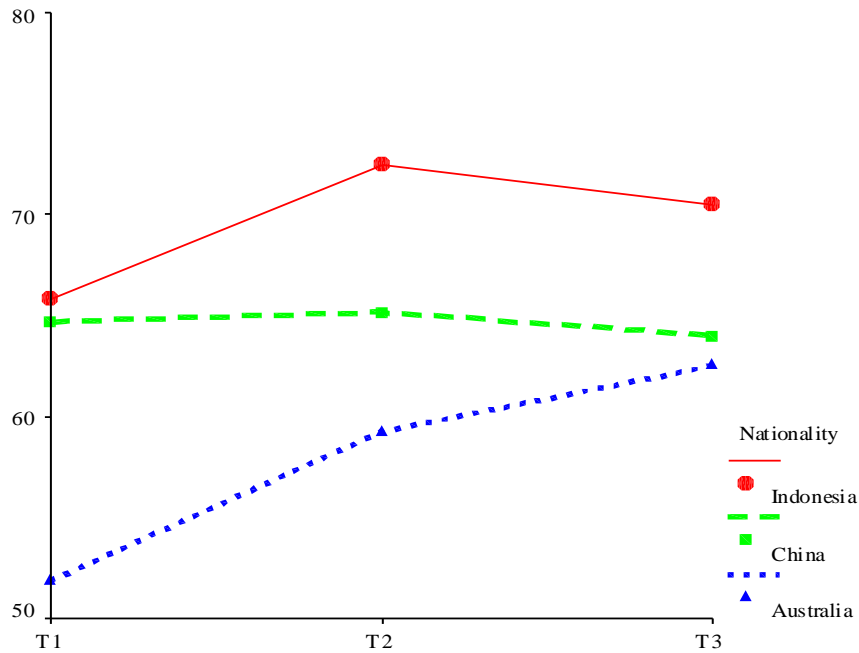
Figure 5. Daily Hassles for Indonesian, Chinese and Australian students at T1, T2 and T3.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was not confirmed. Although both international student groups experienced more daily hassles than Australian students at T1, T2 and T3, these differences were not significant.

Hypothesis A5: International students will experience more nonacademic daily hassles than local students at the beginning of their studies (T1); however, both groups (international and local students) will experience more academic daily hassles at T2 and T3 than at T1.

The Brief College Student Hassles Scale (BCSHS) was used to assess daily hassles experienced by students. This measure, however, does not identify subscales targeting academic concerns, and it only provides an overall score indicating the student's

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concerns. With the view of discriminating between academic and non-academic concerns for students, five items from the overall 20-item scale were selected to identify academic concerns and the remaining fifteen nonacademic concerns in the everyday life of students.

The resulting five-item academic concerns subscale provided an acceptable alpha reliability of .78 (T1), and the 15-item non-academic-concerns subscale a good alpha reliability of .88 (T1). For the following analysis, the item means for each subscale were used.

A 3 x 2 x 3 ANOVA design was used to assess mean differences with time, gender and nationality (Indonesia, China and Australia) as independent variables and academic and non-academic concerns as dependent variables. There was a significant main effect for nationality on academic concerns $\underline{F}$ (1, 137) = 3.79, $\underline{p}$ = .025 and time on non-academic concerns, $\underline{F}$ (1, 137) = 4.85, $\underline{p}$ = .008. No significant effects were found for gender or nationality and interactions of time by gender or time by nationality.

Pairwise comparisons for nationality on academic concerns showed Indonesians (M = 4.08) scoring significantly higher ($\underline{p}$ = .008) than Australians (M = 3.26). No pairwise mean effects were observed for Indonesians and Chinese (M = 3.65).

Pairwise comparisons for time on non-academic concerns showed T1 scores (M = 2.88) significantly lower ($\underline{p}$ = .007) than T2 (M = 3.13). T1 was also significantly lower ($\underline{p}$ = .008) than T3 (M = 3.15). No pairwise mean effects were observed for T2 and T3.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was not confirmed. Indonesians were significantly higher than Australians on academic concerns when differences were actually expected on non-academic concerns.

3.7.1.5. Distress (Hypothesis A6).

Hypothesis A6: Distress will be higher for Indonesians and Chinese compared to Australians at T1, T2 and T3.

A 2 x 3 x 3 ANOVA design was used to assess mean differences across time with gender, nationality (Indonesia, China and Australia) and time as independent variables and distress (HSCL-21 scale) as the dependent variable. There was a significant main effect for nationality, $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 3.87, $\underline{p}$ = .023, and a significant interaction effect for time by nationality, $\underline{F}$ (4, 139) = 2.57, $\underline{p}$ = .038. No significant effects were found for time, time by gender or time by nationality by gender (see Figure 6).

There were significant mean differences on T1 pairwise mean comparisons. These showed Australians (M = 36.17) scoring significantly lower on distress ($\underline{p}$ = .012) than Indonesians (M = 44.06). There were no significant differences between Australians and Chinese (M = 40.71) or Indonesians and Chinese.

There were significant mean differences on T2 pairwise mean comparisons. A pairwise comparison showed Australians (M = 34.54) scoring significantly lower on distress (p = .000) than Indonesians (M = 47.10), and scoring significantly lower (p = .025) than Chinese (M = 41.51). There were no significant mean differences on T3 distress pairwise comparisons.
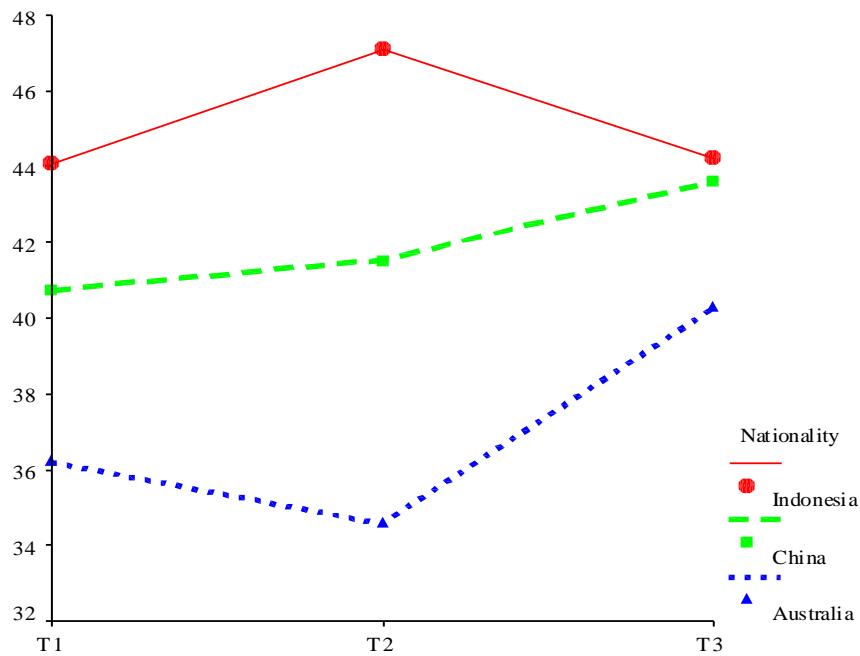
Figure 6. Distress for Indonesian, Chinese and Australian students at T1, T2 and T3.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed.

3.7.1.6. "U" Curve Culture Shock (Hypothesis A7).

Hypothesis A7: International students will experience high to moderate stress compared

with local students resulting from acculturative stress at T1. Acculturative stress will

decline at T2 (four months later) and T3 (eight months later). The shape of these results

will differ from the "U" curve shape predicted by the traditional "honeymoon"

perspective of culture shock.

Analyses were performed with time and nationality (Indonesians, Chinese and

Australians) as independent variables and distress as the dependent variable. There was a

significant main effect for nationality, F (2, 139) = 3.87, p = .023. There was a significant

interaction effect for time by nationality, F (4, 139) = 2.57, p = .038. (see Section A,

Hypothesis A6, results on distress and Figure 6).

Analyses were performed with time and nationality (Indonesian and Chinese students

only) as independent variables and acculturative stress as the dependent variable. There

was no significant difference for acculturative stress, F (1, 106) = 1.41, p= .238 (see

Section A, Hypothesis A2).

Indonesians (M = 46.92) and Chinese (M = 41.62) at T1 showed nearly identical

acculturative stress scores to Indonesians (M = 47.59) and Chinese (M = 41.89) at T2,

respectively. However, from T2 to T3, Indonesians (M = 45.03) showed a sharp decline in

their acculturative stress and Chinese a sharp increase (M = 44.93). Overall no differences

between groups were significant.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed. Distress levels for both

international student groups were higher than Australians at T1, T2, and T3. There were

no significant differences on distress for Indonesians at T1 compared with their own

distress levels at T2 or T3. The same pattern was observed for Chinese students.

Similarly, even though both groups of international students experienced an

increase in acculturative stress at T2 compared to T1, this was not significant. Thus these

results reject the "U" shape model of distress proposed by the traditional culture shock

approach. This "U" shape model is rejected for Indonesian and Chinese international

students studying in Australia.

3.7.1.7. Indonesian Students in Australian Universities and at Universitas Indonesia (Hypothesis A8).

Hypothesis A8: Indonesian students who move to Australia for university studies

will not be significantly different to those who study at Indonesian universities.

A collaborative study between an Indonesian lecturer at Universitas Indonesia and

the author based in Australia allowed the following information to be gathered. Data was

collected about local students at Universitas Indonesia in Jakarta, Indonesia, with some of

the instruments used to assess the acculturative stress experience of international students studying at Australian universities. In addition to demographic data, the instruments used to collect data from Universitas Indonesia students were the Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM), Network Orientation Scale (NOS), the Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced (COPE), Brief College Student Hassle Scale (BCSHS), and the Hopkins Symptom Checklist 21 (HSCL-21). All these instruments were translated into Indonesian and back translated to ensure accuracy.

To ensure equivalence of the samples, a subsample with demographic features similar to the sample from Universitas Indonesia (i.e. undergraduates under 23 years in age) was drawn from the overall Indonesian international student sample studying at Australian universities. Overall, 161 Universitas Indonesia students and 144 Indonesian international students studying at Australian universities were considered for comparison. Age, gender and level of studies did not contribute to differences between the samples, but location of study did (Wilks' $\Lambda = .54$, $\underline{F}$ (4, 298) = 64.21, $\underline{p} = .000$).

No significant differences by location of study were found for daily hassles, but ethnic identity ($\underline{F}$ (1, 301) = 3.93, $\underline{p} = .048$), Network Orientation Towards Support ($\underline{F}$ (1, 301) = 229.2, $\underline{p} = .000$) and distress ($\underline{F}$ (1, 301) = 7.45, $\underline{p} = .007$) yielded them. Indonesian students in Australia presented higher scores on ethnic identity than Universitas Indonesia students. Similarly, Indonesian students in Australia had a more positive orientation towards network of support than Universitas Indonesia students. Universitas Indonesia students presented more distress on the HSCL-21 than Indonesian students in Australia.

The collaborative effort between the researcher in Indonesia and the main researcher of this study included results from the COPE scale. However, only data from the fourteen COPE subscales and not the factor-analysed seven-factor COPE subscales were available for this report. For a detailed report on these results see Table 20.

However, these differences between Indonesians studying in Indonesia and those in Autralia should be approached with caution because although scales administered to both groups were translated and back translated for Indonesian students in Universitas Indonesa, they may not have been sensitive enough to capture the current political, social and cultural dynamics of Indonesian people and society. Similarly, these scales may not have been sensitive enough to ascertain the multicultural features of Australian society.

Table 20

One-way analysis of variance for international Indonesian students in Australia and Universitas Indonesia students in Indonesia on fourteen coping strategies

Coping strategies	M	SD	df	SS	MS	F
Self-disclosure						
Between Groups	5.79	1.35	1	5.18	5.18	2.86
Within Groups			306	554.68	1.81	
Active coping						
Between Groups	6.08	1.16	1	.07	.07	.05
Within Groups			306	414.91	1.36	
Denial						
Between Groups	3.38	1.29	1	10.05	10.05	6.17*
Within Groups			305	496.59	1.63	
Substance-use						
Between Groups	2.11	.54	1	1.44	1.44	5.04*
Within Groups			306	87.58	.29	
Emotional support						
Between Groups	5.52	1.33	1	1.52	1.52	.86
Within Groups			306	539.32	1.76	
Instrumental support						
Between Groups	5.79	1.32	1	3.64	3.64	2.11
Within Groups			304	524.97	1.73	
Behavioural Disengagement						
Between Groups	3.42	1.06	1	.18	.18	.16
Within Groups			306	346.79	1.13	
Venting						
Between Groups	4.54	1.37	1	8.12	8.12	4.38*
Within Groups			305	566.20	1.86	
Positive reframing						
Between Groups	6.10	1.28	1	15.60	15.60	9.85**
Within Groups			306	484.28	1.58	
Planning						
Between Groups	6.01	1.25	1	5.45	5.46	3.52
Within Groups			305	471.52	1.55	
Humour						
Between Groups	4.39	1.64	1	1.08	1.08	.40
Within Groups			304	819.42	2.69	
Acceptance						
Between Groups	6.26	1.26	1	8.03	8.03	5.15*
Within Groups			305	475.13	1.56	
Religion						
Between Groups	6.21	1.72	1	94.81	94.81	35.57***
Within Groups			305	813.00	2.67	
Self-blame						
Between Groups	5.08	1.34	1	17.20	17.20	9.814**
Within Groups			305	534.60	1.75	

*$p < .05$.   **$p < .01$.   ***$p < .0001$.

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Overall remark: The above results indicate that the Indonesian students who decide to study in Australia are significantly different from those who remain in Indonesia on four of the scales. Location of study showed no differences on daily hassles, but there were significant differences on ethnic identity, network orientation towards support, coping and distress.

3.7.1.8. Reporting Emotional Problems (Hypothesis A9).

Hypothesis A9: Chinese and Indonesians, who come from cultures with a stigma surrounding mental illness, will be more reluctant to admit suffering from emotional difficulties than Australian students.

A chi-square analysis was performed revealing significant differences between Indonesians, Chinese and Australians on self-report of experiencing emotional problems in the last six months (χ^2 (2, N = 974) = 24.15; p = .000). Indonesian students were least likely to report experiencing emotional difficulties (46.2%). On the other hand, Chinese (64.0%) and Australians (56.1%) were more likely to report experiencing emotional difficulties (see Figure 7).

Further two-group chi-squares were conducted for Indonesian-Chinese, Indonesian-Australian, and Chinese-Australian comparisons. Significant chi-squares were only found for the comparison between Indonesians and Chinese (χ^2 (1, N = 835) = 24.01; p = .000).

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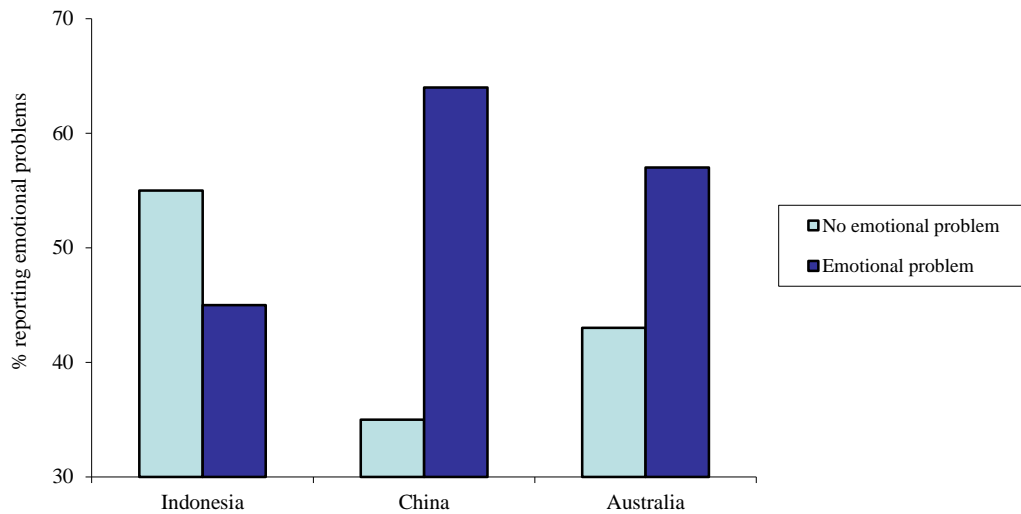
Figure 7. Emotional problems in the last six months.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was only confirmed for Indonesian students who were least willing to admit experiencing emotional difficulties. On the other hand, Chinese and Australians were more likely to admit emotional difficulties. In particular, Chinese students were surprisingly more willing to admit experiencing emotional difficulties.

3.7.1.9. Willingness to Seek Professional Help (Hypothesis A10).

Hypothesis A10: Chinese and Indonesians, who come from cultures with less reliance on professional support for emotional difficulties, will find it more difficult to seek counselling compared to Australians students.

A chi-square analysis was performed, and there were no significant differences between Indonesians, Chinese and Australians on seeking professional help for emotional difficulties (χ^2 (2, N = 974) = 5.30; $\underline{p}$ = .071). Interestingly, Indonesian (64.3%) and Chinese (65.1%) students were more likely to seek help when experiencing emotional difficulties than Australians (54.7%). (see Figure 8).

Two-group chi-squares were also conducted for Indonesian-Chinese, Indonesian-Australian, and Chinese-Australian comparisons. A significant chi-square difference was only found for the two-group comparison between Chinese and Australians (χ^2 (1, N = 697) = 5.14; $\underline{p}$ = .023).
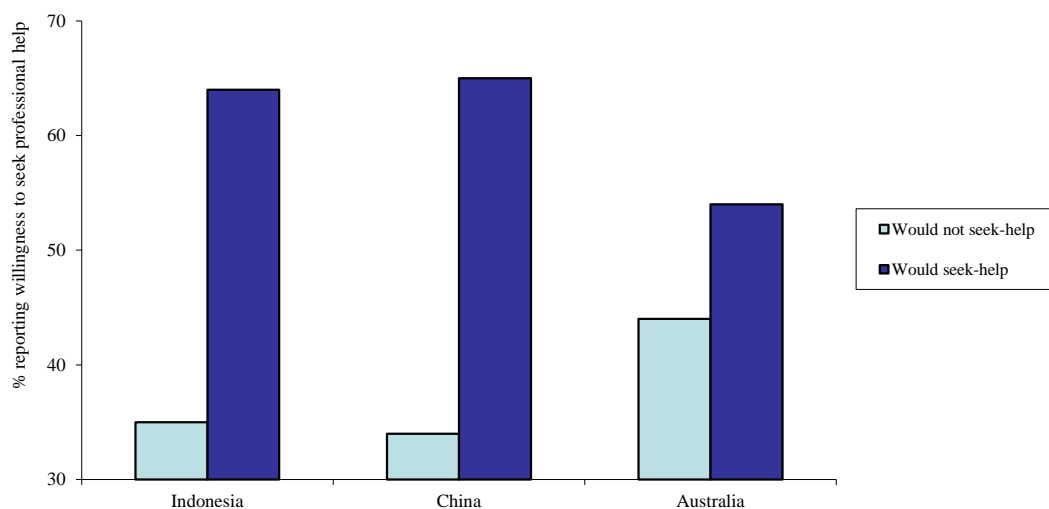
Figure 8. Seeking professional help.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was not confirmed. What is more intriguing is that most students reported being comfortable about seeking professional help when

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experiencing emotional difficulties. Chinese were in particular more prepared to seek professional help than Australians and Indonesians, though the difference between Chinese and Indonesians was minimal.

3.7.1.10. Comparing Undergraduate and Post Graduate Acculturative Stress (Hypothesis A11).

Hypothesis A11: Acculturative stress will be higher for undergraduate compared with postgraduate international students at T1. However, because undergraduate students are more flexible in adjusting to change, no differences will be shown at T3.

This hypothesis proposed that postgraduate students experience lower acculturative stress than undergraduate students when they first arrive in the host society. Selecting only international students, a 2 x 2 x 3 design ANOVA was conducted with level of study (undergraduate and postgraduate studies), nationality (Indonesian and Chinese), and time as independent variables and acculturative stress as the dependent variable. No significant main effects or interactions were observed for time or level of study.

Overall remark: Results of this analysis did not confirm this hypothesis. However, pairwise comparison showed that undergraduates experienced more acculturative stress than postgraduate students at T1 (p = .028). Additionally, the fact that no pairwise

differences were found for T2 and T3 further confirms the direction of the expected results.

3.7.1.11. Problem Focused Coping vs. Avoidance Coping and Level of Study for International Students (Hypothesis A12).

Hypothesis A12: Postgraduate international students will use more problem-focused coping, while undergraduate international students will use more avoidance coping at T1, T2 and T3.

A 2 x 2 x 3 design ANOVA was conducted with level of study (undergraduate and postgraduate), nationality (Indonesian and Chinese) and time as independent variables and problem solving and avoidance coping as dependent variables. A multivariate test showed a significant effect for time, Wilks'Λ = .90, $\underline{F}$ (4, 101) = 2.68, $\underline{p}$ = .036, and level of study Wilks'Λ = .94, $\underline{F}$ (2, 103) = 3.57, $\underline{p}$ = .032. Significant time effects were found for avoidance coping, $\underline{F}$ (2, 106) = 5.61, $\underline{p}$ = .004. A significant interaction effect was found for time by level of study, Wilks'Λ = .89, $\underline{F}$ (4, 101) = 3.19, $\underline{p}$ = .016. A significant interaction for time by level of study was found for problem-focused coping, $\underline{F}$ (2, 106) = 3.29, $\underline{p}$ = .039.

There were significant effects for time on avoidance coping. T3 avoidance coping (M = 7.21) was significantly higher ($\underline{p}$ = .002) compared to T1 (M = 6.46) and

significantly higher ($\underline{p}$ = .020) than T2 (M = 6.67). No significant differences were found for T1 and T2 avoidance coping.

Pairwise comparisons indicated significant differences between groups. For T1 avoidance coping, higher means were observed for undergraduate students (M = 6.91) than postgraduate students (M = 6.01) and were corroborated by significant mean differences ($\underline{p}$ = .019). Similarly, for T2 problem-focused coping, higher means were observed for postgraduate students (M = 25.16) than undergraduate students (M = 23.26) and confirmed by significant mean differences ($\underline{p}$ = .006).

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed. Overall, at T1, undergraduate students preferred avoidance coping, while at T2, postgraduate students used more problem-focus coping. No differences between groups were observed at T3.

3.7.1.12. Local and International Students' Use of Coping Strategies (Hypothesis A13).

Hypothesis A13: International students from Indonesia and China will use more support-seeking, avoidance, religion, self-blame, humour and substance-use coping strategies than Australian students at T1, T2 and T3. International students will also use less problem-focused coping than Australian students, particularly at T1.

Table 21 shows means for all coping strategies by nationality for T1, T2 and T3, arranged from most to least commonly used strategies.

Table 21

Coping strategies by Nationality for T1, T2 and T3

Coping strategy		Indonesia	China	Australia	Total
		M	M	M	M
Problem-focused	T1	3.56$_a$	3.48$_a$	3.17$_b$	3.42
	T2	3.56$_a$	3.48$_a$	3.25$_b$	3.42
	T3	3.60$_a$	3.45$_a$	3.22$_b$	3.43
Support-seeking	T1	2.85$_{a, b}$	2.73$_a$	2.97$_b$	2.82
	T2	2.88$_a$	2.90$_a$	2.76$_a$	2.86
	T3	3.03$_a$	2.82$_a$	2.87$_a$	2.89
Religion	T1	3.11$_a$	1.97$_b$	2.12$_b$	2.32
	T2	3.18$_a$	2.06$_b$	2.16$_b$	2.39
	T3	3.28$_a$	2.18$_b$	2.10$_b$	2.45
Self-blame	T1	2.28$_a$	2.29$_a$	2.16$_a$	2.25
	T2	2.31$_{a, b}$	2.24$_a$	2.54$_b$	2.34
	T3	2.40$_{a, b}$	2.21$_a$	2.58$_b$	2.35
Humour	T1	2.40$_a$	2.21$_{a, b}$	2.03$_b$	2.22
	T2	2.55$_a$	2.21$_b$	2.07$_b$	2.26
	T3	2.46$_a$	2.23$_a$	2.11$_a$	2.26
Avoidance	T1	1.55$_a$	1.59$_a$	1.33$_b$	1.52
	T2	1.57$_a$	1.71$_a$	1.54$_a$	1.63
	T3	1.66$_{a, b}$	1.82$_a$	1.56$_b$	1.71
Substance-use	T1	0.55$_a$	0.55$_a$	0.64$_b$	0.57
	T2	0.55$_a$	0.61$_{a, b}$	066$_b$	0.61
	T3	0.58$_a$	0.64$_{a, b}$	0.71$_b$	0.64

Note: Means in the same row that have different subscripts indicate significant differences at $\underline{p} < .05$.

A 2 x 3 x 3 design MANOVA was conducted with time, gender and nationality as independent variables and coping strategies (problem-focused coping, support-seeking, avoidance, religion, self-blame, humour and substance-use coping) as dependent variables for T1, T2 and T3.

A multivariate test showed a significant effect for nationality, Wilks' Λ = .55, $\underline{F}$ (14, 134) = 6.66, $\underline{p}$ = .000. Significant interaction effects were found for time by nationality, Wilks' Λ = .85, $\underline{F}$ (28, 275) = .1.64, $\underline{p}$ = .019. Significant univariate time effects were found for avoidance coping, $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 5.09, $\underline{p}$ = .007, self-blame coping $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 3.49, $\underline{p}$ = .032, and substance-use coping, $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 3.62, $\underline{p}$ = .028. Significant nationality effects were found for problem-focused coping, $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 9.39, $\underline{p}$ = .000, avoidance coping $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 3.35, $\underline{p}$ = .038, religion, $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 21.10, $\underline{p}$ = .000, and humour, $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 4.57, $\underline{p}$ = .012. Significant gender effects were found for support-seeking coping, $\underline{F}$ (1, 139) = 6.83, $\underline{p}$ = .010. Significant interaction effects for time by nationality were found for support-seeking coping, $\underline{F}$ (4, 139) = 4.15, $\underline{p}$ = .003, and self-blame coping $\underline{F}$ (4, 139) = 3.32, $\underline{p}$ = .011 (see Figures 9 and 10). Significant interaction effects between time and gender were found for support-seeking coping, $\underline{F}$ (2, 139) = 3.49, $\underline{p}$ = .032 (see Figures 11 and 12).

3.7.1.12.1. Pairwise Comparisons for Time on Avoidance Coping, Self-Blame Coping and Substance-Use Coping.

For avoidance coping, T1 (M = 5.98) was significantly lower (p = .042) than T2 (M = 6.40) and was significantly lower (p = .003) than T3 (M = 6.66). No significant

differences between T2 and T3 were found. For self-blame coping, T1 (M = 4.45) was significantly lower (p = .009) than T3 (M = 4.82). No significant differences between T1 and T2 (M = 4.69) or T2 and T3 were found. For substance-use coping, T1 (M = 1.17) was significantly lower (p = .010) than T3 (M = 1.27). No significant differences between T1 and T2 (M = 1.21) or T2 and T3 were found.

3.7.1.12.2. Pairwise Comparisons for Time and Nationality on Support-Seeking Coping and Self-Blame Coping.

On support-seeking coping Australians (M = 11.89) were significantly higher (p = .043) than Chinese (M = 10.90) at T1. No significant differences between Indonesians (M = 11.38) and Chinese were found at T1. No significant differences between Indonesians, Chinese and Australians were found at T2 and T3.

No significant mean difference for nationality was found on self-blame coping at T1. However, Australians (M = 5.08) were significantly higher (p = .034) than Chinese (M = 4.48) at T2. No significant differences between Indonesians (M = 4.62) and Chinese were found at T2. Australians (M = 5.16) were significantly higher (p = .013) than Chinese (M = 4.42) at T3. No significant differences between Indonesians (M = 4.80) and Chinese were found at T3.

3.7.1.12.3. Pairwise Comparisons for Time and Gender on Support-Seeking Coping.

Pairwise mean comparisons showed differences between female and males at T1 and T2.

Females (M = 11.78) were significantly higher (p = .000) than males (M = 10.41) at T1. Females (M = 11.29) were also significantly higher (p = .003) than males (M = 10.45) at T2.

For females, no significant differences between T1 (M = 11.48), T2 (M = 11.75), and T3 (M = 11.80) were found. For males, T2 scores (M = 10.02) were significantly lower than both T1 (M = 11.02, p = .018) and T3 (M = 10.84, p = .043). No significant differences between T1 and T3 were found.

3.7.1.12.4. Pairwise Comparisons for Time and Nationality on Support-Seeking Coping.

Australian females were higher than Indonesian and Chinese females in support-seeking coping at T1, although differences were less salient at T2 and T3 (see Figure 11).

Australian males scored much lower than Indonesian and Chinese males at T2. The low Australian male scores at T2 also accounted for the significant differences between Australians males and females (see Figure 12).
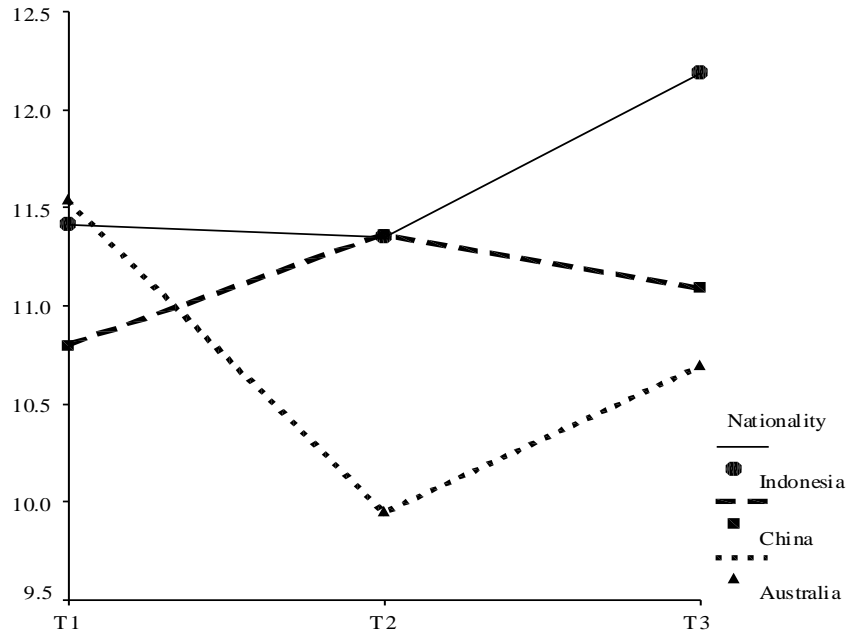
Figure 9. Support-seeking coping by Time and Nationality for Indonesian, Chinese and Australian students at T1, T2 and T3.
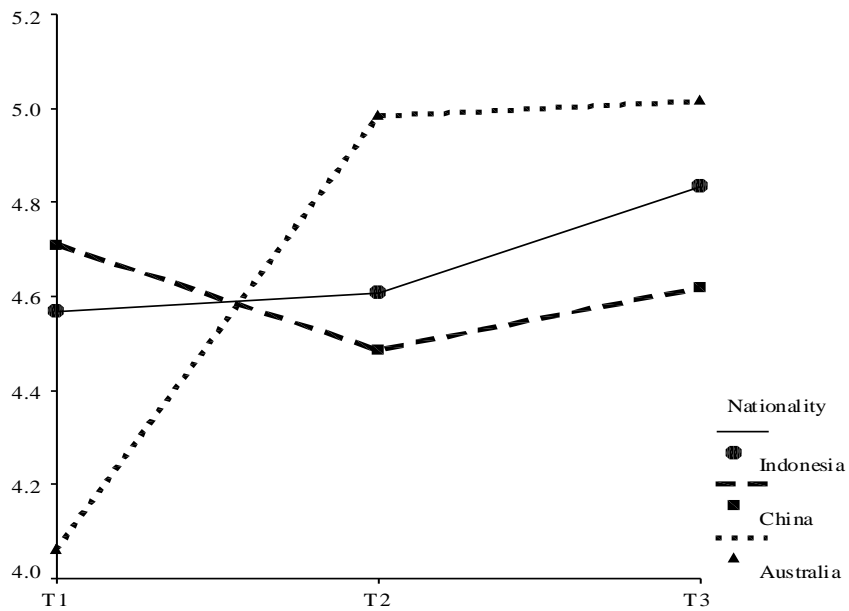
Figure 10. Self-blame coping by Time and Nationality for Indonesian, Chinese and Australian students at T1, T2 and T3.
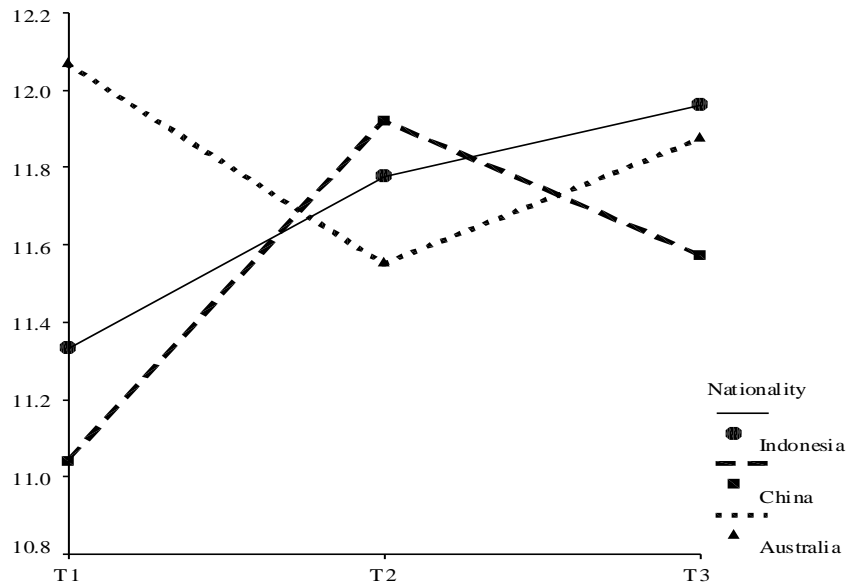
Figure 11. Female Support Seeking for Indonesian, Chinese and Australian students at T1, T2 and T3.
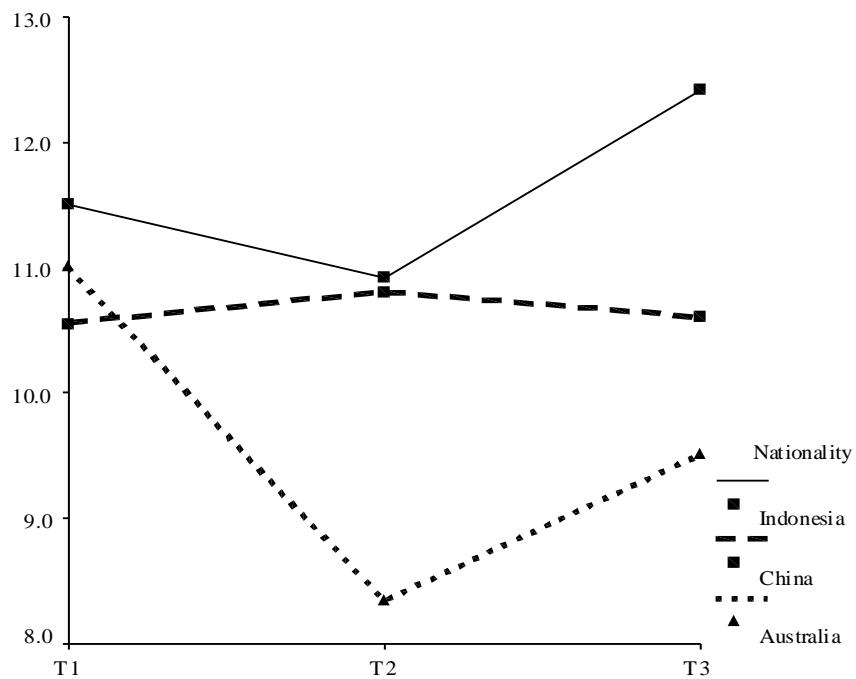
Figure 12. Male Support Seeking for Indonesian, Chinese and Australian students at T1, T2 and T3.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed. International students used more

support-seeking and less self-blame coping than Australians did, particularly for support-

seeking coping. Similarly, international students were different from Australian students

on problem-focused coping, avoidance coping, religious coping, and humour coping.

Differences between groups were generally more salient at T1 and T3. Gender differences

were significant for support-seeking coping. Additionally, females were significantly

higher than males in support-seeking coping at T2. Local female students were not

significantly different to male and female international students; however, local female

students used more support-seeking coping than male and female international students at

T1.

3.7.1.13. Local and International Students' Use of Avoidance Coping

      (Hypothesis A14).

Hypothesis A14: International students will use avoidance coping more than local

students as they have limited control over their situational circumstances at T1, T2 and

T3.

A 3 x 2 x 3 design ANOVA was conducted with time, gender and nationality

(Indonesians, Chinese and Australians) as independent variables and avoidance coping as

the dependent variable. There were significant effects for time, $\underline{F}$ (2, 971) = 10.06, $\underline{p}$ =

.000 and nationality, $\underline{F}$ (2, 971) = 10.26, $\underline{p}$ = .000. However, no significant interaction was

observed for time by nationality, $\underline{F}$ (4, 971) = 1.86, $\underline{p}$ = .115.

Pairwise mean comparisons showed differences between groups. The Chinese mean (M = 6.83) was significantly higher than both Indonesians (M = 6.35, $\underline{p}$ = .003) and Australians (M = 6.09, $\underline{p}$ = .000) at T1. Similarly, Chinese (M = 6.96) were significantly higher than both Indonesians (M = 6.35, $\underline{p}$ = .000) and Australians (M = 6.32, $\underline{p}$ = .002) at T2. Again, Chinese (M = 7.01) were significantly higher than both Indonesians (M = 6.40, $\underline{p}$ = .000) and Australians (M = 6.35, $\underline{p}$ = .001) at T3. No significant differences were observed between Indonesians and Australians in avoidance coping.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed for T1, T2 and T3 but only for Chinese students. That is, Chinese students reported more avoidance coping when facing unfamiliar circumstances than both Indonesian and Australian students.

3.7.2. Level of Analysis B: Distress - Correlates, Predictive and Moderating-Effects Analyses.

This section will report on correlations between self-ratings of English language proficiency, ethnic affirmation and distress for Indonesian and Chinese international students and correlations between family income, levels of study reached by parents, social support, coping and distress for all students. This section includes a subsection on: (1) longitudinal results from ethnic identity, acculturative stress, daily hassles and distress for Indonesian and Chinese students and; (2) longitudinal results on daily hassles and distress for all students.

3.7.2.1. Level of Analysis B: Distress – Correlates.

3.7.2.1.1. Income and Distress (Hypothesis B1).

Hypothesis B1: Students from families with lower income will experience more distress than those from wealthier family backgrounds.

Correlations were computed for all students to assess the relationship between parents' income and distress at T1, T2 and T3. No significant relationship was observed between parents' income and distress at either T1, r (650) = -.07, p = .068, or T3, r (101) = .03, p = .760, but the T2 correlation with distress was significant, r (201) = -.19, p = .006.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed for T2 distress. Although the association between parents' income and distress was negative, and in the direction that lower income was linked with greater distress, this association did not reach significance for T1 or T3 distress. Even for T2, however, the observed correlation accounted for less than 4% of the variance of the two variables $(-.19)^2$.

3.7.2.1.2. Parents' Level of Study and Students' Distress (Hypothesis B2).

Hypothesis B2: Higher levels of study reached by their parents will result in less distress for all students.

Correlations were computed for all students to assess the relationship between parents' education and distress. A weak but significant negative relationship was observed between mother's education and distress; $\underline{r}$ (973) = -.09, $\underline{p}$ = .008 at T1. Correlations for mother's education and distress at T2 and T3 were not significant. Correlations between father's education and distress were not significant at T1, T2 or T3. Further correlations were computed separately for Indonesian, Chinese and Australians, but no significant correlations were observed.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed for the mother's education but only weakly and at T1. If the mother had a lower education, distress levels were slightly greater. This hypothesis was not confirmed for father's education and distress.

3.7.2.1.3. English Proficiency and Distress (Hypothesis B3).

Hypothesis B3: Self-rating of confidence in English will correlate negatively with distress and acculturative stress at T1, T2, and T3.

Correlations were computed to establish associations between English proficiency; acculturative stress and distress (see Table 22).

Table 22

Proficiency in English and levels of acculturative stress and psychological distress

Predictor	Acculturative stress			Distress		
	T1	T2	T3	T1	T2	T3
Proficiency in English	-.12**	-.10	-.07	-.12**	-.07	-.08

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Overall remark: It was anticipated that proficiency in English (as an indicator of acculturation) would have a negative association with distress and acculturative stress. This hypothesis was somewhat confirmed. Although weak, there was a negative association in the expected direction, especially at T1. Therefore, self-rated proficiency in English may be a protective resource against the impact of acculturative stress and distress.

3.7.2.1.4. Ethnic Affirmation and Distress (Hypothesis B4).

Hypothesis B4: The more highly international students score on ethnic affirmation, the less distress they will experience, while the more highly they score on ethnic search, the more distress they will experience at T1.

Correlations were computed for Indonesians and Chinese students to assess the relationship between distress and both ethnic search and ethnic affirmation. No significant relationship was observed between ethnic search and distress, $\underline{r}$ (832) = .04, $\underline{p}$ = .301; or

ethnic affirmation and distress, $\underline{r}$ (832) = -.02, $\underline{p}$ = .629 at T1. Similarly, no significant associations were observed for T2 or T3.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was not confirmed.

3.7.2.1.5. Ethnic Identity and Distress (Hypothesis B5).

Hypothesis B5: The importance of ethnic identity with culture of origin will be particularly relevant at T1, when stressors are more diverse and greater; therefore, higher scores on ethnic identity (identification with culture of origin) at T1 will be linked with lower distress, particularly at T1 (see Table 23).

Table 23

Correlations between ethnic identity and distress at T1, T2 and T3

Predictor		Distress		
		T1	T2	T3
Ethnic Identity	T1	.01	-.08	-.01
	T2	-.04	-.15*	-.04
	T3	.11	-.09	-.02

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Overall remark: This hypothesis was only slightly confirmed. Only one correlation was significant. However, seven out of nine correlations between ethnic identity and

distress were in the expected negative direction. In other words, the higher a student's ethnic identity, the lower their levels of distress at T1, T2 and T3.

3.7.2.1.6. Network Orientation Towards Support and Distress (Hypothesis B6).

<u>Hypothesis B6</u>: Higher positive orientation towards support will result in less distress, while negative orientation towards support will result in more distress for both local and international students.

Correlations were computed to ascertain the degree of relationship between network orientation towards support and distress. As expected, a negative relationship was observed between NOS and distress at T1, T2 and T3 (see Table 24).

Table 24

<u>Correlation between Network Orientation towards support (T1, T2, and T3) and distress (T1, T2, and T3)</u>

Predictor		Distress		
		T1	T2	T3
Network Orientation Towards Support	T1	-.12**	-.15**	-.17*
	T2	-.11	-.24**	-.24**
	T3	-.15	-.20*	-.19*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed. NOS protected against experiencing distress. Although this association was not strong, all correlations were in the predicted negative direction, and seven out of nine were significant.

3.7.2.1.7. Coping Strategies and Distress (Hypothesis B7).

Hypothesis B7: Problem-focused coping will correlate negatively with distress at T1, T2 and T3, while support-seeking, avoidance, substance-use, self-blame and humour coping will correlate positively with distress at T1, T2 and T3.

To address this hypothesis, correlations between T1, T2 and T3 coping strategies and T1, T2 and T3 distress were examined for all groups (see Table 25). The results on the relationship between coping strategies and distress are reported under the following subheadings:

3.7.2.1.7.1. Problem-Focused Coping.

Correlations were inconsistent for all groups. Indonesians showed one out of nine significant correlations (positive), while Chinese two out of nine significant correlations (both negative).

3.7.2.1.7.2. Support-Seeking Coping.

Indonesians showed five out of nine significant correlations (all positive) while Chinese showed three out of nine (one positive, two negative). Australians did not show any significant correlations.

3.7.2.1.7.3. Avoidance Coping.

All groups presented low to moderate significant associations between T1, T2 and T3 avoidance and T1, T2 and T3 distress; all were positive.

3.7.2.1.7.4. Religious Coping.

Correlations were inconsistent for Indonesians and Australians. However, Chinese showed significant low positive correlations for T1 and T2 distress and religious coping.

3.7.2.1.7.5. Self-Blame Coping.

There were mainly moderately significant positive correlations between T1, T2 and T3 self-blame and T1, T2 and T3 distress for all groups. The only exceptions were non-significant associations of T2 self-blame coping association with T3 distress and T3 self-blame coping with T1 distress for Chinese.

3.7.2.1.7.6. Humour Coping.

There were no significant associations between humour coping and distress for any group, except for Indonesians for T3 distress, and T1 and T2 distress for Australians.

3.7.2.1.7.7. Substance-Use Coping.

Chinese and Australians each had five significant correlations out of nine, while Indonesians showed two significant correlations out of nine. All significant correlations were positive.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed. Correlations were comparatively high for avoidance and self-blame coping. It was somewhat confirmed for support-seeking coping, religious coping, humour coping and substance-use coping. This hypothesis was also generally confirmed for problem-focused coping, with 20 negative correlations out of 27 with T1, T2, and T3 distress, but only three of these were significant.

Table 25
Correlations between coping strategies and distress for all groups at T1, T2 and T3

Coping styles		Indonesians			Chinese			Australians		
		T1	T2	T3	T1	T2	T3	T1	T2	T3
Problem-focused coping	T1	.12	-.09	.36*	.05	-.06	-.24*	-.07	.03	-.19
	T2	-.07	-.21	-.06	-.05	-.10	-.42**	-.02	-.03	-.05
	T3	.17	.01	.09	-.13	-.13	-.22	-.10	-.07	-.14
Support-seeking coping	T1	.17**	.27*	.44**	.13**	-.06	-.32**	-.02	.14	.06
	T2	.13	.07	.09	.16	.05	-.23	-.09	.03	.08
	T3	.39*	.28	.33*	-.05	-.16	-.28*	-.00	.12	.14
Avoidance coping	T1	.33**	.39**	.25	.38**	.37**	.21	.34**	.38**	.23
	T2	.21	.33**	.43**	.31**	.62**	.39**	.32*	.32*	.39*
	T3	.41**	.49**	.55**	.24*	.39**	.53**	.46**	.48**	.39*
Religious coping	T1	.08	-.04	.03	.27**	.27**	.20	-.06	.08	.10
	T2	-.07	-.13	.00	.22**	.35**	.11	-.08	.03	.11
	T3	.03	.07	.11	.11	.19	.28*	-.06	-.05	-.02
Self-blame coping	T1	.38**	.49**	.56**	.45**	.34**	.37**	.54**	.40**	.44**
	T2	.46**	.51**	.50**	.18*	.41**	.22	.47**	.34**	.39*
	T3	.47**	.45**	.47**	.18	.29*	.44**	.66**	.33*	.36*
Humour coping	T1	-.01	-.06	.19	.00	-.04	-.09	.26**	.27*	.01
	T2	-.04	.02	.31	-.12	.08	-.05	.20	.30*	-.01
	T3	.16	.16	.33*	.08	.03	.13	.27	.22	.12
Substance-use coping	T1	.11	.16	.22	.19**	.07	.14	.26**	.21	.33*
	T2	-.03	.12	.07	.15	.46**	.29*	.16	.09	.24
	T3	.19	.37*	.36*	.13	.27*	.51**	.39*	.33*	.35*

n = Indonesians (T1 = 277, T2 = 79, T3 = 41); Chinese (T1 = 558, T2 = 152, T3 = 69); Australians (T1 = 139, T2 = 60, T3 = 38).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

3.7.2.2. Level of Analysis B: Distress - Predictive and Moderating Effect Analyses.

To address the following hypotheses, model-reduction regression analyses were conducted. This model-reduction process involved elimination of main effects and interactions when they were not significant. Analyses were conducted separately for T1 predictors of T2 distress; secondly, T1 predictors of T3 distress; and thirdly, T2 predictors of T3 distress.

The following steps were included in the reduction process:

1. Including all demographic variables of interest in this model (nationality, gender, level of study, source of financial support, mother's and father's education, income, residence before Australia, and number of visits to doctor), the elimination process proceeded as follows:

    a) Firstly, taking one moderating variable at a time, a model was tested including all the demographic variables, plus one moderating variable at a time (network orientation towards support, problem-focus, support-seeking, avoidance, self-blame, religion, humour and substance-use coping), plus the interaction of the moderating variable with the demographic variable. The dependent measure in all these analyses was distress levels as measured by the HSCL-21. Demographic variables were entered as factors and moderators as covariates.

    b) A reduced model was achieved including any significant interaction between the moderating variable and the demographic variable.

c) After testing all moderators with the demographic variables, some significant main effects and interactions were obtained.

d) A model was tested including all demographic variables, and all moderators involved in significant interactions, and their interactions.

e) The above model was reduced by removing demographic variables that were not significant unless they were involved in a significant main effect or interaction.

f) A model was reached which included significant demographic variables, significant moderators, and demographic variables involved in significant interactions.

2. To obtain a final model, the results from the above model were tested by including them together with one moderator at a time and all psychological variables (self-report of preferred language in Australia, self-report of health in the last three months, self-report of experiencing emotional difficulties in the last six months, self-report of agreeing to seek professional advice for emotional difficulties, ethnic identity, acculturative stress, and daily hassles) at a time. From the above psychological variables, all were entered for Indonesian and Chinese students (see Hypothesis B8); however, acculturative stress, ethnic identity, self-report of preferred language in Australia and self-report of reading in English were not entered for Australians because they were not relevant and hence not collected (see Hypothesis B9). The model was then reduced by eliminating the interactions that were not significant until a model was reached which included the psychological variables showing significant main effects or interactions and

moderating variables included in significant interactions. All variables involved in interactions were mean centred, and a line graph is displayed below for each significant interaction as appropriate.

For all these analyses, alpha was selected as $\underline{p} = .01$ to avoid Type-I error. All variables entered in the analysis were screened to examine normality assumptions. All scales were within reasonable levels of normality of distribution.

Previous to reporting these analyses, Table 26 illustrates correlations between various predictors and distress at T1, T2 and T3.

3.7.2.2.1. Predictive and Moderating Effect Analyses for International Students (Hypothesis B8).

Hypothesis B8: Acculturative stress, ethnic identity and daily hassles experienced by international students at T1 and T2 will predict levels of distress at T2 and T3 over and above significant demographic, moderating and other psychological variables.

Table 26

Correlation of predictors and covariates with distress at T1, T2 and T3

Predictors and Covariates		Distress		
		T1	T2	T3
Preferred Language in Australia (T1)		.08*	.23**	.21*
Self-rated ability to read English (T1)		.12**	.07	.08
Self-report of health (T1)		.15**	.18**	.04
Self-report of emotional difficulties (T1)		.23**	.16**	.12
Willingness to seek professional support (T1)		-.01	.03	.03
Ethnic identity	T1	.01	-.08	-.01
	T2	-.04	-.15*	-.04
	T3	.11	-.09	-.02
Acculturative stress	T1	.52**	.44**	.42**
	T2	.34**	.61**	.62**
	T3	.45**	.53**	.59**
Network Orientation towards Support	T1	-.12**	-.15**	-.17*
	T2	-.11	-.24**	-.24**
	T3	-.15	-.19*	-.19*
Daily Hassles	T1	.50**	.42**	.45**
	T2	.36**	.55**	.47**
	T3	.51**	.57**	.61**

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.7.2.2.1.1. T1 Predictors of T2 distress.

The final result for the reduction-model regression analysis included significant

psychological variables, moderators involved in interactions, and the interactions

themselves. The final reduced model included the moderators avoidance coping and self-

blame coping, the psychological variables preferred language spoken in Australia and

acculturative stress, and the interaction between the moderator avoidance coping and daily

hassles psychological variable (see Table 27). This interaction suggests that avoidance

levels were more strongly associated with distress for those low in daily hassles, whereas

those suffering high daily hassles were highly distressed, regardless of avoidance levels

(see Figure 13).

Table 27

Summary of model reduction regression analysis for T1 predictors of T2 distress

Dependent variable: Distress T2

Predictors	B	Beta	t	$\underline{p}$
Avoidance coping	1.02	.64	2.84	.05
Self-blame coping	2.01	.06	4.01	.00
Preferred language	-7.19	.08	-2.83	.05
Acculturative stress	.14	.06	3.43	.01
Avoidance coping*Daily Hassles	-.06	.06	-3.97	.00

$\underline{F}$ (6, 223) = 22.94; $\underline{p}$ = .000, R^2= .365

Note: Avoidance coping*Daily Hassles represents the interaction of these variables.
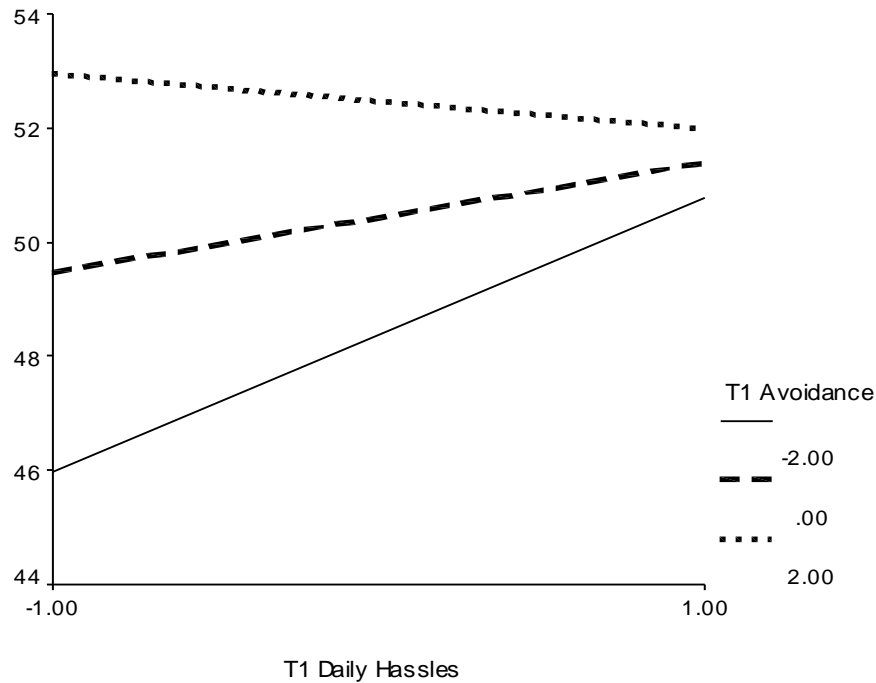
Figure 13. Interaction Effects of T1 Avoidance coping* T1 Daily Hassles and T2 Distress

Overall remark: This hypothesis was partially confirmed for T1 predictors of T2 distress. High acculturative stress and daily hassles at T1 predicted high distress at T2. Preferred language spoken in Australia also contributed to the prediction of T2 distress. If preferred language at T1 was English, there was lower distress at T2. In addition to the above psychological variable predictors, high T1 avoidance and self-blame coping moderators also predicted high T2 distress.

For international students, there was an interaction effect between T1 avoidance coping, and T1 daily hassles in predicting T2 distress. Higher levels of daily hassles were associated with higher distress regardless of levels of avoidance coping. When T1 daily hassles were lower, T1 avoidance predicted lower distress at T2.

3.7.2.2.1.2. T1 Predictors of T3 Distress.

The final reduced model included the moderators support-seeking coping and self-blame coping, the psychological variable acculturative stress, and the interaction between nationality and support-seeking coping (see Table 28). This interaction suggests that as Indonesians' support-seeking coping increased, distress levels increased accordingly, while the opposite was the case for the Chinese. Chinese distress levels decreased as support-seeking coping increased (see Figure 14).

Table 28

Summary of model reduction regression analysis for T1 predictors of T3 distress

Dependent variable: Distress T3

Predictors	B	Beta	t	p
Support-seeking coping	-1.70	.11	-3.09	.003
Self-blame coping	2.65	.09	3.66	.000
Acculturative stress	.19	.08	3.42	.001
Nationality*support-seeking coping	2.57	.17	3.02	.003

F (5, 104) = 11.62; p = .000, R^2= .328

Note: Nationality*Support-seeking coping represents the interaction of these variables.

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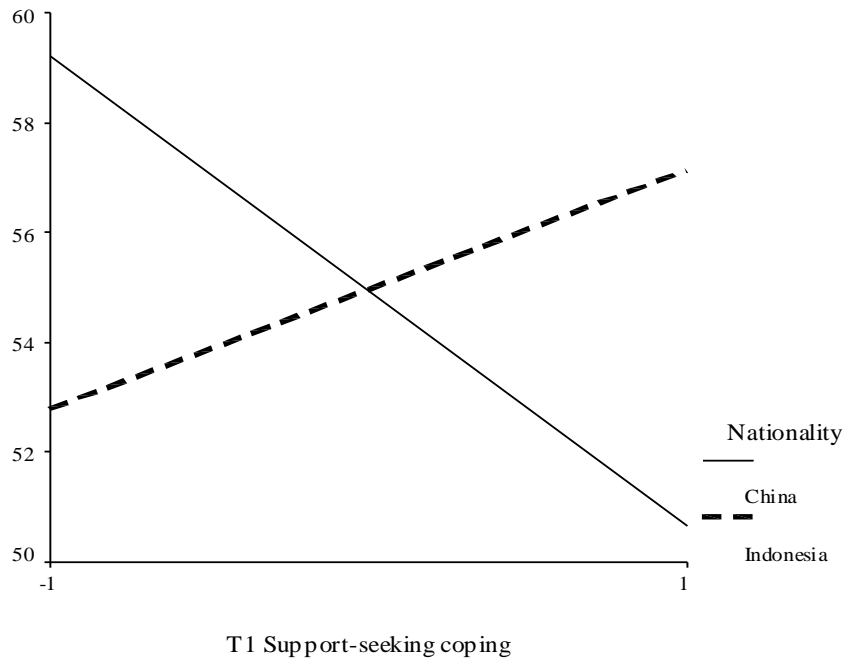
Figure 14. Interaction effects of T1 Nationality*Support-seeking and T3 Distress.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was partially confirmed. High T1 acculturative stress predicted high distress at T3. Nationality and its interaction with support-seeking coping predicted distress. Higher T1 support-seeking and self-blame coping predicted lower T3 distress.

3.7.2.2.1.3. T2 Predictors of T3 Distress.

The final reduced model included the significant moderator problem-focused coping and the psychological variables acculturative stress and daily hassles (see Table 29).

Table 29

Summary of model reduction regression analysis for T2 predictors of T3 distress

Dependent variable: Distress T3

Predictors	B	Beta	t	p
Problem-focused coping	-.765	.08	-2.86	.005
Acculturative stress	.339	.09	5.45	.000
Daily hassles	.15	.09	2.98	.004

F (3, 103) = 32.15; p = .000, R^2= .469

Overall remark: This hypothesis was confirmed. High T2 daily hassles and acculturative stress predicted high T3 distress. Additionally, lower T2 problem-focused coping predicted higher T3 levels of distress.

3.7.2.2.2. Predictive and Moderating Effect Analyses for All Students (Hypothesis B9).

Hypothesis B9: Daily hassles experienced by international and local students at T1 and T2 will predict levels of distress at T2 and T3 over and above demographic, moderating and other psychological measures.

3.7.2.2.2.1. T1 Predictors of T2 Distress.

The final reduced model included the moderators avoidance coping, religious coping and self-blame coping, the psychological variable daily hassles, and the interaction between avoidance coping and daily hassles (see Table 30). This interaction suggested that avoidance levels were more strongly associated with distress for those low in daily hassles, whereas those suffering high daily hassles were highly distressed, regardless of avoidance levels (see Figure 15).

Table 30

Summary of model reduction regression analysis for T1 predictors of T2 distress

Dependent variable: Distress T2

Predictors	B	SE B	t	p
Avoidance coping	1.34	.06	4.08	.000
Religious coping	.92	.05	3.00	.003
Self-blame coping	1.77	.05	4.01	.000
Daily Hassles	.14	.05	4.40	.000
Avoidance coping*Daily Hassles	-.05	.05	-3.85	.000

F (5, 283) = 28.12; p = .000, R^2= .320

Note: Avoidance coping*Daily Hassles represents the interaction of these variables.
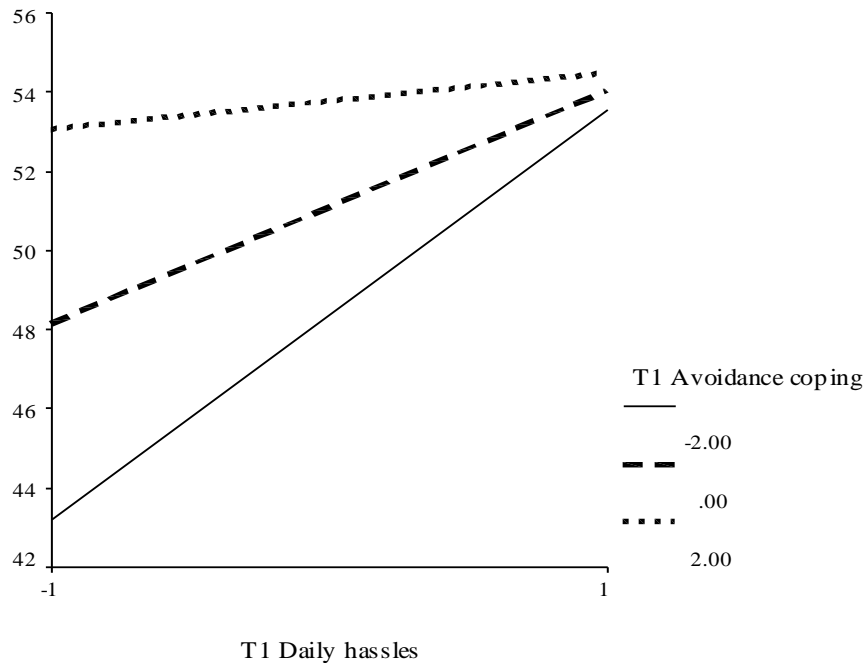
Figure 15. Interaction effects of T1 Avoidance coping*T1 Daily Hassles and T2 Distress.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was partially confirmed for T1 predictors of T2 distress. High daily hassles at T1 predicted high distress at T2. As well, high T1 avoidance, religious and self-blame coping moderators also predicted high T2 distress.

There was an interaction effect between T1 avoidance coping, and T1 daily hassles in predicting T2 distress, paralleling the results for Hypothesis B8. For local and international students, higher levels of daily hassles were associated with higher distress regardless of levels of avoidance coping. When T1 daily hassles were lower, T1 avoidance predicted lower distress at T2.

3.7.2.2.2.2. T1 Predictors of T3 Distress.

The final reduced model included the moderator variable self-blame coping and the psychological variable daily hassles (see Table 31).

Table 31

Summary of model reduction regression analysis for T1 predictors of T3 distress

Dependent variable: Distress T3

Predictors	B	Beta	t	p
Self-blame coping	2.70	.08	4.28	.000
Daily Hassles	.20	.08	4.09	.000

$\underline{F}$ (2, 143) = 29.04; $\underline{p}$ = .000, R^2= .279

Overall remark: This hypothesis was partially confirmed for T1 predictors of T3 distress. High daily hassles at T1 predicted high distress at T3. As well, high T1 self-blame coping also predicted high T3 distress.

3.7.2.2.2.3. T2 Predictors of T3 Distress.

The final reduced model included the moderator avoidance coping, the psychological variable daily hassles, and the interaction between the psychological variable professional help for emotional difficulties and moderator support-seeking coping (see Table 32).

For those not seeking professional help-seeking, this interaction suggested that the more they sought support from their network, the less distress was experienced, while for those willing to seek professional support, the more they relied on their network support, the more distress they experienced (see Figure 16).

Table 32

Summary of model reduction regression analysis for T2 predictors of T3 distress

Dependent variable: Distress T3

Predictors	B	Beta	t	p
Avoidance coping	1.94	.07	4.24	.000
Support-seeking coping	-1.33	.09	-2.65	009
Daily Hassles	.24	.07	5.60	.000
Professional help*support-seeking coping	2.26	.14	3.10	.002

$\underline{F}$ (5, 139) = 14.88; $\underline{p}$ = .000, R^2 = .325

Note: Professional help*Support-seeking coping represents the interaction of these variables.

Overall remark: This hypothesis was partially confirmed for T2 predictors of T3 distress. High daily hassles at T2 predicted high distress at T3. High T2 avoidance coping also predicted high T3 distress. Finally, high willingness to seek professional help when experiencing emotional difficulties and high support-seeking coping predicted high

T3 distress. Low willingness to seek professional help and high T2 support-seeking coping predicted low T3 distress.
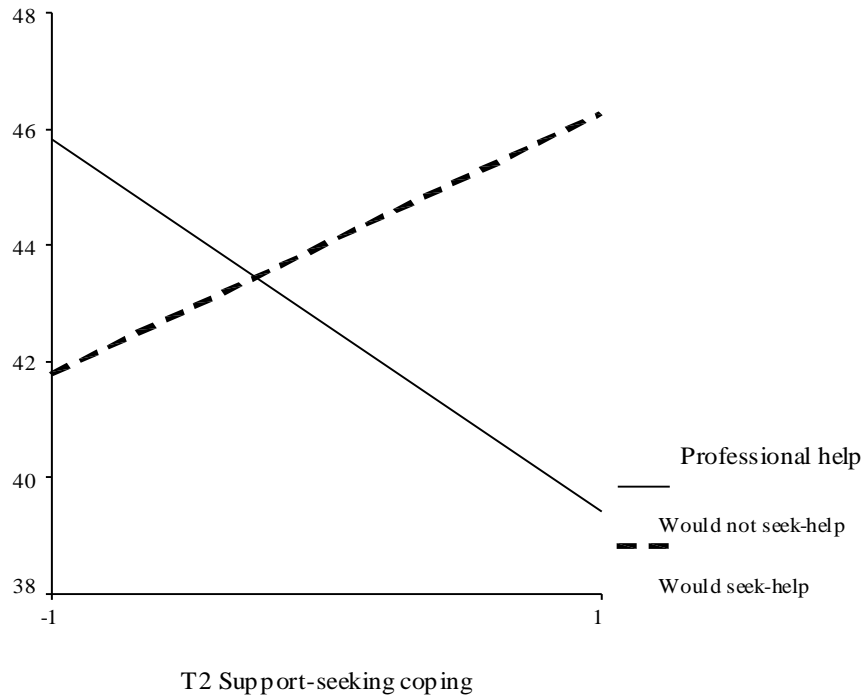
Figure 16. Interaction effects of T2 Seeking-help*T2 Support-seeking coping and T3 Distress.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

This section interprets and evaluates the findings of this study in light of the hypotheses and past research and theory. With this purpose in mind, and for the convenience of the reader, this section will begin with subheadings similar to those in the Results section: Changes over time, comparisons between local and international students, and longitudinal predictions.

Additionally, this section highlights the implications of individualism-collectivism, self-blame and counselling for international students in light of the overall findings in this study.

4.1. Changes Over Time, Comparison between Locals and International Students, and between Chinese and Indonesians.

4.1.1. Ethnic Identity.

It was anticipated that the overall ethnic identity of Chinese students would be significantly impacted by their relatively large numbers and visibility as an ethnic group at the majority of Australian universities. A stronger ethnic identity for Chinese compared to Indonesian students was only confirmed at T1, while they did not show significant differences at T2 and T3 (Hypothesis A1).

Chinese ethnic identity remained constant throughout the three waves, suggesting its strength and steadiness. In contrast, Indonesians began their experience in Australia with a weaker ethnic identity, but this progressively strengthened through T2 until reaching approximately the same level as the Chinese at T3. It is plausible that Indonesians' weaker ethnic identity at T1 was due to their younger age compared to an overall older Chinese group. Alternatively, it could indicate that for Indonesians, ethnic identity is established gradually. Perhaps this stage of grounded ethnic identity is achieved when they overcome difficulties such as their minority status at university (Elligan & Utsey, 1999).

For the convenience of the reader, the associations of ethnic affirmation and ethnic search with distress at the entry stage are discussed in the section specifically dealing with ethnic identity issues.

4.1.2. Acculturative Stress.

Considering that levels of acculturative stress in this study were lower than those previously reported for Mexican-American students in the USA (Hovey, 2000; Hovey & Magana, 2002), it is possible that societal features peculiar to Australia may have a mitigating influence on stress levels experienced by international students from China and Indonesia (Hodgkin, 1978). One such feature is the pluralistic or multicultural nature of Australian society, which allows Chinese and Indonesian students to affiliate with their

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own cultural groups without great interference, and therefore softens the impact of acculturative stress. Most international students reside in large multicultural cities in Australia. Furthermore, Liu, Lawrence, Ward and Abraham (2002) reported that multiculturalism promoted not only ethnic values but also overall national values, based on the acceptance of other ethnic groups' values, thereby contributing to a friendlier relationship between ethnic groups. Williams and Berry (1991) outlined the importance of the receiving society in the process of settlement of new arrivals. It is also plausible that pre-contact factors involving Australian society may have influenced the current findings, including primarily residing in large (and hence fairly cosmopolitan) cities (see Table 15), knowledge of the language and culture, prior intercultural experience before coming to Australia, levels of family education and income, and positive or negative attitudes to acculturating into Australian society and values (Williams & Berry).

As detailed in Hypothesis A2, Indonesians showed higher scores in acculturative stress at T1 and T2 compared with T3. Indonesian students' changes in acculturative stress across waves of assessment follow a predictable course, whereby after eight months of sojourn, students have become more familiar with the host society, and therefore, acculturative stress tends to decline (Ward et al, 1998). It is therefore puzzling that Chinese showed an increase in acculturative stress at T3 compared to T1 and T2. Although the increase was not significant, it suggests a non-typical pattern of acculturative stress according to the stress-coping model. It must however, be acknowledged that some studies have reported acculturative stress being a part of sojourners' life even three years after first arriving in the host society (Hsiao-Ying, 1995).

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Overall, these findings caution researchers against making generalisations about behavioural patterns of acculturative stress across ethnic groups. In particular, one must be cautious in reaching conclusions for all international groups based on research pertaining to a limited number of ethnicities.

4.1.3. Social-Network Orientation and International Students.

Indonesians and Chinese share a collectivistic tradition and highly value providing support not only to family and friends but also to strangers within the larger society, following their principle of helping one another (Goodwin & Giles, 2003).

In this study, all groups showed a high positive orientation towards support at T1, followed by a significantly lower positive orientation towards network of support at T2 and T3 compared with T1. This pattern deserves some comments (Hypothesis A3). High NOS at T1 may indicate satisfaction with their levels of perceived network of support. However, the increasing burden of daily hassles and acculturative stress may prompt students to reconsider their perceived network of support and develop a new network. It is also plausible that at T1 students appraise their circumstances as requiring more of their own control; thus students may shift their preferences towards lower NOS at T2. In other words, when students viewed their circumstances as those in which they needed to be more self-sufficient and less reliant on support networks, they showed lower NOS. It is at T3 that students shifted back to more positive NOS when they acknowledged the benefits of a broader network of support. It is also possible that there were less adjustment

pressures between T2 and T3 and more academic demands, urging students to rely more on a healthy network of support. For example, it has long been known that, when under stress, people affiliate with others exposed to the same stressors (Schachter, 1959).

It is not surprising that perception of network of support is high at T1 because of the several adjustments students face at entry to university, and therefore, strong reliance on network of support is of paramount importance. However, it is puzzling to find this significant drop at T2, which may suggest that perception of network of support did not have the protective influence reported in the literature. However, students at T2 might be at the middle of the semester and not yet subject to final exam stress, which might be more likely at T3. On the other hand, students experiencing adjustment stresses may find it more difficult to reach for support. Dumont and Provost (1999) reported that adolescents vulnerable to mental health problems did not use social support.

4.1.4. Daily Hassles.

The BCSHS was used in this study because of its specificity to measure the daily hassles of university students (Blankstein et al., 1991). As the results for Hypothesis A4 indicated, Indonesians presented significant increases in daily hassles at T2 compared to T1, suggesting that as these students settled in the host society, daily hassles became of increasing concern. This corroborated the prediction that daily hassles only increased in number and probably also in intensity following first interactions at the university level.

Item means for the Australian group were broadly similar to those reported by Blankstein et al's (1991) Canadian sample, particularly in women. It was assumed that local and international students experienced daily hassles differently. International students needed to adjust to life in Australia as well as their university studies. Adjustment for local students involved dealing with university demands, but only some local students had left home. All groups experienced daily hassles relating to life changes and adjustment to university in their own terms. Both Indonesians and Chinese scored higher than Australians, but differences were not significant.

An inspection of item means indicated that although adjustment-related daily hassles became less influential, academic concerns became a more frequent cause of concern for international students. Australians went through a similar process, but increases were at T3 compared to T1. Australians, however, appeared more preoccupied about financial security, future prospects and not having enough money to cover everyday expenses.

Lay and Nguyen (1998) reported that some of the hassles experienced by immigrants from China to the US could be traced to the acculturation experience, while others pertained to daily hassles. Similarly, these authors indicated that more recent immigrants had experienced more hassles with out-groups and higher depression. On a more conclusive note, Sim (2000) reported that if a person experienced high levels of daily hassles, it caused higher levels of maladjustment. Having several hassles may certainly affect overall adjustment.

Some caveats need to be kept in mind while researching daily hassles. A hassle that is central for one person is not necessarily central to another. This highlights the finding that personality and background factors influence levels of daily hassles and the impact that they may have on a given individual.

For the convenience of the reader, the associations between academic and non-academic concerns subscales of daily hassles are discussed next.

4.1.4.1. Daily Hassles: Academic versus Non-Academic Concerns.

All groups of students reported more daily hassles at T1, compared with T2 and T3. The rejection of Hypothesis A5 proposing that international students presented more non-academic related stresses at T1 deserves some further comments. Indonesians in particular presented high academic concerns from the beginning of their experience in Australia, in addition to non-academic concerns. This reflects the different pressures of academic systems from country to country. Additionally, it highlights the perceived academic readiness and proficiency that students bring from their own culture.

Overall, academic background skills attained before sojourning in Australia, academic pressures peculiar to the receiving society, and acculturation level (denoted by proficiency in English language) each significantly shape the initial effect of academic pressures on international students. This serves as a reminder that the host society's

educational system should aim to shape academic demands to students' academic background and expectations.

4.1.5. Distress.

Indonesian and Chinese students experienced higher distress levels than Australian students (Hypothesis A6). This is consistent with a New Zealand study conducted by Deane, Leathem, and Spicer (1992), who developed norms for adults from nurses and psychotherapy clients. Comparing the results of the HSCL-21 distress scale used in this study, means for the Indonesian and Chinese sample on the HSCL-21 were close to the means obtained for the psychotherapy clients by Deane et al. (1992). On the other hand, the Australian means were similar to the norm for the registered nurses. These means confirmed that distress for the international student groups was sufficiently high at T1, T2 and T3 as to correspond approximately to results for the New Zealand psychotherapy group.

In a cross-cultural study using Chinese student samples in the US, it was found that Chinese Americans reported a lower rate of distress and depression than Filipino Americans and Korean Americans (Kuo, 1984). In this study, although differences were not significant, Chinese students reported lower rates of distress compared with Indonesian students.

4.1.6. Rejecting the "U-Curve Shape" Traditional View of Culture Shock.

This study attempted to corroborate the findings of Ward et al. (1998) with Japanese students in New Zealand by examining the experiences of Indonesian and Chinese students attending Australian universities. Ward et al. measured sociocultural and psychological adjustment in Japanese foundation students at a Japanese institute in New Zealand. Instruments used by Ward et al. were different to those used in this study; however, it is of interest to compare the means across time for both groups. In Ward et al's study, sociocultural and psychological distress scores were high at the entry stage, and these scores significantly declined for both measures at 4, 6 and 12 months following first assessment. In this study, the scores on SAFE and HSCL scales were used to ascertain levels of acculturative stress and distress respectively, for Indonesian and Chinese students. On the acculturative stress scale Ward et al's results were corroborated for Indonesian students, while Chinese students behaved differently, as their scores increased at T3 compared to T1 and T2. Ward et al. focused on students who were preparing to undergo university studies and were at a level equivalent to those attending foundation (university preparatory) courses in Australia. Hence, for comparison purposes, postgraduate students were removed from the present analysis. Results showed that undergraduate students from both groups had higher scores at T1 and these decreased at T2; however, the patterns of results at T3 were still different for Ward et al's student sample compared to the undergraduate students in this study.

The measure of psychological adjustment used by Ward et al. (1998) was the Zung depression scale. In this study, the broader HSCL-21 was used to ascertain levels of distress. As for sociocultural adjustment, psychological maladjustment for Ward et al's sample showed a sharp decline for T2, T3 and T4 compared to high scores at T1. In this study, distress scores tended to increase rather than decrease from T1 to T2 but decreased from T2 to T3 for Indonesians, while Chinese scores increased for all subsequent waves after T1. Both groups were significantly more distressed than the Australian sample, which highlights the fact that together with the daily hassles that all experienced when attending university, these two ethnic groups experienced the additional burden of acculturative stresses which caused their distress to increase from T1 to T2 (Hypothesis A7). This did not happen from T2 to T3, as groups did not show significant differences.

The sharp decline in psychological adjustment from entry to 4 months and subsequent follow-ups, as reported in Ward et al's study (1998), was not corroborated with distress levels in this study. This may relate to the fact that in this study, students were assessed within the first three months as the entry point, with two further assessments at 4 and 8 months. Ward et al's subjects were assessed within 24 hours of entry to New Zealand. Unfortunately, this study could not replicate exactly the method used by Ward et al. due to the logistical recruitment difficulties posed by working with international students attending several universities in Australia. One may also need to bear in mind the significant financial and socio-cultural differences between the samples, i.e., the Japanese used by Ward et al. and Indonesian and Chinese samples in this study. Ward et al.'s sample resembled more the Indonesian international student group recruited

for this study when we consider the decline in distress that Indonesians experienced between T2 and T3. Consideration must be given to the nature of the host societies where these studies took place. Ward et al's sample of Japanese students attended a Japanese-only institute for preparation to university studies in a university town of about 100,000 in New Zealand with few Japanese residents. However, the great majority of students in the present study resided in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane; cities with populations from one to four million and with a larger, more heterogeneous ethnic mix.

4.1.7.1. Final Comments on the "U Shape Curve" of Acculturative Stress.

Challenging the traditional "U curve" culture shock model has practical implications. It is intrinsic to the "U shape" culture shock proposition that students go through this process as a maladaptive "disease" cycle which is constituted by phases. Consequently, there is an assumption that international students should be left alone to go through this cycle until "recovered" (Popadiuk & Arthur, 2004). In contrast, the present study has found that acculturative distress is an appropriate adjustment reaction to the unfamiliar environment and is most severe at entry into the host culture. This lends support to earlier refutations of the "U shape" model in the longitudinal studies of Kealy (1989) and Ward et al. (1998). Furthermore, this study offers an empirically based understanding of the acculturative stress experience, particularly as it pertains to Indonesian and Chinese students, and thereby supports the promotion of programs designed to assist international students as early as possible in their sojourn.

Rejection of the "U-curve" hypothesis is limited to international students who are planning to return home following completion of their studies in Australia. Within these sojourning groups, there may be a subgroup contemplating the possibility of becoming permanent settlers in Australia. However, it is unlikely that questions formulated in this study could address their aspirations of staying in Australia without jeopardising their participation. This particular subgroup could have suspected ulterior motives (e.g., Immigration Department) for enquiring of their intentions of becoming settlers in Australia and consequently may have withdrawn their participation. Therefore, it is not feasible to identify this subgroup without being intrusive and jeopardising response rates to the study.

4.1.8. Indonesian Students in Australian Universities and at Universitas Indonesia.

This study found that Indonesian students who enrolled at Australian universities were significantly lower in ethnic identity, higher in orientation towards support, and lower in distress compared to those who chose to study in Indonesian universities (Hypothesis A8). These findings can be explained within the parameters of self-selection. Students who decide to study abroad may be more adventurous, self-confident and optimistic that they can succeed in a new culture (Chang, 1996). Further, Triandis, McCusker, and Hui (1990) suggested that those who decide to migrate or sojourn to another culture tend to be more individualistic than the ones staying in the original culture. However, it was expected that these groups (Indonesian students in Australia and those in Indonesia) would also differ according to their relative geographical locations.

The scales administered in this study were translated into Indonesian language and back-translated into English. The words and concepts were appropriately translated and made sense to the students, confirming that these instruments can travel across cultures well. Although instruments used in this study demonstrated linguistic equivalence, it is important to consider them in light of complex differences within ethnic groups. Therefore, responses provided by one ethnic group member may not reflect the views of all members of that particular ethnic group.

4.1.9. Emotional Well-Being.

Hongyan (2003) outlined Chinese preferences for emotional satisfaction in life and their choices related to the collectivistic nature of their society. In a survey of Chinese children enquiring into perceptions of happiness, 47.9% indicated having a warm family, 35.0% as making contributions to society and 28.5% as having intimate friends (Hongyan). Despite their understanding of happiness, mental health education for children is still quite limited in China, at least as compared with mental health standards in Western societies. In China, 85% of schools do not have psychology teachers, and only 7% of students visited a counsellor at a psychological service at school (Hongyan). These findings suggest, then, some Chinese students may not be psychologically prepared for the demands of study in Australian universities.

It is plausible that the high number of Chinese reporting emotional difficulties in the present study may reflect their inner disharmony due to unfulfilled expectations of happiness following their sojourn to Australia. Australians were open to admitting emotional difficulties, as expected. Hypothesis A9 was only confirmed for Indonesian students, who were, as expected, more guarded about admitting emotional difficulties, which is more congruent with Eastern perspectives of high stigma in relation to mental illness. This reluctance of Indonesians to reveal their emotional difficulties correlates with Asians' general perception that talking about problems equates to amplification rather than resolution (Taylor et al., 2004).

4.1.10. Willingness to Seek Professional Support.

Asian students in US universities have been reported to overutilise university counselling services with academic-related concerns (Tracey, Leon & Glidden, 1986). All groups in this study were willing to seek professional support for emotional difficulties. These findings are perplexing, considering that Atkinson and Gim (1989) noted that highly acculturated groups were those most willing to seek counselling. They found that Japanese-Americans were more willing to seek counselling compared with Chinese-Americans and Korean-Americans because they were more acculturated. This did not apply to groups selected for this study (Hypothesis A10). International students from Indonesia and China, as recent arrivals in Australia, were highly concerned by their acculturative stress difficulties. On the other hand, they mainly came from financially well-educated, affluent families, had parents who had travelled overseas at least once, and

had experienced (not as individuals but in their families) cultural shifts which made them more accepting of Western approaches to utilising counselling services. It is also likely that their need for social support may have motivated their willingness to seek professional help when necessary.

4.1.11. Coping Strategies.

The following section comments on coping strategies in light of findings for Hypotheses A12, A13, A14 and B7.

4.1.11.1. Problem-Focused Coping.

This study showed that Indonesians and Chinese reported using more problem-focused coping than Australians, and these differences were significant. The inference is, however, established that this group of international students was flexible in their use of adaptive coping strategies. As per Terry's (1994) findings, well-adjusted people used problem-focused strategies to deal with situations that had some level of controllability, and therefore, matched these strategies with the situations they faced through their sojourn. Terry further indicated that less neurotic people were better able to judge the situation and applied suitable solutions to it instead of being overwhelmed by it. Similarly, people with positive emotions and optimism used more problem-focused coping strategies.

Elliot and Frude (2001) reported that people who scored high on the hopelessness scale used less problem-focused coping. Overall, they found that coping strategies such as taking specific steps to deal with problems, looking for advice and support were predictors of low hopelessness (Berghuis & Stanton, 2002). On the other hand, denial, religion or getting emotional support showed no association with hopelessness.

Longitudinal studies have found that the problem-solving style of coping and perceived social support were predictors of wellness and absence of psychological distress (Cassidy, 2004). It was highlighted that "when" problem-focused coping was used, it was more relevant to the understanding of this coping strategy than "whether" problem-focused coping was used (Ptacek, Smith & Zanas, 1992). Placed in the context of cultural differences in coping with acculturative stress, this becomes quite complex. International students who come from countries culturally distant from Australia find it difficult to choose a suitable coping strategy when facing a culture-shock experience.

4.1.11.2. Support-Seeking Coping.

Indonesians, Chinese and Australians did not differ on support-seeking coping at T1. This corroborates the perception that sojourning Asians from an interdependent culture may prefer not to engage their social network members for fear of burdening them and thus may prefer to resolve problems on their own (Taylor et al., 2004). In other words, people from collectivistic cultures like to share their stresses with others but in their efforts to avoid disharmony, may also prefer to avoid doing so.

However, when acculturative stresses and daily hassles became too overwhelming, Indonesians and Chinese used more support-seeking coping than Australians at T2. It is within this context, that overwhelming stress may cause Indonesians to use more social support coping than Chinese and Australians at T3.

This study confirmed a main effect for gender on support-seeking coping as per previous reports (Ptacek et al., 1992). Females were more prepared to develop supportive networks and use those supports to deal with distress (Cassidy, 2004). Cassidy found that females in the general population, and particularly female international students, were found to be more likely to use support-seeking coping when experiencing emotional difficulties than their male counterparts. This was clearly reflected in previous studies where female international students were more likely than males to seek support for emotional difficulties (Tata & Leong, 1994). This study also confirmed this tendency. Local female students were more willing to use support-seeking coping strategies when they first entered university. Although female international students were rather guarded in using support-seeking strategies on their arrival in the host culture, they were more willing to use this strategy as they became more familiar with the university and host society environment. They used this coping strategy at the same rate as the local female students as confirmed through the three waves of this study. Local males, on the other hand, were consistently more guarded than the international males in using support-seeking coping.

4.1.11.3. Avoidance Coping.

This study showed that high avoidance and self-blame coping were associated with higher levels of distress. This is consistent with other longitudinal studies that found an association between avoidance and distress (Nolen-Hoeksema, Parker, & Larson, 1994; O'Connor & O'Connor, 2003; Terry & Hynes, 1998). Terry and Hynes argued that avoidance is not adaptive even in the short-term when people are faced with situations beyond their control. Other studies, however, reported that avoidance was adaptive in such circumstances such as those experienced by international students (Mulder, de Vroome, van Griensven, Antoni, & Sandfort, 1999).

Indonesians and Chinese were not significantly different from each other on avoidance; however, Chinese were significantly more avoidant than Australians. The fact that Chinese scored particularly higher than other groups in avoidance coping does not mean that they were more maladjusted than other groups (also see Figure 6). It may simply mean that they use this strategy to regain strength in their efforts to deal with the new environment. It must be added that these results were puzzling because avoidance coping remained high throughout the different waves of assessment, while other studies indicated that avoidance is adaptive only when used at the beginning of dealing with the stressful situation (Mulder et al., 1999). Avoidance was not, however, considered adaptive in other studies, such as in women trying to adjust to abortion (Major, Richards, Cooper, Cozzarelli, & Zubek, 1998).

4.1.11.3.1. Undergraduate and Postgraduate International Students' Use of
Avoidance Coping.

Undergraduate international students used more avoidance coping than postgraduate international students at T1, while postgraduate international students used more problem-focused coping than undergraduate international students at T2. No differences between groups were observed at T3. It appeared that postgraduate students were more able to use the skills developed during their prior tertiary background to resolve difficulties by using problem-focused coping. On the other hand, undergraduate students were more likely to respond with avoidance when faced with difficulties in their everyday life and presented that kind of response on their first interaction with the host society.

It was argued that avoidance coping is functional when dealing with acute stressors and there is no control over the circumstances (Berghuis & Stanton, 2002). However, use of avoidance coping at T2, for example, was more predictive of depression at T3.

4.1.11.4. Self-Blame Coping.

This study showed that both international and local students used self-blame as a coping strategy. This has also been confirmed as a predictor of distress and maladjustment (Pakenham, 1999). By using self-blame coping, local students take responsibility for the undesirable impact of distress resulting from daily hassles experienced while adjusting to

university. Similarly, international students use self-blame coping if they believe they should have had better control over the acculturative stress process that caused distress when they first entered the host society, i.e., if they had prepared themselves better before sojourn. Both local and international students may be advised to focus on the aspects of their adjustment to university that may be more within their control capabilities.

The alternative for international students is not self-blame coping or reacting against the university or host society, but trying to address the problems in the adjustment process that may be amenable to some level of control. In other words, instead of trying to focus on controlling the entire impact of the acculturative stress experience, it is more beneficial for students to focus on specific aspects of the overall experience of adjustment to a new culture, such as time management for studying, or looking for accommodation that best suits their cultural or other preferences.

The overall assumption in the stress literature (Felton & Revenson, 1984) has been that the greater the severity of problems faced, and the worse the resulting emotional distress, the higher will be the probability that the sufferer chooses maladaptive coping strategies (Ptacek et al., 1992). The boundaries of what represents a maladaptive behaviour are not quite clear. The fact that many Chinese and Australians chose self-blame as a coping strategy indicates a passive, self-punitive approach to the stressful experience. The reason why self-blame coping may not be adaptive is that it does not allow the individual to focus on control of future circumstances, and they become locked

in the past and present, which may not prevent them from experiencing and managing future problems.

Previous studies have shown an association between perceived control over cancer and emotional state outcomes. Perceived control over cancer onset had a positive impact on later depression level through the illness process and across the eight months that the study took place, but self-blame did not (Newson, Knapp & Schulz, 1996). This finding has relevance for the type of influence self-blame has on coping with acculturative stress or daily hassles for university students. That is, students who perceived the acculturative stress experience as beyond their control, may engage in more maladaptive behaviour, while those that believe they have more control may engage in more adaptive behaviours to deal with the acculturative stress experience.

4.1.11.5. Religious Coping

Most Indonesians profess a strong Muslim faith as a central principle governing their lives. Accordingly, they were expected to hold strong religious beliefs to which they resort as a coping strategy in dealing with their adjustment in the host culture. Although they were significantly different from Chinese and Australians in religious coping at T1, T2 and T3 (see Table 21 for means), it is of interest that there was no significant negative association between religious coping and distress (see Table 25). This could be interpreted along the lines of Fitchet, Rybarczyk, De Marco, and Nicholas (1999), who viewed religion as a covariate rather than a cause of positive functioning and adjustment. Further,

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Fitchet et al. suggested that religious coping might have a different influence for people adjusting to short-term impairments against those experiencing long-term impairment. Fitchet et al. found that people who had suffered permanent loss of mobility control had higher scores on religious coping than those who had improvement in mobility control. Indonesians' experience of culture shock may be seen as a long-term stressful experience which did not threaten overall well-being and therefore, did not elicit a specific religious behavioural response e.g., more frequent prayer. The particular protective influence of religious coping against distress is then not necessary.

In a study of abortion and adjustment, Major et al., (1998) found that for those women turning to religious coping in response to an abortion, global adjustment was positive, indicating the positive impact that religious coping has in people's lives. Similarly, Tix and Frazier (1998) found that religious coping predicted adjustment longitudinally. Hovey and Magana (2002) reported that religious coping resulted in less anxiety for Mexican farm workers in the US.

The moderately positive association between religious coping and distress for Chinese students is, however, puzzling. The inference is that higher religious coping equated with higher distress for Chinese students. However, it also highlighted that religious coping can at times be a positive experience accelerating the coping process of individuals. On the other hand, reliance on religion can be a sign of trouble, warning that the person has not been successful using other forms of coping (Pargament et al., 2003).

T1 religious coping predicted T2 distress more strongly in Indonesians and Chinese than Australians. Indonesians' use of religious coping is intimately central to their core beliefs and approach to life. Chinese, however, approached religious coping in a more complex fashion. Although institutional Chinese society promotes atheistic beliefs, the modernisation process and open-door policy to the Western world has introduced a revaluation of various religious concepts and beliefs. Chinese may therefore use religious coping but be conflicted about these beliefs. Another plausible explanation for these results is that the larger and heterogeneous sample population of Chinese students may have contributed to a wider distribution of scores for Chinese students and hence greater potential for high correlations with other variables.

4.1.11.6. Substance-Use Coping.

Previous research suggested that addictive behaviour was associated with emotional coping strategies (Unger et al., 2002). People engaged in addictive behaviour frequently used emotional coping strategies such as avoidance coping to deal with stresses (Lightsey & Hulsey, 2002).

In this study, Australians showed higher means on substance-use coping than international students which, taken together with their higher self-blame coping and lower problem-focused coping, indicated their difficulties in adjusting to the new university experience.

4.1.11.7. Concluding Comments on Coping Strategies.

Generally, the literature regards problem-focused and support-seeking coping as effective in dealing with distress, while emotion-focused coping is regarded as a less effective approach (Jex, Bliese, Buzzell & Primeau, 2001). It has been argued, based on the transactional model, that choice of coping strategy is related to personal characteristics and the specific situation (Singer & Davidson, 1991) and is mediated by controllability of the situation (Anshel, 1996). These observations are applicable to the particular situations faced by sojourning Indonesian and Chinese international students, who contend with a new social environment over which they have limited control. It is not surprising then that this study found avoidance and self-blame to be highly correlated with distress at the three waves of assessment. It is important to note that self-blame can be a form of escape or avoidant behaviour as people focus on self but not the problem.

Although some studies have suggested that strategies such as avoidance were ineffective because they caused more psychological distress (Tein, Sandler & Zautra, 2000), it is arguable that international students may use avoidance as a means to protect themselves while settling in the host culture. It is only afterwards that international students may progressively be able to broaden their coping strategies beyond avoidance coping as they become more familiar with the host culture. In this study, problem-focused coping remained an important coping strategy for all groups. Although results were not significant for problem-focused coping, it was found that lower problem-focused coping contributed to higher distress in the expected direction.

4.1.12. Parents' Education, Income and Distress.

In this study, parents' education was not found to have any influence on distress for international students except for a weak association between mother's education and distress (Hypothesis B2). Overall, previous studies found a strong association between parents' low education and distress in Chinese adolescents (Wang, 1998).

Studies have indicated that a mother's low education and large family size were strong predictors of children's low education in adulthood (Riala, Isohanni, Jokelainen, Jones, & Isohanni, 2003). It was intriguing that in this study, a mother's but not a father's education influenced children's levels of distress. This might be due to the tendency of mothers to shoulder the main responsibility for child-rearing, thereby becoming more involved in their children's learning processes and opportunities. Understandably, such involvement may give rise to anxiety in mothers, potentially causing distress in their offspring. Fathers in particular had high expectations about their children's study abroad.

It is also feasible that children who had university-educated mothers themselves who later became working mothers, did not have, due to the mother's daily absence from home, as much maternal input into their own education (Ricco, McCollum & Schuyten, 2003). This situation may have put more pressure on children in modern China, particularly where maternal education has been considered "household capital" and therefore, a resource for children (Kramer, Allen & Gergen, 1995). Drawing from other ethnic groups' experiences, the mothers of more successful students in a study of Turkish

and Moroccan immigrant groups were more educated and therefore, encouraged more intellectual achievement (Van Der Veen, 2003).

Surveys conducted in high schools in China corroborated the impression that children there experienced significant stress resulting from academic pressures. According to surveys conducted there in 2001, 45% of high school students felt overstressed, and 38% felt that their classmates were better than they were. Half the students interviewed felt that they were not going to meet their parents' expectations, and 57% were worried about their future (Hongyan, 2003). Children perceived that not only they, but also their parents were distressed due to pressures for academic achievement.

Low socio-economic status has been associated with poor educational attainment in Hispano Americans, Black Americans and Asian Americans in the US (Kao & Tienda, 1995) and distress for university students (Castillo, Conoley, & Brossart; 2004, Lee, 1981). Hypothesis B1, predicting that lower economic background would be associated with distress, was only confirmed for T2 distress. It is possible that regardless of parents' income, the daily expense of university studies and living abroad strained many families' financial means and therefore, caused further distress to students and their families.

4.1.13. English Language Proficiency.

As per Hypothesis B3, the ability to speak English was a significant predictor of adjustment, confirming previous research such as that of Birman et al. (2002), who

showed that the English competence of Soviet Jewish immigrant adolescents to the US,

predicted low levels of distress on the HSCL-21. Although in this study competence in

English was assessed by a self-report of English language preference in Australia, its

relevance is manifested in the prediction of T2 distress. International students who

showed more confidence in their English abilities at their entry to Australia were similarly

less distressed four months later. Ying (1995) reported that low language competence did

not preclude sojourners from presenting a positive attitude towards the host culture.

However, contact with the new language without accompanying competence in it has

been suggested to negatively influence membership in the host society (Noels & Clement,

1996). This highlights the importance of competence in English as an acculturation

indicator, and given that international students have the major challenge of conducting

their studies in English, more knowledge of English leads to less distress (Nwadiora &

McAdoo, 1996).

4.1.14. Ethnic Affirmation.

Ethnic affirmation as a stage of grounded ethnic identity has been associated with

psychological well-being (Rotheram-Borus, Lighfoot, Dopkins & LaCour, 1998).

Hypothesis B4 found that the association of ethnic affirmation, and ethnic search with

distress was not significant for either group of international students. Yip and Fuligni

(2002) found that psychological well-being was more strongly linked with ethnic

affirmation $(r = .23)$ than ethnic search $(r = .12)$, but neither correlation was significant

here.

4.1.15. Ethnic Identity at Entry.

In this study the coefficient alphas for ethnic identity at T1 (.83) T2 (.85) and T3 (.83), were similar to the .85 reported for Asians by Bracey, Basmaca, and Umana-Taylor (2004). Although these authors found that Asian students (whose parents were both Asians) had a stronger ethnic identity than biracial students (Asian-American) in the US, they also found that they had weaker self-esteem than biracial adolescents. In this study, Hypothesis B5 associated stronger ethnic identity with lower distress. These findings can be interpreted in line with the ethnic identity scores of Indonesian students, who showed weaker ethnic identity than Chinese and subsequently presented higher distress. One explanation for a stronger ethnic identity in the Chinese group is that when these sojourners experienced discrimination, the favoured response was to adhere to one's own ethnic group as a resource for regaining strength (Brehm, Kassin, & Fein, 1999). The present study found that such recourse to the ethnic group was easier for Chinese, as they were a more visible group than Indonesians within Australian universities and society as a whole.

Considering that Chinese students may be targets of discrimination and prejudice may have prompted them to develop further their ethnic identity (Ancis, Sedlacek & Mohr, 2000; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000). This has also been the case with African Americans (Neville, Heppner, & Wang, 1997) who had stronger ethnic identity than Asian Americans and Latin Americans, due to their being more overtly the target of racism in American society (Utsey et al., 2002). Liu et al. (2002) confirmed that Chinese had the

strongest ethnic identity in Singapore as the largest ethnic group there, and constituted the second largest ethnic group, after the Malay, in Malaysia.

A grounded ethnic identity may have a significant impact on the experience of distress (Anderson, 1991; O'Dougherty Wright & Nguyen Littleford, 2002). Studies on African American suicide attempters attending a hospital in the US found that they had a weaker ethnic identity than non-attempters (Kaslow et al., 2004). A grounded ethnic identity may thus play a protective role for international students, buffering the impact of distress in their lives (Lee, 2003; Nesdale & Mak, 2003). This was particularly evident for Chinese students who presented lower levels of acculturative stress and distress than Indonesian students.

4.1.16. Network Orientation Towards Support and Distress.

In line with previous research (Misra, Crist, & Burant, 2003), this study found that a positive network orientation towards support was associated with less distress (Hypothesis B6). Australian students had a more positive orientation towards their social network, confirming their familiarity with the social environment and availability of social support. However, in agreement with reports by Misra et al., for international students, the social-support buffering role was met by gaining social support in the new host society and maintaining contact with family and friends back home. Having a positive orientation towards support is translated into attitudes that promote harmonious interaction with others and facilitate a smoother transition into the host society. As an

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extension of this optimistic attitude towards others, in this study, international students appeared more willing to seek support when experiencing emotional difficulties. This has previously been reported to be the case particularly with Chinese-American university students (Tata & Leong, 1994). They found that Chinese-American students who were more acculturated and less self-reliant showed more willingness to see a psychologist for counselling.

Previous studies reported that the perception of having a network of support had an even more powerful influence on the individual than the actual enacted support (Cheng, 1997; Stewart & Vaux, 1986). Similarly, Tata and Leong (1994) reported that orientation towards support was not only related to international students' willingness to make friends and establish a support network but also to their attitudes towards approaching professional help and openness towards counsellors and advisers. In the context of working with international students, this positive attitude towards getting help from others may make counselling a more viable option for distressed international students.

4.2. Longitudinal Predictions.

This section examines the results of Hypothesis B8 in the context of the experience of Indonesian and Chinese students. Following this, all groups are included in further discussion of Hypothesis B9.

4.2.1. Indonesian and Chinese Students.

The findings that international students used more problem-focused coping at T2 than at T1, in their first interaction with the host society, suggested that they may need time to orientate themselves within the host society, and only then are they ready to use strategies such as problem-focused coping. Initially, they may feel more comfortable using other coping strategies to deal with situations beyond their control. As they apparently increased in confidence, they used problem-focused coping strategies more often. This was confirmed by studies with athletes facing acute stress as a result of sport-related injuries. When facing acute stress beyond their control, athletes used avoidance strategies temporarily to regain strength and to continue with their competition (Anshel, 1996).

International students who used considerable avoidance and/or self-blame coping at T1, experienced high distress at T2. Their inability to exert some level of control over their host environment may have led them to resort to the above coping strategies. On the other hand, if international students felt capable in their English language skills in Australia, this had a positive influence on their adjustment and therefore resulted in lower levels of distress at T2.

There was an interaction between avoidance coping and daily hassles at T1 and distress at T2. Less avoidant international students who experienced more daily hassles showed less distress at T2, while more avoidant students who experienced more daily

hassles showed more distress at T2. In other words, in spite of the constant intrusion of

daily hassles in their life, less avoidant students experienced lower levels of distress.

Conversely, if they showed more avoidance, distress levels were more pronounced.

When predicting distress at T3, a number of predictors at T1 became salient.

Support-seeking coping and self-blame coping became significant predictors of distress.

High self-blame coping was associated with high distress at T3, as at T2. On the other

hand, there was a negative association between T1 support-seeking coping and distress at

T3 for Indonesians and Chinese. This can be interpreted as reflecting that those relying

more on support-seeking coping will experience the benefits of less distress at T3. Again,

acculturative stress difficulties experienced at T1 predicted high distress at T3.

The impact of acculturative stress and daily hassles at T2 again influenced distress

at T3. It also appeared that problem-focused coping influenced distress at T3. Using more

problem-focused coping resulted in less distress. The use of problem-focused coping at T2

may be attributed to an increased familiarity of international students with their host

environment, leading to more productive efforts to control their circumstances.

One important finding of this study is the consistent influence of daily hassles on

distress. Daily hassles and acculturative stress can have a significant predictive influence

on distress as reported in previous studies on daily hassles with university students in

Canada (Kohn, Lafreniere, & Gurevich, 1991). It has previously been confirmed that the

impact of daily hassles can affect mental health longitudinally over and above the

influence of other factors such as demographic ones for Chinese adolescents (Lu, 1991). Similarly, that study confirmed that in the context of facing daily hassles, problem-focused coping was more adaptive than avoidance coping. Correspondingly, if the individual has experienced many hassles in the past, this affects their ability to use a problem-focused approach in dealing with new hassles, with a deleterious impact on their overall mental health.

A study of divorced parents by Tein et al. (2000), focusing on custodial mothers' practice of child discipline, confirmed that using avoidance behaviour at T1 resulted in more psychological distress at T2. Levels of psychological distress had an impact on the overall consistency and appropriate delivery of disciplining behaviour. Tein et al. advocated programs reducing the post-divorce impact of distress on separating couples, together with enhancing new coping strategies. Similarly, it was suggested that programs reducing the impact of acculturative stress and developing broader coping strategies to fit with the new society positively impacted on the stress caused by sojourning to the host culture. That study also reported that the presence and intensity of daily hassles impacted on higher levels of distress; daily hassles assumed a mediating role, while avoidance coping took a moderating role. The present study replicated the findings of Tein et al. and showed that a significant interaction between daily hassles and avoidance coping impacted distress levels at T2. The same role is shared by other non-adaptive coping techniques such as self-blame coping. It is therefore reasonable to infer that some international students who experienced the hassles of everyday adjustment to the host

culture may be overwhelmed by the stresses, thus using more avoidance and self-blame coping rather than problem-focused techniques.

There is a contradiction between the high scores on support-seeking coping and the non-significant results for orientation towards support experienced by international students. Given that orientation towards support is associated more with perceived than received support, it is possible that there is no match between the support needs of international students with the actual support received. In other words, Indonesian and Chinese students may hold perceptions of a support network including local students, while in actual fact they mainly obtain their support from other international students. Previous research highlighted that there were differences between support-seeking and the appropriateness of that support (Tein et al., 2000).

Overall, the more positive their appraisal of the sojourn, as described by Indonesian and Chinese students, the less need there was for avoidance/denial, emotional venting, religious and support-seeking coping strategies.

4.2.2. Indonesian, Chinese and Australian Students.

There was conclusive evidence in this study indicating that problem-focused coping was the preferred coping strategy for local or international students. It is however of interest that T2 problem-focused coping predicted lower T3 distress for international students. This supports the view that problem-focused coping contributes to coping with

depression, decreased intensity of feelings of being burnt-out or depersonalised and strengthened feelings of achievement, as reported by studies conducted with Chinese students at the University of Hong Kong (Chan, 2001).

Avoidance, self-blame and religious coping at T1 predicted distress at T2 for all groups. Self-blame had an unusually larger effect on distress in Australians than in Indonesians and Chinese. It is likely that as Australians became aware of their falling behind in academic work as the semester progressed or were troubled by the number and intensity of daily hassles, they blamed themselves for the state of affairs. It is also possible that Australians consciously used self-blame coping to revitalise themselves and to further increase performance in all aspects of their life. Although it was expected for Australians to show high self-blame in view of their adherence to personal responsibility, typical of an individualistic society, it was puzzling that they presented the lowest scores on problem-focused coping of all groups.

The importance of daily hassles as a predictive influence of distress at T2 was expected for all groups. Daily hassles remained a constant predictor of distress at T2 and T3. Daily hassles have a continuing impact on the lives of all students from their entry to university regardless of their status as local or international students. Similarly, self-blame was also a predictor of distress across T1, T2 and T3. International and local students' use of self-blame coping in predicting distress at T2 and T3 may be linked to their sociocultural and academic adjustment to university life. International and local students may focus on previous daily hassles and academic disappointments rather than putting

these experiences in future perspective and considering what they might do to avoid falling into similar circumstances (Boninger, Gleicher, & Strathman, 1994).

Avoidance and support-seeking coping at T2 predicted distress at T3. Avoidance coping at T2 for international students came as a result of difficulties in controlling involvement with the host society and daily hassles. For local students, daily hassles experienced while attempting to adjust to university life contributed to T2 avoidance coping. As local and international students develop efforts to become acquainted with the university environment, they try to access social support in order to manage with stresses in their everyday life. All groups may attempt to achieve this by mixing with co-nationals or local students and agreeing to attend professional counselling support services for help with their concerns.

Overall, the consistent use of avoidance and self-blame coping at T1, T2, and T3 amplified the negative consequences of problems experienced, thereby having an influence on increased distress levels.

4.3. Individualism-Collectivism.

Most Indonesian and Chinese students indicated that their parents were university educated, and, particularly in the Chinese sample, affluent. Collectivism has been traditionally associated with lower income, as financial independence causes social independence, while financial pressure causes more social interdependence (Triandis,

1994; Vandello & Cohen, 1999). From this it follows that the sample is not typically collectivistic, especially with regard to the Chinese. If anything, Indonesians fit better the features of a collectivistic group.

Collectivistic societies tend to be associated with areas of population density, and in the current study, both Indonesians and Chinese came mainly from densely populated cities. However, from both ethnic groups, Chinese lived in more urban environments associated with modernity and industrialisation leading to individualistic tendencies.

Australians showed the lowest levels of distress of all groups participating in this study. This deserves some comment in the light of individualism-collectivism. Collectivists are assumed to lead less stress-ridden existences because of their focus on collective responsibility (Ellison, Burr & McCall, 1997). Contrary to the above assumption, Indonesian and Chinese students (collectivists) were more distressed than Australian students (individualists), although their higher scores could obviously be due to their sojourner status and hence acculturative stress and higher daily hassles.

Although international students may temporarily be more distressed, it is the approach to dealing with distress that differs across groups. Australians used substances more often in coping with distress, corroborating Vandello and Cohen's (1999) findings for individualistic groups in US society. It is also assumed that self-blame is more of an individualistic tendency. Suicide rates are higher in individualistic societies, which reflect extreme behaviour in societies lacking integration (Ellison et al., 1997) and demonstrate

that self-blame is more prevalent in individualistic societies. The current study

corroborated these findings where local students presented more self-blame coping than

international students.

Indonesian and Chinese students were willing to seek professional support when

experiencing emotional difficulties and held a positive orientation towards their network.

Ellison et al. (1997) indicated that more individualistic students were more likely to attend

counselling for help with emotional problems. Considering that Indonesians in particular

were the fourth highest on an index of collectivism obtained for 56 countries (Hofstede,

1980), it is puzzling that they were so willing to seek help for emotional problems. This

could be explained by demographic factors, i.e., that Indonesian and Chinese students

attending Australians universities in this study are not typical of the overall population in

those countries. As well, Hofstede's work was conducted a generation ago, with vast

changes in Chinese and Indonesian exposure to Western culture since that time.

4.4. Is Self-Blame Adaptive?

The predictive influence of self-blame coping on T2 and T3 distress deserves

further comment. Self-blame coping is an internal attribution resulting from the stresses

associated with being in an unfamiliar host culture for international students, and facing

university adjustment for all students. Self-blame coping has been associated with

emotional coping rather than problem-focused coping (Schneider, 2000). It is uncertain

whether self-blame coping is related to a maladaptive adjustment outcome. Use of

characterological self-blame (personality traits) compromise one's psychological

adjustment more than behavioural (specific behaviour) self-blame (Janoff-Bulman, 1979).

It is therefore important to note that self-blame coping items of the COPE scale used in

this study contained assertions on "criticising myself", and "blaming myself for things

that happen" associated with specific situations such as stresses of being at university or

moving to Australia; therefore they broadly fit with the behavioural approach to self-

blame. Janoff-Bulman (1992) associated characterological self-blame with poor

adjustment because helplessness was an intrinsic aspect of it. Glinder and Compas (1999)

found that behavioural self-blame was related cross-sectionally with stress, while

characterological self-blame was linked to distress predictively in breast cancer patients.

In the present study, self-blame was linked to distress both cross-sectionally and

predictively.

Cross-culturally, self-blame encompasses different meanings. In collectivistic

cultures people may stress group responsibility for mistakes, while in individualistic

cultures responsibility may remain with individuals. The Chinese have incorporated

collective responsibility as one of the cornerstones of their cultural beliefs (Chiu & Hong,

1992). Attributing problems in marriage to contextual factors (e.g. situations) more than

personal factors was confirmed for mainland Chinese compared to US couples in a study

conducted by Stander, Hsiung, and MacDermid (2001). In terms of the predictive

influence of high self-blame coping on T2 and T3 distress for Indonesian and Chinese

international students, and based on their collectivistic background of shared assumption

of responsibility, it was assumed that their responses to high distress would relate more to

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the uncontrollability of the situation faced, rather than a perception of personality flaws. This has practical implications for working with international students. Self-blame coping should not always be discouraged as it may merely represent a cultural reaction to the situation and/or a collectivistic sharing of responsibility. Therefore, self-blame in this instance, may not constitute personality vulnerability.

When the overall group of Indonesians, Chinese and Australians was examined, high self-blame predicted T1, T2 and T3 distress. This merits some further comments. It was expected that all students presented this cross-sectional pattern of results at T1 due to the uncontrollability factor they were faced with. However, when high self-blame also predicted high distress at T2 and T3, it appeared that students were not addressing problems occurring at T1 effectively. This suggested that their self-blame style might be characterological rather than behavioural in nature, which may not be positive for their adjustment. Their coping strategies may be of a maladaptive nature with poor health outcomes (Taylor, et al., 2004). Students may be attributing their frustrations with adjustment to stable and internal causes (hence, characterological) rather than the external and unstable ones, which are features of situational self-blame (Weiner, 1985).

4.5. Is there a Cultural Variant in Coping?

Some coping strategies have been considered to promote adjustment and well-being. It has been shown that spiritual beliefs, problem-focused coping and support-seeking coping all can contribute to well-being (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). It was also found that self-blame coping and avoidance were longitudinally associated with

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distress. However, studying cultural variations of coping confirms that there is no one single coping strategy that can help all (Lohman & Jarvis, 2000). In other words, some coping strategies are better than others based on the circumstances of their use and are contextual to the specific situation, in this case the acculturative stress and/or the stresses of entering university (Coyne & Racioppo, 2000).

4.6. International students and sexuality

This study approached local and international students experiencing late adolescence and early adulthood. Therefore, sexuality represents an important aspect of their developmental process, thus requiring comment. Asians in general have a more conservative attitude towards relationship and sex than others. However, as they become more acculturated to US culture, their sexual behaviour becomes more consistent with norms prevalent in American society (Okazaki, 2002). Two-thirds of students participating in this study were females, and thus there is a need to comment on their perspectives regarding sexuality. Indonesian and Chinese females have a different perspective on relationships and sexuality than Australian females. Rules of behaviour in social and sexual interactions for most Asian girls, regardless to their familiarity with Western views, are based on cultural customs, their religious sense of duty, family allegiances and community expectations (Hennink, Diamond & Cooper, 1999). Hennink et al. concluded that these cultural norms discouraged mixed gender socialisation, entering relationships, and experiencing premarital sex. Spirituality and religion certainly shaped a

more conservative perspective towards relationships and particularly sex in many Asian cultures (Beckwith & Morrow, 2005).

Although the above fits with the views of Asian students, local university students have diverging views about sexuality. In a survey conducted with university students in a southeastern US university (Knox, Cooper & Zusman, 2001), three perspectives about sex were profiled by students. On the one hand, absolutism was held by students who based their views on religious beliefs which ultimately determined right and wrong, and on the other hand, hedonism was held by students who were guided by pleasure. In between the two, relativism led students to the view that what people do sexually depends on the person they are with. Although male university students tended to take a hedonistic perspective, most from both genders preferred to take a relativistic stance regarding sex.

Although this study did not cover personal and sensitive sexuality issues so as not to inhibit participation in this study, some students expressed their views on relationships and trustworthiness of others in the host society in an unprompted way via the in-depth interviews conducted in the qualitative phase. International students appeared conservative and guarded in developing friendships in the new culture. The strength of their relationship with family and friends and reliance on these networks for support played an important role in their openness to new social interactions within the host culture. Given the need to establish a network of support in the new culture, international students tended to rely on co-nationals and students from other nationalities before mixing with local students in Australia. It is considered that similarity in cultural background and

sharing of values are relevant to international students' pursuit of new friendships within the new culture. Selection of sexual partners (if any) is therefore, a relatively complex process given international students' selectivity in developing initial friendships in the host society.

Overall, issues about sexuality were not mentioned in the quantitative or qualitative study. It is considered that maybe at this stage of their entry into the new culture, most international students were concerned about daily hassles in their settlement in Australia rather than sensitive and personal issues relating to sexuality. Furthermore, international students appeared more concerned with academic than personal stressors at this stage of their sojourn.

4.7. The 2002 Bali bombing and Indonesian students in Australian universities

Indonesia experienced significant financial pressures following September 11 and the 2002 Bali bombing. From $6.2 billion in 1996, foreign investment in Indonesia fell to $5.9 billion in 2001 (Schuman, 2002). Anti-Western sentiment and guerrilla upheavals in various regions of Indonesia contributed to an increasing decline on foreign investment. Industries that have been hit hardest are tourism, agriculture and other services.

The impact of the Bali bombing on Australians was of a similar magnitude to the impact that September 11 had on Americans despite the fact that the 2002 Bali bombing did not take place on mainland Australia. Most of foreign victims from the 2002 Bali

bombing were Australian nationals. Also, for years Australians have developed an emotional and psychological attachment to Bali as part of their own territory, given its high popularity as a tourist destination (Green, 2004). The Bali bombing was seen by regular Australian locals as anti-Australian and created anti-Muslim sentiment, particularly against international students from Indonesia who chose to study in Australia (Green, 2004). This hostility translated into attacks on mosques and verbal and physical abuse to women wearing hejab (head-covering). Indonesians had additionally already decreased their presence in Australian universities following the Indonesian financial crisis in 1998. This was further affected following the Bali bombing with reports from students already receiving education in Australia reporting discrimination.

International students comprise 12.5% of admissions to Australian universities, second only to Switzerland with 16.6%. Although there is a larger enrolment of international students, Australian universities have not advanced at the same pace in accommodating the needs of the changing student population profile. These lags can still be observed in assessment practices, ethnocentric Westernised views on education or even simple acts such as allocation of venues for Muslim students' prayers on university campuses (Asmar, 2005). Liverant, Hoffman and Litz (2004) have indicated that following the September 11 events, college international students living in Boston, Massachussets presented more signs of anxiety and coped using maladaptive strategies such as denial, behavioural-mental disengagement and venting of emotions. In this study, Indonesian and Chinese students used avoidance as a coping strategy to deal with the new

environment, which may also account for the feelings of discrimination and rejection experienced as a result of the Bali bombing.

Discrimination and racial hatred are not greatly evident at Australian universities. International students spend a large percentage of their everyday activities attending lectures and the library. In effect, the university environment protects them in a way from the influences of the broader Australian society. This is particularly the case at the beginning of their sojourn when international students are focussing on becoming familiar with the university, and changes will only occur later when after settling into the university ther are forced to come to terms with the wider society.

Considering that the Bali bombing took place in October 2002, it is feasible that Indonesian students responding at T3 may have experienced discriminatory repercussions as they initially were recruited in February 2002. A smaller number of international students were recruited during 2003 who may have been warned by co-nationals of the after effects of the Bali bombing. Overall, it is difficult to establish whether the acculturative stress issues of adjusting to life in Australia including discrimination experienced following September 11 and the 2002 Bali bombing may have influenced Indonesian students' responses and adherence through the waves of this study because there was no direct question relating to the impact of these events.

4.8. Counselling International Students.

Both international and local students consistently used problem-focused coping through waves of assessment. However, international students used more problem-focused coping than local students, and this highlights a major aspect of counselling for international students. In contrast to popular perceptions, this study found that local rather than international students need assistance with problem-focused coping. Considering that using problem-focused coping results in diminished distress, counselling may promote further expansion of problem-focused skills to deal with adjustment and daily hassles. Concentrating on dealing with an unfamiliar environment through problem-focused coping may also allow both local and international students to protect themselves from the emotional implications of this significant change in their lives. Furthermore, counsellors may thereby be able to identify students who are vulnerable or at risk of further emotional problems, as international students in particular do not readily communicate emotional discomfort. An extreme presentation of this is the unreported suicidal tendencies in some ethnic groups which go undetected on assessment (Morrison & Downey, 2000). Bearing in mind the above vulnerability factors, an assessment of distress is crucial within the first three months, considering that levels of distress are highest close to the point of entry into Australia (Zheng & Berry, 1991).

It appears that counselling should be of a more proactive nature at the beginning of international students' university experience. This proactive approach should, however, be mindful of the overload of information to which international students can be exposed in

their first contacts with the university. A direct focus should consider nurturing social support and furthering ethnic identity through mentoring by international students who have been in the host society longer. Similarly, all efforts need to be directed towards normalising the acculturative stress experience and removing the negative labels associated with avoidance and self-blame coping as legitimate approaches to dealing with an unfamiliar host culture on first contact. Considering that these two international students' groups were found to use problem-focused coping to a higher level than local students, energy should be shifted to some other areas of working with international students' adjustment.

It is necessary that counselling services incorporate more awareness of spirituality in assisting the adjustment of international students in particular groups, such as Indonesians, who have ingrained religious beliefs that contribute to their overall adjustment (Simoni, Martone & Kerwin, 2002). One is reminded that in many cases, spirituality and attendance at religious services become sources of social support for international students (Simoni et al.). Considering that substance use is used to some degree by students, religious coping may represent a more adaptive approach to dealing with problems (Smith, McCullough & Poll, 2003). It is also important that counselling services acknowledge the longitudinal influence of avoidance, self-blame coping and substance use coping on distress levels so that appropriate intervention strategies may be designed.

Counselling may also further incorporate the use of scales measuring coping preferences to adapt delivery of services according to the coping needs of students.

International students may, in many instances, prefer to confide in their lecturers, tutors or trusted friends when dealing with personal difficulties. Counselling services need to acknowledge that it can be more acceptable to seek advice from a trusted mentor rather than a "mental health professional". It is likely that international students feel empowered to confide personal information to trusted friends or academics despite indirectly disclosing mental health information in the process. The further point for counsellors is to incorporate these international students' perspectives within their counselling process. Counsellors may encourage international students to rely (at least initially) on these informal levels of support available to them, such as lecturers, international student's advisors and co-nationals.

International students may benefit from psychoeducational materials, workshops, lectures aimed to familiarise them with the host culture. These activities may assist international students to identify what are the common negative reactions they may have and strategies to deal with them (without resorting to use avoidance or self-blame).

4.9. Strengths and Limitations.

This section describes the strengths and limitations identified in conducting this study.

4.9.1. Strengths of this Study.

This is one of the first Australian studies attempting to address the acculturative stress process of international students across time. A review of articles published since 1965 in the PSYCINFO electronic database (Psychological Abstracts) found no other prospective study on acculturative stress in Indonesian or Chinese students using the stress and coping model.

This study measured coping strategies at different waves, assessing progression in use of coping strategies across time for these three groups of students. Assessing coping strategies across time while participants were facing the same stressor is a design approach valued in the coping literature (Carver et al., 1989). As Lazarus (2000) also indicated, prospective within-subjects longitudinal studies of stress and coping are very relevant because they allow one to identify changes over time as well as stable psychological structures. Longitudinal studies also offer the opportunity to identify causal relations among constructs.

Another strength of this study was that it moved away from the traditional problem-focused and emotion-focused coping dichotomy persistent in the coping literature, examining seven coping strategies. Studying coping strategies from culturally different perspectives allowed the possibility of recognising coping strategies beyond the traditional dichotomy common in Western cultures. The fact that the topic studied was

adjustment to a new culture, involving the low-controllability stress created by acculturation, added new elements to the understanding of coping (Terry & Hynes, 1998).

This study assessed coping strategies along more than two entry points, enabling comparisons with previous stages of coping. Comparing performance across time confirmed Terry's assertion (1994) that the way people cope in the present was similar to the way they coped in the past, so measuring subjects on more than two occasions addressed the comparability factor on retrospective recall of coping. In other words, having three assessment points allowed better comparisons and reduced the chances that reports of coping did not reflect the actual experience.

A distinctive strength of this study is that having three measurement waves allowed for the identification of non-linear patterns of stress, coping and adjustment, permitting comparisons not possible with only two waves.

Additional strength of this study is the examination of patterns of acculturative stress in two large groups of international students. At least in Australia, Chinese and Indonesians are rapidly becoming the two largest international student groups and present a complex array of issues to the university community. At a time of declining Commonwealth funding, international students also contribute to the financial strength of Australian universities, which underlines the importance of providing such students with high quality education and a fulfilling sojourn. Berry (1994) acknowledged the relevance of conducting cross-cultural research and communicating results to those managing the

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acculturation process, thereby providing worthwhile information to ensure the successful settlement of international students.

Conducting a qualitative portion of this study allowed the identification of factors that are seen by sojourners as challenges rather than threats. It also provided insights beyond the limited concepts dealt with in the standardised scales. Highlighting these factors in cross-cultural training programs may also favour a better delivery of services for international students (Ryan & Twibell, 2000). Lazarus (2000) advocated that stress-coping research focus on intra- and inter-individual differences; the present design permitted both to be examined.

Another strength of this study was obtaining a comparison group of students attending universities in Indonesia. This permitted to establish more accurate assumptions in regards to international students from Indonesia who selected to study in Australia. Furthermore, care was incorporated in the process of translation and back translation to English. This study also obtained data from multiple universities, and in multiple cities, hence permitting greater generalisability across Australia.

4.9.2. Limitations of this Study.

Individuals experiencing severe levels of acculturative stress may not have been highly represented in this study, because they might have found it threatening to volunteer initially and difficult to continue the follow-up stages of this process due to high levels of

distress. This has previously been confirmed by research with depressed students (Cantazaro et al., 1995). Therefore, future studies should redouble efforts to include those international students with failing grades or who are known to frequently visit medical or counselling centres.

Discretion should be used when collecting self-report measures of behaviour. Administration of self-report measures assumes insights into one's own behaviour, which may only come with age if at all. The majority of international and local students taking part in this study were late adolescents experiencing, in many cases for the first time, significant transitions in their lives, which may influence their accuracy of their responses to new situations.

As with any self-report study, a word of caution is in place to interpret data provided by international students as they completed self-assessment measures which asked their retrospective views about stress. Stone et al. (1998) cautioned against using coping measures which enquired about general strategies to deal with stress as they do not reflect the "moment by moment" efforts by sojourners to deal with stress. It may be productive for future studies to include daily diaries of stress experienced to compare with ratings of daily hassles and coping strategies.

Some of the measures included in this study, such as the daily hassles administered to a sample of Indonesian students in Indonesia, should be administered with caution, as hassles vary across locations and clearly from one country to another. The

daily hassles of sojourners are obviously different to those experienced by Indonesian students attending Universitas Indonesia. Therefore, this study advises caution in generalising these results to other nations and cultures.

In this study, the influence of self-blame coping was examined longitudinally only during the first eight months of sojourn. It is suggested that follow-up using self-blame coping should be pursued beyond the first year (Rahe & Tolles, 2002). Furthermore, although the brief COPE scale has good psychometric properties, using only two items for the assessment of self-blame (as with all coping subscales) may not have been sensitive enough to identify whether self-blame is characterological or behavioural, in which case more specific scales would be best suited to achieve that purpose.

Caution is also necessary when considering the cultural expectations of Asians in intercultural experiences. Asians accentuate cultural harmony, and this may influence their responses to questionnaires and interviews. Therefore, their responses to the questionnaire may not reflect their actual views but may, at least in part, be an effort to provide favourable comments and opinions so as not to disrupt harmony.

One should be cautioned to not generalise the results of this study to Chinese and Indonesian students staying in smaller cities/towns, attending smaller colleges/universities or living in other nations, even English-speaking ones.

The findings of this study are useful for international students, in particular, Indonesian and Chinese international students. However, this study does not automatically translate to the views or experiences of other ethnic groups of international students here or elsewhere. Furthermore, this study does not necessarily reflect the views of the overall sojourning population in Australia.

The inability to recruit students immediately following entry into Australia represents a limitation to this study. It was not feasible to recruit international students directly on arrival here; therefore, some acculturation would undoubtedly have occurred prior to recruitment.

Local students were only recruited at Macquarie University; consequently comparisons with international students from 16 other Australian universities were not strictly appropriate.

As proficiency in English language is an important indication of acculturation and confidence in communicating with others in the host society, it must be carefully measured. Self-rated proficiency in English language appeared to provide a reasonable indication of English skills; however, future studies may be advised to include objective measures of English proficiency as a check on overly optimistic or pessimistic self-ratings (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992).

A final word of caution needs to be in place regarding the approach used for the analysis of the results. The author did not use Structural Equation Modelling due to the low number of participants who completed all three-measurement waves. There was a small sample (41 Indonesians, 70 Chinese and 37 Australians) at T3. The low sample for T3 did not make it viable, appropriate or worthwhile to look at T1-T2. Indeed, it might have been misleading to do so, as the results may not have shown a similar pattern at T1-T3 and T2–T3.

4.10. Recommendations.

This study has implications for counselling international students. Indonesian and Chinese students bring with them their personalities, family background and cultural experiences whilst aiming to fit into Australian society. It makes sense then for the receiving culture to acknowledge this contribution by introducing mechanisms conducive to a successful adjustment for international students (James, 1997). Counselling services may assist international students by rejecting culturally bounded influences in counselling. Counselling should take a role in accepting culture-centred approaches, acknowledging that therapy develops in a cultural context (Fisher, Jome & Atkinson, 1998). Members of any culture hold beliefs in healing processes that deserve respect and need to be incorporated into the counselling process of the receiving society (Sue, 1994).

This study revealed that there are opportunities for counselling services to deliver attributional retraining programs for international and local students (Weiner, 1985). As

students in this study appeared to engage in considerable self-blame behaviour, which was linked to internal and stable characterological traits, attributional retraining would be indicated. Through such training, the pessimistic characterological stance of students can be shifted towards a more optimistic behavioural attitude. Attributional retraining has previously been successful with career exploration in US university students (Luzzo, James & Luna, 1996), learning disability in US college students (Borgowski, Weyhing & Carr, 1988), and enhancing academic achievement in US college students (Perry & Penner, 1990). Furthermore, this study found a high correlation between self-blame and avoidance coping, thus, counselling services may also incorporate programs to reduce the high incidence of such coping, and to promote problem-focused and social-support coping (Luzzo et al.; Vitaliano, Katon, Maiuro & Russo, 1989).

Promoting ethnic identity as an aspect of the overall cultural identity of minority groups in Australia has its advantages for the successful adjustment of international students. Sonn, Bishop and Humphries (2000) studied the relocation of Aboriginal students to an urban setting at a university in Perth, Western Australia. They found that mainstream society needed to cater for social diversity and further facilitate a social environment in which students might negotiate their own ethnic identity and values, working towards a successful adjustment to the mainstream culture.

The importance of advocating ethnic identity also has implications for the academic achievement of international students (Gareis, 2000). The value of ethnic identity in academic achievement and overall adjustment of ethnic groups cannot be

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overlooked. Clifton, Williams and Clancy (1991) conducted research with Australian, British, Greek and Italian secondary students living in Australia, finding that adherence to their own cultural values facilitated achievement, and lack of English skills limited it. In the counselling context, awareness of ethnic identity issues additional to English language proficiency and time living in Australia, should be considered important tools when designing prevention and intervention strategies for international students (Barry & Grilo, 2003).

One overall recommendation transpiring from the high levels of acculturative stress experienced by Indonesian and Chinese students relates to the support available at counselling services. This study suggests that counselling services need to be prepared to cater for the needs of new arrivals, in this case particularly Indonesian students who experienced alienation, loneliness and feelings of not being at home, more so than Chinese. These students may also be underachieving and at risk of dropping out of their studies, and may have difficulties communicating in the English language (Fuertes & Westbrook, 1996).

Chinese were disadvantaged by their lower use of support-seeking coping at T1, which caused higher distress at T3. Programs may assist by promoting the benefits of support-seeking coping in this particular ethnic group.

It has been found that avoidance has a negative effect on health, while problem-focused coping and support-seeking coping had a beneficial influence after one year of

follow-up (Ingledew, Hardy, & Cooper, 1997). Equally, as stressors increased in intensity, avoidance coping became more prominent, except for those using problem-focused coping and social support. Therefore, when working with international students, it may be advisable to encourage their use of problem-focused and support-seeking coping for a successful adjustment into the host culture. However, avoidance coping is justifiably appropriate when initially dealing with an unfamiliar environment, and only later, when some balance and familiarity with host society has been reached, problem-focused coping becomes prominent.

A stress-coping conceptualisation of acculturative stress provided a valuable framework in this study. Using the stress-coping model in future studies is therefore highly recommended. As distress resulting from acculturative stress and daily hassles interferes with adjustment to university and Australia, all students resorted to using coping strategies appropriate to their personal and cultural background experiences (Prelow, Tein, Roosa, Mark, & Wood, 2000). Of particular note was the inconsistency of problem-focused coping across groups, Indonesians' preference for support-seeking coping and religious coping, and Chinese and Australian choice of substance-use coping, although overall, this was the least common strategy. All groups, however, showed a preference for avoidance coping and self-blame coping at different stages of their adjustment.

Findings related to the coping strategies used by international students in this study may contribute to the further understanding of the coping process. It has been suggested that problem-focused and support-seeking coping may hold the key for a

successful adjustment when facing stress (Cassidy, 2004; Compas et. al., 2001). Consistent with the literature on coping, females favoured support-seeking coping, regardless of nationality (Compas & Wagner, 1991). Placed in the cultural context of university and host society adjustment, problem-solving coping becomes a tool when students incorporate it in their maturing process after having experimented with other coping strategies with varying outcomes. Avoidance, religious coping, support-seeking, self-blame, and substance use coping all have, in one way or another, a role in shaping students' resources for developing the best coping strategy for their circumstances.

International Offices and Counselling Services should collaborate with university schools and faculties in promoting policies that facilitate the integration of international students into university life. These services have a proactive role in educating lecturers on acculturative stress, highlighting the benefits of ethnic identity affirmation and supporting the culturally appropriate use of coping strategies by international students. International Offices and Counselling Services have an overall significant pastoral and advocacy role in assisting universities to provide welfare and personal well-being for international students.

4.11. Future Directions.

To increase further understanding of the acculturative stress process, international students' personal accounts of their sojourn should be gathered through structured and semi-structured interviews. It may also be beneficial to include significant others related to the international student such as family and other co-nationals who may be able to

provide additional insight on what it means for the person interviewed to be an international student (Compas et. al., 2001). This study also highlighted the appropriateness of further prospective studies, with a view to developing causal models of acculturative stress. Similarly, this study responded to the increasing need for Australian research that examines in detail the associations between acculturative stress and coping.

One difficulty in this study was the limited availability of standardised instruments assessing the acculturative stress experience and related constructs. Having more standardised instruments may accelerate the progress of research in this area. Although all instruments used in this study showed high reliabilities, there was not much evidence supporting their use in cross-cultural contexts. With the exemption of the COPE, HSCL-21 and MEIM, all used extensively in cross-cultural research, instruments such as the BCSHS, NOS and SAFE have yielded little normative data in cross-cultural populations. This explains the exploratory nature of this study and the importance of including the Australian group for intergroup comparisons.

It is also important to understand the cultural context in which acculturative-stress research takes place and the coping strategies that students use in these different contexts. There is a need for studies focusing on coping strategies within various ethnic groups in Australia and their further implications for counselling students.

It is imperative that future research follows students for more than one year to discover the long-term consequences of patterns of behaviour in relation to the

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acculturative stress process for international students and adjustment to university for local and international students (Zheng & Berry, 1991). For example, successful first-year adjustment may or may not predict successful later-year adjustment. It would be important to ascertain sojourning issues when the acculturative-stress issues and adjustment to university are relatively under control. Longer-term follow-ups of students from origins other than the ones considered in this study may give insights on the long-term aspirations of students. For international students sojourning from collectivistic societies, these aspirations may also be intimately linked to the expectations and further aspirations of their own families, who may need to be included in future research designs.

One overall aim of this study has been achieved. This study found that stresses are more prevalent at the beginning of sojourn. This recommends a major shift in efforts initiated by international offices and counselling services to develop proactive programs to assist international students from Indonesia and China from early on in their settlement at university and in the host culture.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS FROM QUALITATIVE STUDY

The qualitative section of this study endeavoured to elicit sojourners' narratives of their experiences of moving to Australia from Indonesia and China. In drawing attention to the international students' experience of acculturative stress, the value of conveying their personal stories of sojourn cannot be over-estimated.

Qualitative data was obtained by conducting face-to-face interviews. The format of the interviews was broadly modelled on that proposed by Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994).

Ten students from Indonesian and China were invited to present their views on their first experience of being in Australia and university. Three males and two females each from Indonesia and China shared their acculturative stress experiences in a face-to-face interview with the author of this study.

Interviews were conducted on campus and included only Macquarie University and the University of Sydney. At the outset of each interview, the interviewer made it explicit that the aim was to obtain interviewees' views on their experience regardless of whether they were positive or negative. The interviewer also stressed the confidentiality and anonymity of the interview process, thus encouraging a freer presentation of information. All interviews were conducted in English.

The opinions of the ten international students were summarised and grouped according to specific themes as follows:

- First impression on arrival to Australia

- Ethnic identity issues

- Problems experienced since arriving in Australia

- Coping strategies

- Fears

- Discrimination

- Three wishes

- Educational systems and interaction with lecturers and other students

- Advice to new students

This section comprises two subsections, followed by a discussion of the results. The first subsection, titled "Themes of sojourn at arrival in Australia", is a summary of interviews conducted with international students shortly after their arrival in Australia from Indonesia and China. The purpose of describing this initial phase of their experience was intended to elicit the impact acculturative stress had in their lives.

The second subsection was titled "Personal stories of sojourn across time". Two students from Indonesia (one male and one female) and two from China (two females) were interviewed at entry to university (which was within the first month of their arrival in Australia), plus four and eight months after entry to University. Names have been changed to protect their privacy, and description of their experience is presented in third

person. Due to length, the full interviews are not included in the main body of this report; they form Appendix D. However, a brief summary of their views is included in the main body of this section.

5.1. Themes of Sojourn at Arrival in Australia.

This section summarises the views of the ten international students on their first impressions upon their arrival in Australia. Quotes from actual transcripts representing opinions of students are included at the beginning of each theme. In some instances more than one quote is included and separated by quotation marks.

5.1.1. First Impression on Arrival to Australia.

"Clean. It is clean and many people from other cultures, and then because the culture is different from Indonesia, in here I can wear anything. In Indonesia cannot because people are not supposed to wear dress"…"The only difficulty is the weather because one day is quite changing and becomes very hot in the morning raining in the afternoon, I find difficult to cope."…. "I like the city because people are like friendly. This is international city so I can find food; facilities here are good, especially for disable people and international people."

One of the first aspects highlighted by international students who had just arrived in Australia included comments on the environment. Some had arrived in very cold weather for which they had not prepared, the cleanliness of the surroundings, some excited about the blue skies, and some felt impressed by the lack of pollution.

Some international students commented on the accommodation difficulties experienced; others resided with Australian families (home stay). The home stay students found this experience gratifying as they were given a warm family atmosphere.

Another common thread was illustrated by comments about how quiet the surroundings are. Some had this impression even as early as arrival in Australian airports, where they did not observe the crowds familiar in China's airports. International students also commented on how people in Australia live in spacious houses, compared to their home country, where people live in overcrowded accommodation.

People also commented about how nice and helpful people are in Australia. The friendliness of people provided some international students with a positive introduction, which assisted their adjustment in the host culture. On the other hand, some students felt upset because they felt that they were not welcomed to the new culture, and people who collected them from the airport were not friendly.

Some other students, particularly Chinese, complained that there were too many Chinese people in Australia, which made them feel they were still at home. However, their disappointment at the large number of people from their own nationality meant that they felt this was a limitation to learning English. Some comments revealed disappointment as they expected to be mainly in contact with the mainstream Western cultural group. On the other hand, some Indonesians in particular felt obliged to broaden

their friendships with people from other nationalities, as they did not find many people from their particular background. Some felt excited about being in the new culture but similarly felt homesick about leaving family and friends.

5.1.2. Ethnic Identity.

5.1.2.1. Meanings Associated with Being Indonesian.

> "I call Indonesia home. It is a wonderful place. The ways people are in Indonesia are always friendly, nice. I always felt safe. So many customs, traditions, religions, values and races mix together. I had friends who were Muslims, Christians."

One student indicated pride for the hardworking nature of people in Indonesia, although many are forced to leave their country due to financial strain. Another student indicated how difficult it is to live on some of the islands in Indonesia where criminal activities and poverty are high. Another student commented on the multicultural nature of Australian society, which does not exist in Indonesia. On the other hand, another student commented on the mix of cultures, religions and costumes which make Indonesia a lively culture. This student admired the friendliness of Indonesian people.

Some students stressed differences in everyday people's pace of life. A student pointed out how people in Indonesia are never on time, and how people in Australia always walk so fast, as if they were late for an appointment. This student further commented on how everything is scheduled in Australia, while in Indonesia if one wishes

to catch a bus, they just wait till it comes. Another student felt surprised about the high divorce rate in Australia and remarked how divorced people are looked down on in Indonesia. Some talked about personal independence in Australian society and how people live independently from their own families. In Indonesia, people can still live with parents even after they are married.

Another student stressed the cultural differences, viewing Australia as an individualistic country while Indonesia was a collectivistic society. This student articulated that families are more together, have faith in God and don't lead their own life away from family in Indonesia.

Another student outlined the courteous and friendly relationship in Indonesia between parents and children, teachers and students and the respect the young owed to older people. This student also noted that Indonesians don't shield their own emotions and are more open than Australians.

5.1.2.2. Meanings Associated with Being Chinese.

> "Long history, hard working cultural, moral case very hard, traditional values look nice and goes from generation to generation".... "I feel patriotic and proud of being Chinese. Many locals still think China is still underdeveloped. When I get new friend try always to tell them that China is changing and is becoming more democratic and prosperous country. In some regards is more prosperous than Australia."

One student felt that being in Australia brought awareness about the financial difficulties which caused some people even to lack food in China. A student remarked on the progressive financial rise of China which influences its position in the world. It was also noted by another student that China is not the underdeveloped country that some people may choose to believe. On the contrary, China is in many respects more developed than Australia. Another student noted that youth in China had become very competitive and thus found many opportunities to progress in his homeland. This student felt his mission was to change Australians' perception of China. Another indicated pride about China's ancient history. Another had insight about how Chinese culture is seen by Australians and indicated that China, as a culture, needed to be "nicer" in its presentation to the world. Another student complained about the lack of media freedom in China that prevented everyday people from expressing their opinions. A student considered that China, particularly Shanghai, was as multicultural as Sydney.

One student highlighted the features of Chinese students compared to Australians. This student indicated that Chinese were shy people who preferred not to talk unless they were talked to. Similarly, this student stressed the hardworking nature of Chinese people. Another highlighted the adaptability of Chinese students when exposed to new cultural environments.

Another student also highlighted differences in family values. A student considered that Australian teachers were more open in talking about their families in front of their students, while in China that was a private issue. It was noted that for Australians,

family was very important, while Chinese considered that co-workers were even more important than family members.

A student argued it that it did not matter where you came from, all cultures and countries were the same. To further this point, this student stressed that the skin colour is the only difference, as people are the same everywhere. Another student went further to indicate that what is more important is the flexibility to adjust in the host culture. Another student indicated that it is difficult to establish your own identity, and he was struggling to develop one of his own.

5.1.3. Problems Experienced Since Arriving in Australia.

5.1.3.1. Food.

> "It is really different than Indonesia. It is very difficult because we only eat rice and spicy food. We did not eat pork. That is difficult for me (how to make others understand that he does not want pork in supermarkets)."

Some students found it difficult to find fresh food, as they were not used to frozen food back home. Others found the availability of some foods such as pork against their religion, and because of their English language communication problems they could not raise this issue at supermarkets.

5.1.3.2. Friendship.

> "I want to make friends. I join some group, go to church. Before I came, I went to church often. I am Christian. It is strange to go alone. I should overcome my character"….. "I found difficult to stay because I don't have friends. I find difficult to make friends. Some students not from my town city and tried to make friends with students from other countries. I think is very exciting to make friends with students from other countries."

Some students were keen to meet new friends and to share close friendships but were also aware that friendships took time to evolve. Some found it difficult to approach locals for friendship because of fears of being rejected. Some also consider opportunities such as attending church as a means to gain new friends. Some indicated they took the initiative to develop friendships, and if one was shy and had insufficient command of English, they had reduced chances to develop networks of friends.

5.1.3.3. Communication.

> "In China my English is not bad. When I first arrived in Sydney I cannot understand what people are saying because people speak so fast"…. "When I am coming, I have an apartment and flat mates are American. I could not speak English at all. It is difficult to communicate with them. I just tried to speak with them. They did not understand much but I tried to learn and speak better"… "My problem is the language. People sometimes don't know what I am talking about."

Students reported communication difficulties not only related to their interaction with local students but also other international students. Although Indonesian students

related positively to other sojourning groups, such as Chinese students for example, Indonesians found it difficult to express their feelings due to English language limitations.

5.1.3.4. Independence.

"I think sometimes I feel I am making the wrong decision, because in here I am making all decision by myself and you have to bear the consequences behind your decisions. Even though I am 20 years old now, I feel that I am not mature enough to make some of the big decisions on my own."

Some students found it difficult to adapt to their newly gained independence, as they were used to relying on parents' support to provide for all their needs. Some even found it too overwhelming to make decisions due to the risk of making an unwise decision which might have a long-lasting impact on their life.

5.1.3.5. Finances.

"There is not enough money. In Jakarta my money is enough but here is very expensive. I have to try to get a job not to burden my family."

One important difference between Indonesian and Chinese students was reflected in their different financial backgrounds. Several Indonesian students complained about a shortage of finances, while this did not appear to be overly concerning for Chinese students. Some students considered getting jobs to meet educational expenses so they could free their parents from the burden of financing their education.

5.1.3.6. Accommodation.

"I stay with people from another countries. We have different ways of life but we have to stay in same apartment. One want to do some way and that creates conflict between us. Our English is not that good to communicate and there is some misunderstanding between us"….. "If they don't have relatives you have to share accommodation. They charge you big money. Even when you want to find new accommodation you have problems because you don't have a car. You need to find quickly and sometimes you don't care who you share accommodation. This is because there is no time before classes start. Most of my friends want to live with locals because they want to practise their English."

Many of the interviewed students from Indonesia and China found it difficult to organise their own accommodation and deal with the intrinsic problems related to sharing with others. Some students complained about the shortage of accommodation available within the university complex. Some found living arrangements overcrowded and had no physical space to enjoy privacy. Others felt that living in home stays saved them from having to organise house chores for themselves such as doing shopping, cooking and preparing meals.

5.1.3.7. Academic Commitments.

"The teacher outlines the course and you have to do everything by yourself. You have to do the research in the library, from the Internet. In China they teach you everything. You just ask and they give the answer to you"......"To tell you the truth, you have more freedom here than in China. You can allocate your time, arrange your timetable, and enjoy the campus life"…. "Lecturers are very nice. They seem very busy. I just send e-mail to them. They respond. But if you talk to them face-

to-face I don't feel comfortable. If we had problems with assignment, we send our concerns to lecturers before class."

Some felt overwhelmed about their inability to understand lecturers and the quantity of homework requirements. Some students felt that they needed time to get used to the fast pace of lecturers' speech. A frequent cause of concern was managing their time. Some worried about the length of essays requested in class and feared being unable to meet essay length criteria due to their limited English skills. Some blamed academic pressures for their changing sleeping habits.

5.1.3.8. Loneliness.

"Shock issues the first problem is loneliness. Maybe a little bit better now because I moved in a house stay with an Australian couple, very nice. I could talk with them. I waited for uni to start so I can meet people here."

Some international students found it difficult to reconcile with their loneliness and the disillusionment from being unable to gain new friends in the host culture.

5.1.3.9. Prejudice.

"I never got it but I hear that Australians treat overseas students differently"…."So far the people treat me the same that they treat local people, especially the lecturer, and also the other friends, from international students from Asian countries."

A student felt ashamed when a lecturer accused her of plagiarising and she was not able to defend her position regarding the accusation due to her lack of English. However, most students did not experience prejudice from people in Australia.

5.1.4. Coping Strategies.

"Basically I am religious person, I go out with my friends, go to the cinemas. They help me to take this problem from my mind. If I have a problem, you don't go there and sit on a chair and think about it, because if it very bad for you. If you cannot do anything about the problem, is better to stop thinking about it. Think positively."

Some students relied on religion as a source of comfort when finding difficulties in everyday adjustment. Some considered having supportive friends as a mean of taking their minds away from everyday difficulties. Some believed that having positive self-talk helped when facing difficulties, particularly when one was unable to change the course of events. A student went further and welcomed problems because they allowed him to gain life experience. A student considered that having a pen and paper approach to problems facilitated developing the most appropriate decision to overcome a problem.

Another student considered that there were layers of dealing with problems. If the problem related to academic issues, the student indicated consulting with lecturers was best. If the problem related to personal affairs, the first line of action involved talking with friends. If the friends were unable to deliver an appropriate solution, the student was willing to attend counselling. Some students preferred to seek advice from friends back

home, as they trusted their relationship. Another student tried to contact their parents for advice on dealing with a problem. Another student was, however, reluctant to contact family at home with problems because he did not want to burden them with his difficulties, and family at home could not relate to his living circumstances in Australia.

Some students used humour and finally distraction, such as going to the movies or talking with a friend, when trying to cope with problems. Sometimes just trying to forget the problem, may help to deal with it. A student considered that crying brought comfort afterwards and then they did not care about their problems anymore. A student considered that the only source of answers to problems is within oneself, and thus one should find answers on his own.

5.1.5. Fears.

> "I can't pass the exams. It is so hard the English language. For local students spend one hour reading a chapter, I need to spend 3 hours"…."I am afraid that I can't get familiar with this culture, I am afraid that I don't do what my family expects me to do. They expect me to get the best education, grade. Afraid that I can't improve my language, being unable to understand"….."Security. I always heard people about rape. I may sure I am home not later after seven. Because in China even if you go home late, there are so many people in the streets."

International students ranked high the fear of failing in their studies. Another student feared the freedom existing in Australia, which may cause her to fall into drug use and other negative behaviours, in her perception, such as sexual activity. A student feared not finding accommodation and becoming homeless. A student feared being unable to

settle in this culture and not fulfilling parents' expectations. Another was fearful that she might not fulfil her own expectations to complete a degree.

Another common concern was related to safety. One student did not go into the city because he did not want to become a target of abuse by undesirables such as drunken people. A female student feared being a victim of rape because there were not as many people in the streets at night as she was used to back home. A student feared not finding friends on whom to rely upon in difficult times.

5.1.6. Discrimination.

> "Up to now, I haven't found discrimination. Not at least in this university. In the university maybe is different from the society outside. But I think, I was told that here there is less discrimination"……"No yet. I wish not. But my friend experienced discrimination. She finished high school here and felt discriminated by Australians. I feel scared that I may be discriminated. That is why I find difficult to make Australian friends."

Most students perceived Australia as a fair society and found locals friendly. One student felt that even though she did not personally suffer discrimination, she felt that potentially Australia was an environment to experience discrimination because it was her perception that Westerners did not like Asians. One student perceived some discrimination in class when local students avoided joining Chinese students for group work. One student experienced discrimination during enrolment because local students were apparently given units ahead of international students.

5.1.7. Wishes.

"Have a lot of money, to help my parents and make them happier like they are. They have supported me in my studies in Australia. Achievements in career and life"….. "People treat us not as guest but as a friend. Even if you don't like them, you accept them. Try not to ignore them. I wish Chinese were not shy anymore. Go out and try to get into this culture. Make the opportunities for ourselves. The world is becoming smaller and smaller and we should try to accept others. The differences are becoming smaller and smaller. Not to think that Chinese for example are different."

Most students indicated their desires to support and help parents in the future, complete their degree, make money and be helpful to other people.

5.1.8. Educational Systems and Interaction with Lecturers and other Students.

"I am in class too crowded, too many in class but the teacher is good in class"…. "The class is more practical here. China is more theoretical. Teacher is OK here"… "I can only understand 50%. I have to do a lot to hard work before I go to lecture. I read it first and get a general idea for the next lecture. Also the library helps a lot because you don't have to buy the textbook. I read it by myself"….. "Tutorials and practicals I think are good but you have to do the work for the tutorial and the practical. I was thinking the tutor may do something for us. The real thing is you need to ask the tutor otherwise he will not tell you anything"…. "I have problems with English. I cannot understand what lecturer is saying. I can get the idea but not all the words he is saying. I worry how I can go through the exam if I don't understand"….."The assignments are very heavy. In my bachelor there are only a few assignments and take little to complete but here take hours. My assignments are individual."

Another student stated that lectures were more practical in Australia but more theoretical in China. Another student had to extensively prepare before attending a lecture to be able to follow it due to limitations in English. Another considered that tutorials required active participation from students, and tutors were unable to guide them if they did not ask. Students viewed facilities such as the library as more than adequate in Australia.

A student indicated that campus life was colourful in Australia. Students were able to communicate with others at university, and that confirmed that university life is more than just attending lectures.

Students highlighted the differences in the type of learning process between China, Indonesia and Australia. While in Chinese education memorisation prevailed, and lecturers encouraged it, students were challenged to find out answers for themselves in Australian education. One student praised the intensity of essay work given at university because it encouraged their creativity and knowledge.

The type of relationship with lecturers was also noted. While they admitted a close relationship with lecturers back in China, they found that in Australia they did not talk with lecturers other than through their email. Some students found it difficult to follow what lecturers explained in class and thus felt concerned about how to prepare for exams if their level of understanding in English was limited.

A student worried about overcrowded lecture classes. Another student confirmed that view and indicated that in China lecture classes cater for 40-50 students, while in Australia lecture rooms are for about 300 students.

5.1.9. Advice to New Students.

"I will tell them get as much information as you can before you go to Australia because information can help you much. Helps to prepare yourself mentally and physically"…..."To live here is great but is tough for the first time because you have many problems. Soon you will cope with the problems and life is better than Indonesia."

A student noted that new students needed more information on what to expect from coming to Australia so they could prepare themselves physically and mentally. A student indicated that new students should learn as much as they can about Australian life and people, so they are not caught by surprise. On the other hand, another student asserted that any information is useless until international students actually come to Australia.

Other students indicated that life may be tough at the beginning, but it is worth it as they may have a better life than in Indonesia. It was also suggested that new students needed to become more independent as they do not have the family support they enjoyed back home. It is also important for new students, as another student noted, to have as many friends who are going through the same sojourning process as possible because one can learn from their experiences. However, another student concluded that in the end people were on their own and had to deal with problems without any support.

A student suggested that new students should learn as much English as possible so they can perform better from the beginning in Australia. It was frequently the case that new students had to succeed at English studies before they could actually begin their undergraduate or postgraduate degree. By studying English back home, they could minimise the time spent on English preparation when they arrived in Australia.

5.2. Personal Stories of Sojourn.

This section focuses on four students across three stages of their adjustment in Australia and university. The progress of two Indonesian and two Chinese students was followed at entry into university (and within a month of their arrival to Australia), as well as at 4 months and at 8 months. These personal stories present very different accounts of sojourn, which are briefly outlined here.

"Daniel" (not his real name to protect his privacy as for the rest of the students interviewed) is a male undergraduate student from Indonesia. "Susan" is a female postgraduate student from Indonesia. "Jenny" is an undergraduate student and "Lily" a postgraduate student from China. Daniel, Susan and Jenny study at a business school and Lily in a school of humanities. As indicated above, due to their length, the detail of their accounts has been placed in Appendix E. However, an overall summary of their experiences is detailed here.

5.2.1. First Impressions of Australia Upon Arrival.

Daniel, Lily, Susan and Jenny were all impressed with the clear skies and lack of pollution when they arrived in Australia. They found it to be less crowded than where they came from. Depending on when they arrived, those who arrived in winter found it to be cold and were not prepared for it. Generally they found Australians to be helpful and friendly. They were aware of cultural differences such as the open mindedness of Australians, Australians being more inclined to be aware of time by keeping to a schedule and being on time; and the differences in the foods Australians eat compared to them.

5.2.1.1. Initial Problems to Overcome.

Initial problems to overcome when first arriving in Australia were primarily: improving their command of English (this was seen as an obstacle to making local friends, inhibiting them from standing up for themselves and being better understood); getting used to being independent and the responsibility of making decisions for themselves; securing accommodation and getting used to living with others; getting used to the differences in the Australian education system; having to do things for themselves such as laundry and cooking; keeping to a budget; understanding how to travel around and how the transportation system works; making friends; setting up a bank account; and feelings of loneliness.

5.2.1.2. Coping Strategies.

To cope with their new life at university in Australia, initially Daniel, Lily, Susan and Jenny relied on friends locally, but in particular friends back home. There was a feeling that friends back home could be trusted more with their problems than the new friends they had made in Australia. Also, there was a tendency not to share their problems with their families as they did not want to cause them any concern or stress and also because there was the feeling that their families would not be able to relate to their new lifestyles and the problems they experienced. Trying to forget their problems by going to the movies with friends, for example, was a coping strategy. Lily specifically found crying helped. Daniel found his religious beliefs helped.

5.2.1.3. Ethnic Identity.

There was a strong identity with their homeland and a sense of pride in their country's achievements, long history, and particularly for the Chinese, its economy and rising presence in the world.

5.2.1.4. Homesickness.

Homesickness was being experienced but generally Daniel, Susan, Lily and Jenny found it relatively easy to keep in regular contact with family and friends via the phone and email.

5.2.2. Experiences after Four Months.

After four months, generally their command of the English language had improved, which made a difference to their studies and their confidence, and made their lives easier as a result. "I can communicate better. When I first came to Australia I found difficult to communicate with people, now is better. If I want to find information, ask the officer or anybody else. In the past, I don't ask because I am afraid that nobody is going to understand my English".

They have made more new friends, particularly students from other countries. The opportunity to make friends from other countries whilst in Australia was seen as exciting. Making local friends was still not prevalent.

There were still feelings of homesickness at four months but not as strong. The four participants in particular missed their food from home. There was a tendency not to miss their culture.

The key coping strategy continued to be to confide in friends.

Awareness of other cultural differences was becoming more evident, such as the relative equality of men and women in Australia, in contrast to the home culture; the relative quiet after dark in Australia, especially due to earlier closing times for the shops;

the perception that Australians lead a more open, independent and less traditional lifestyle; and the feeling of the Indonesians, in particular, that there is less crime and violence than in Indonesia.

5.2.3. Experiences after Eight Months.

At the beginning of their new life in Australia, speaking English was the key issue, as well as securing accommodation and settling into the university. At eight months however, the focus turned to their studies and maintaining their finances. This focus on finances meant that part-time work was being sought.

There was a feeling of being more settled and more independent than when they first arrived.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF QUALITATIVE RESULTUS

This section will bring together findings from "Themes of sojourn at arrival in Australia" and "Personal stories of sojourn". There is continuity between these two sections. The former illustrates prominent acculturative stress issues shortly following arrival in Australia, and the latter portrays patterns of sojourning behaviour across time.

6.1. Initial Reactions to an Unfamiliar Host Culture.

For most of the students interviewed, the initial elation over a clean environment, the reactions to weather (depending on the time of the year they arrived in Australia), and the pleasant interactions with locals, were promptly replaced by major issues relating to accommodation difficulties, communication with locals, homesickness and attendance at lectures. While the former were short-lived reactions, the latter constituted more stable consequences that were to stay with the student for a long time.

Regardless of their experience with the host culture, most students felt proud of their ethnic heritage. Pride in their ethnic identity included recognition of their common past and awareness of the collective future. However, in some instances ethnic identity was associated with negative aspects of the social and financial life of their country, which filled them with resentment rather than ethnic pride.

When Indonesians and Chinese begin their experience in Australia, an overriding issue jeopardising adjustment in the host culture is their English language difficulties. Most students interviewed complained of their English language limitations. The fact that students reported feeling better adjusted along with references to their improved English makes it valid to identify an association between adjustment in Australia and English proficiency. These findings reinforce the importance of English proficiency for the adjustment of international students (Deyo, Diehl, Hazuda & Stern, 1985).

Coping with difficulties was in many instances associated with the kind of support received. Although students did not report support from local students, most felt comfortable approaching co-nationals, other international students and family and friends back home for support with problems. The broad range of coping strategies used by international students (e.g. support seeking, finding meaning in events, problem-focused coping, distraction, humour, religion, and emotional catharsis) highlights the multifaceted nature of coping and heterogeneous approaches to resolving problems used by international students.

International students are familiar with the spoon-feed and memorisation approaches to learning; however, to be able to survive in the Australian academic system they need to develop an analytic approach to learning (Biggs, 1994). Preparation for lectures can take most of their time as a result of deficits in their communication in English. Correspondingly, presentations in class can become overwhelming for students

unfamiliar with the English language, with obvious lasting negative effects on their studies. Similarly, writing lengthy essays in English can also bring much stress when they experience difficulties in writing (Couchman, 1997). Overall, interviews with international students showed that speaking, writing, reading and listening in English are handicaps to their learning process, particularly at the entry to Australia and university, affecting other areas of their overall adjustment.

Interviews also indicated that international students' learning process is affected by patterns of relating with lecturers and other students. Inability to communicate ideas to lecturers and tutors, and lack of English skills to seek advice from lecturers and staff at international offices may sometimes seriously endanger their academic progress and further adjustment to university (Reid, Kirkpatrick, & Mulligan, 1998). Equally, limited interaction with locals in the class context can be denying international students ideal opportunities to learn Australian ways of academic achievement, or to get the social support they need so much, particularly at the beginning of their studies in Australia.

In summary, international students' initial steps in Australian society are hampered by communication difficulties that limit their social interactions and therefore, adjustment to the host culture. The feelings of elation attributed to the novelty of the new surroundings (perhaps the only evidence of the vaunted "honeymoon" effect in this research) are short-lived, due to the pressures of adjusting to a new culture and dealing with several stresses. However, these interviews conducted with Indonesian and Chinese students showed their optimism about aspiring to a better life (through success in their

studies) not only for them but also their families, despite the academic differences and daily stressors in their life. Overall, they appeared to use creatively a range of coping strategies and showed pride in their ethnic identity.

6.2. Life Sojourning Portrayals of Four Interviewed Students.

The four stories of sojourn reveal quite different life experiences. All describe experiences of successful adjustment to Australia and university life after eight months. Although all four students experienced significant stresses during sojourn, they were able to conquer difficulties securing stability in Australia.

Daniel, a student from Indonesia, had previously completed senior high school using English before sojourning to Australia. The fact that he left his own country and experienced a new one in Malaysia before arriving in Australia had significant relevance to further adjustment to Australia. Daniel also appeared to have a nurturing family environment, financial stability and caring friendships before sojourning to Australia. Following arrival, Daniel secured accommodation on the university campus, which facilitated interaction with other students and relieved him from hassles associated with cooking and other household chores. Daniel has strong religious beliefs that helped him to cope with stress, and he also relied on talking with friends and distraction in coping with problems. After eight months Daniel had visited home and felt re-energised to continue his studies in Australia.

Susan's sojourning experience reveals a caring family background. Her mother accompanied Susan to Australia during her settlement process. She and her family felt comfortable with the accommodation they organised for her. However, her family worried about financial issues, which caused her some instability. Susan had a significant advantage as her boyfriend lived here and became a central supportive figure for her in Australia. Her settlement in Australia was also facilitated by her attainment of an undergraduate degree in Indonesia, which gave her familiarity with tertiary educational systems. Susan relied largely on her boyfriend and on friends back in Indonesia for support with problems. After eight months Susan felt more settled in Australia and did not consider going back to live in Indonesia. She had more understanding of English and was confident that her studies were moving in the right direction.

Jenny profiles a person who had also experienced some cultural mobility when she went to a secondary boarding school in China. She lived in a caring family environment and even while studying in Australia she tried to maintain regular contact with family. Although Jenny found the English language difficult to master, she made attempts to develop a sound social network. Most of her friends are Chinese; however, they gave her the support needed to deal with problems. Her attitudes to stresses in her life were remarkable, and worries in everyday life did not bother her, as "tomorrow is a new day" according to her. She has also made sure to maintain contact with friends for support with problems in her everyday life. Overall, Jenny had an optimistic attitude to studies, felt proud about her ethnic origin, and was currently working, which has given her a meaningful life in Australia.

Lily is an articulate Chinese student who was an English teacher before moving to Australia to complete postgraduate studies. She appeared to be an independent person, even back in China. She had travelled extensively in China before moving to Australia. Lily is a proactive person who has made efforts to quickly become familiar with the new culture. Her English language proficiency allowed her to achieve it more easily. Her outgoing personality facilitated her making friends in Australia, and she now enjoys friendships with people from cultures other than Chinese. Lily's professional background coupled with her outgoing personality allowed her to gain insight into Australian society and develops relationships with people. Lily tended to resort to emotional expression when experiencing stress, which then allowed her to gain further control of her circumstances. She also approached her social network for guidance and advice. After eight months in Australia, Lily had secured a part-time job, travelled around Australia and had a supportive boyfriend.

The above portrayals of these four international students have highlighted the importance of viewing their experience from a holistic perspective including pre-departure, acculturative stress, and settlement factors, in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of their experience. Sojourners' pre-departure factors have been explored in research which suggests that language ability, previous skills in moving between cultures, expectations about the receiving culture, and personality variables (such as stable family background, low neuroticism) all foreshadow a successful adjustment to the new culture (Berry & Kim, 1988; Martin, Bradford & Rohrlich, 1995). Similarly, their optimism at

their achievements in their studies, positive mood, willingness to seek social support and satisfaction for the support received, all contributed to their better adjustment at university as per findings of Aspinwall and Taylor (1992) with university students in the US. As can be seen by the stories of the four students interviewed, despite their very different backgrounds, pre-departure factors, personality variables and difficulties in settlement, all these factors contributed to their adjustment to university life and Australia.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This section summarises findings from the quantitative and qualitative sections of this study. It offers an overall view of findings, and the reader is encouraged to revisit each separate discussion section for a more detailed presentation of discussion.

This study confirmed previous findings ascertaining that daily hassles consistently predicted distress (Lu, 1991). The adverse influence of daily hassles on mental health has only been equalled by the persistent influence of acculturative stress in lives of international students. The overriding influence of daily hassles triggered avoidance and self-blame coping with negative outcomes on international students' mental health.

A stronger ethnic identity for Chinese compared to Indonesian students was only confirmed at T1, while they did not show significant differences at T2 and T3 (Hypothesis A1).

International students from China and Indonesia feel pride in their ethnic background and culture. In depth-interviews found Indonesians referring to the diversity of races living together in Indonesia. The Chinese referred to their ancient historical and cultural background. At the same time, Indonesians referred to the level of poverty and social injustices as their motivation to leave their homeland; while lack of democracy

instigated departure for the Chinese. Quantitative results showed that Chinese ethnic identity remained constant throughout the three waves, suggesting its strength and steadiness. In contrast, Indonesians began their experience in Australia with a weaker ethnic identity, but this progressively strengthened. It is tenable that Indonesians' weaker ethnic identity at the beginning was due to their younger age compared to an overall older Chinese group. Alternatively, it could indicate that for Indonesians, ethnic identity is established gradually as they represent a smaller ethnic group at university and overall Australian society. Perhaps this stage of grounded ethnic identity is achieved when they overcome difficulties such as their minority status at university (Elligan & Utsey, 1999).

Quantitative and qualitative reports illustrated that international students from Indonesia and China experienced significant stress as early as their arrival in Australia. Their concerns were related to social interaction, daily hassles in adjusting to the host culture and academic issues. Communication in English greatly concerned international students in their initial interactions with others in Australia. English language deficits interfered with their chances of developing a social network and understanding academic requests. Deyo et al. (1985) highlighted the central role of communication in English in facilitating the acculturation process. They also indicated that proficiency in English helped to build social networks and equally social networks helped English proficiency. It is not surprising then that T1 English proficiency was a predictor of T2 and T3 distress, and students interviewed at four months appeared more comfortable with their English skills. Correspondingly, international students widened their support network. Despite their difficulties, international students were likely to show an optimistic attitude to their

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settlement in Australia, which made it possible for them to have more ready access to social support (Brissette, Scheier, & Carver, 2002).

This study profiled an optimistic perspective on adjustment of international students from Indonesia and China in Australian society. Although acculturative stress and daily hassles prevailed in the life of students beyond their first year of studies, as exemplified by interviews with four students, and distress levels at T1, T2, and T3, they had reasonably adjusted to the host culture. There is no doubt that daily hassles and acculturative stress are expected consequences of intercultural sojourn; however, intercultural preparation is a key for a less stressful sojourn (Wichert, 2003). International students and receiving universities have a crucial role in making this transition as less taxing as possibly. The expectations of international students need to be matched with an appropriate understanding of the tasks to be faced in the host culture. In this context, universities, through international education agencies and similar bodies in China and Indonesia, can further advise students of the challenges ahead. Similarly, as soon as international students arrive in the host societies, international programs may develop programs to address the stress associated with the sojourn. There are several examples of successful initiatives such as "buddy programs" which allow new international students to engage on a support system with another international student who have already gone through similar experience and may therefore serve as a role model.

University counsellors can play a valuable role as compassionate and sensitive advocates informing the wider university community about international students'

struggles to adjust to university and Australia. Counsellors working with international students should adhere to the principles and values of multicultural counselling, including awareness of one's own set of values shaping the counselling process. Furthermore, counsellors should also acknowledge the impact culture plays in the process of counselling, the skills for developing a therapeutic alliance, and the fostering of organisational development (Sue et al, 1998). Counsellors also have a role in refining Australian universities' policies for internationalisation, education of staff and students across campus on cross-cultural issues, and improving the profile of international students. (Popadiuk & Arthur, 2004).

This study underlined the diversity of coping strategies employed by international students. A clear implication is for researchers not to make sweeping generalisations about the benefits or shortfalls of coping strategies. The recommendation is simply to resist over-reliance on checklists when assessing coping (Coyne & Racioppo, 2000). Although not always feasible, using quantitative and qualitative methods in appraisal of a student's success at coping may add valuable information that checklists cannot offer otherwise. Correspondingly, assessing coping longitudinally has the implicit advantage of ascertaining the path of coping strategies through the stress process.

Although this study focused on the difficulties experienced by Indonesian and Chinese international students, it also attempted to address difficulties experienced by local students. Local students entering university are also at risk due to the several demands imposed by studies and academic adjustment, which at times may cause them to

drop out from studies. One is reminded that Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants

reported greater commitment to studies than local Australians, and this is partially due to

the social pressure and the investment of families in children's education prevalent in

Asian groups (Marjoribanks, 2004). Additionally, a concerning pattern was recognized for

local students, as well as international students, where high use of avoidance, self-blame

and substance-use coping predicted later distress. Use of these coping strategies has been

illustrated previously to prospectively contribute to problem behaviour (Cooper, Wood,

Orcutt & Albino, 2003).

Due to the increasing overseas demand for opportunities to pursue tertiary studies

in Australia, universities have intensified their efforts to provide an environment of

cultural diversity. It is an encouraging sign that international students do not feel overt

discrimination within the university system. However, there is still much work ahead to

promote integration of international students. Although it is natural that the circle of trust

for social support is, in line of importance, represented by parents, friends back home, co-

nationals in Australia and students from other nationalities, there is still much to do to

achieve a community university culture promoting integration between local and

international students. One can blame the pressures of mass education, which discourages

interactions at a more personal level in large urban universities where most students live

at home, not on campus. Additionally, Australian cross-cultural attitudes are not immune

from prejudices arising from current international political, ethnic, and religious frictions.

In this context, the September 11 tragedy and 2002 Bali bombing have resulted in further

ethnic conflict and distrust. However, the multicultural features of Australian society are

still an inviting influence in international students' decision to study in Australia. Australian universities are surely on the right path by promoting cultural mix, ethnic student societies, and all kinds of campus facilities. It is ultimately the responsibility of the university, in its privileged vanguard role, to show the larger society that intercultural harmony it is not just a dream but also a welcoming reality. As has been previously found, the prevalence of stressors during transition to university and Australian life may prevent local and international students from feelings of belonging to the university culture (Isakson & Jarvis, 1999).

This study achieved its aim of revisiting the work of Ward et al. (1998) and confirmed that the "U-curve" of culture shock should be rejected with regard to Indonesian and Chinese international students. It has also highlighted the advantages of the stress and coping model in advancing cross-cultural research in acculturative stress. The confirmation that acculturative stress is more severe at entry into the host culture may serve to further encourage the development of more proactive counselling services and pre-sojourning programs for newly arrived international students and even for potential sojourners in their home countries.

Research in acculturative stress should firstly pay more attention to the various types of acculturation and stressors experienced through settlement in the host society. Consequently, longitudinal understanding of the acculturative stress process should include further than the first year of their arrival in Australia. This may assist in identifying the role of stressors and overall acculturation process. Secondly, research on

acculturative stress should focus on international students' responses to the acculturative stress experience and factors which may influence these responses. It is in this process that research may identify protective and pre-existing vulnerability factors. Thirdly, considering that ethnic identity and coping (in particular, clarify the role of avoidance and self blame coping) play a significant moderating role in the acculturative stress process; it is important to measure their impact beyond stressors involved in the acculturative stress experience. This study represents an effort to understand the contribution of these constructs as moderating factors.

This study highlights the importance of conducting research acknowledging cultural patterns of expression and manifestation of emotional well-being as they influence levels of acculturative stress and coping. Understanding mind-body interaction is in effect, a central issue to consider in cross-cultural research as mind-body interaction may vary across cultures. Similarly, one is reminded that coping is influenced by intrapsychic and personality background factors which are areas of research that may need further development. Finally, stage perspectives (eg traditional "U-curve") in the understanding of the acculturative process should be abandoned and instead, the focus should be on empirically based views such as the stress-coping model advocated in this study.

The stress-coping model has corroborated the assumption that higher daily hassles result in more distress which is a dominant feature in the acculturative stress process experienced by international students. International students face the daily hassles of

leaving home as well as living independently for the first time in the host society. Therefore, daily hassles at arrival in the host society will predict further distress at four and eight months of settling in the host culture. Using certain coping strategies such as avoidance on arrival to the host culture may be functional at this stage, however, continued used of this strategy at four and eight months time may correlate with higher distress. Similarly, for local students, continued use of self-blame coping may anticipate distress at four and eight months of arrival.

Coping strategies also vary as international students become more familiar with the host culture. International students creatively use their repertoire of coping strategies (e. g. religion, avoidance, etc.) and as their adaptive process progresses, may also use coping strategies more prevalent in the host culture (e.g. problem focused). Overall, more daily hassles, and repeated use of avoidance and self-blame coping will cause further distress. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to assist international students in acknowledging and coming to terms with the acculturative stress process early in their sojourn process. This can be achieved by providing psycho educational, and mentoring programs, or facilitating early counselling intervention for those at risk. Otherwise, a promising, exciting and rewarding experience in the host culture may be tainted by disillusionment.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMATION SHEET, CONSENT FORM AND QUESTIONNAIRE
ADMINISTERED TO LOCAL STUDENTS

INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Student,

Experiences of Students at Macquarie University

You are invited to take part in this study aimed at helping the University to better understand the experiences of students in their process of adjustment to University life. We hope the study will help Macquarie University to better address the specific needs of students.

Please give a few minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Participation is of course voluntary. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Questionnaires will be assigned a unique subject number and numbers will not be linked to names. E-mail address, phone/mobile number and/or home address are only provided if you choose to participate in the follow up surveys at four, and eight months periods. No individual will be identified or identifiable in the report. Before you proceed to complete this questionnaire please read and sign the Subject Information Sheet and Consent Form. You will also find a copy of the Subject Information Sheet and Consent Form at the back of this questionnaire. Please detach it and keep it for your own information.

If you have any enquiries, please contact Hugo Gonzales on (02) 98507796, mobile 0421538514 and e-mail: hugonzales8@hotmail.com

Yours sincerely

Hugo Gonzales

SUBJECT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

Dear participant

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study which aims to enable the University to better understand the experiences of students in their process of adjustment to the University life. We hope this study may assist to better address the specific needs of students. My name is Hugo Gonzales, PhD student at Macquarie University. You can contact me on (02) 98507796 and my office location is in the building C3B, room 410, Department of Psychology, Macquarie University. I am conducting the above study to meet the requirements for the PhD of Philosophy, Psychology. I am working on this topic under the supervision of Dr John Cunningham, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Psychology. He can be contacted on (02) 98508070.

Your contribution to this study will comprise completion of a questionnaire which will take about 15 to 20 minutes of your time to complete. This study will take place over eight months which means I will need you to complete this questionnaire when you commence university and repeat the process at four months and finally after eight months. The reason for repeating the process at four and eight months is to determine whether students' adjustment to University life changes over the first eight months. If you find any question in this questionnaire of a concern to you, please feel free to talk to me about it. If you require counselling you may want to contact your University Counselling Service at Macquarie University on 9850 7417.

Your views are completely confidential and the information you provided will be securely stored for some time after which it will be destroyed. As the researcher, only I will have access to these records. I would also like to stress that the results of this study will **only be released in statistical form** and no personal data will be revealed. If you request it, I can provide you with a summary of the results of this study by contacting me on 0421538514. If you have any inquiries about this study or any matter related to it, please feel free to contact me on the above number or by e-mail; hugonzales8@hotmail.com. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary for which I am deeply appreciative. However, you can withdraw from this study at any stage if you wish. Please sign and date this consent form.

"I agree to participate in this research"

Signature of participant …………………………………………

Date…………………………………………………

Signature of Researcher…………………………………………

Date………………………………………………….

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[1] "The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Ethics Review Committee (Human Research). If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (telephone [02] 9850 7854, fax [02] 9850 8799, email: kdesilva@vc.mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome."

Questionnaire – Entry Stage
Students' Adjustment to University Life

The aim of this questionnaire is for Macquarie University to better understand the experiences of students in their process of adjustment to the University life.

This is the first of three questionnaires to be completed. This one marks your entry to the University. There will be another questionnaire to fill in after your first four months at University, and the final one after your first eight months.

To fill in the questionnaire, please circle the most appropriate answer. If there is not an appropriate answer given for your situation, please write in your answer in the space provided next to "other".

Please provide your address and a contact telephone number so that I can contact you again after four months and finally at eight months. This is very important otherwise I cannot use the information you have provided in this Questionnaire. I would like to remind you that your details are completely confidential and no one else will have access to this information other than the researcher

Subject number…………………….
Address…………………………………
Phone/mobile number………………
Level of study: a) Undergraduate studies
                              b) Postgraduate Studies

Section 1. Socio-Demographic Data Section

Q1. Which university do you attend in Australia?

   a. Macquarie University

   b. Other (please specify) _____

Q2. Your e-mail address _____

Q3. Age. Please indicate your age_____

Q4. Gender

a. Female   b. Male

Q5. In which country were you born?

a. Australia   b. Other (please specify) _____

Q6.   If you were not born in Australia, year of arrival to Australia

_____

Q7.   Is English the main language spoken at home?

a. Yes

b. No (Please specify)_____

Q8.   What is your <u>main</u> source(s) of financial support?

a. Austudy   d. Employment

b. Family – parents   e. Other (please specify)_____

c. Family – partner   f.   I do not know

Q9.   What is your marital status?

a. Single   d. Widowed

b. Divorced   e. Other please specify)_____

c. Married

Q10. **What is the highest level of education completed by your parents?**

	a. **Mother**	b. **Father**
Primary School	1	1
Secondary School	2	2
Technical or trade	3	3
University	4	4
Other (please specify) _____	5	5

Q11. **Please estimate in Australian dollars, which of the following gives the best estimate of the total of both your parents' combined annual income?**

a. Less than $10,000

b. $10,000 - $29,000

c. $30,000 - $49,000

d. $50,000 - $69,000

e. $70,000 - $89,000

f. $90,000 - $119,000

g. $120,000 or more

h. Don't know

Q12. **Please circle the statement that best applies to you. Circle only one**.

a. First generation: You were born in Australia.

b. Second generation: You were born in Australia. Either parent born in another country.

c. Third generation: You were born in Australia. Both parents were born in Australia and all grandparents born in another country other than Australia.

d. Fourth Generation: You and your parents were born in Australia and at least one grandparent was born in another country and the other grandparents born in Australia.

e. Fifth Generation: You and your parents were born in Australia and all grand parents born in Australia.

f. Don't know

Q13. First language spoken as a child

a. English

b. Language other than English (please specify)_____

Q14. Which language do you prefer to speak in Australia?

a. English

b. Language other than English (please specify)_____

Q15. How many visits did you make to a General Practitioner (Medical Doctor) during the past three months?

a. none

b. 1 visit

c. 2 visits

d. 3 visits

e. 4 visits

f. 5 visits or more

g. I do not know

Q16. How would you rate your health during the past three months?

a. Very good

b. Quite good

c. Not very good

d. Not good at all

e. I do not know

Q17. In the last six months, how often have you experienced mental health problems such as depression and anxiety for example?

a. Not at all

b. Occasionally

c. Frequently

d. All the time

e. I do not know

Q18. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: A person with an emotional problem is not likely to solve it alone. He or she is likely to solve it with professional help.

a. Strongly Disagree

b. Disagree

c. Agree

d. Strongly Agree

e. I do not know

Q19. This section relates to the level of social support you receive. Please use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling the number that best suits your response.

1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

a. Sometimes it's necessary to talk to someone about your problems   1   2   3   4

b. Friends often have good advice to give   1   2   3   4

c. You have to be careful to whom you tell personal things   1   2   3   4

d. I often get good information from other people   1   2   3   4

e. People should keep their problems to themselves   1   2   3   4

f. It's easy for me to talk about personal and private matters   1   2   3   4

g. In the past, friends have really helped me out when I've had a problem   1   2   3   4

h. You can never trust people to keep a secret   1   2   3   4

i. When a person gets upset they should talk it over with a friend   1   2   3   4

j. Other people never understand my problems   1   2   3   4

k. Almost everyone knows someone they can trust with a personal secret   1   2   3   4

l. If you can't figure out your problems, nobody can   1   2   3   4

m. In the past, I have rarely found other people's opinions helpful when
   I've had a problem   1   2   3   4

n. It really helps when you are angry to tell a friend what happened   1   2   3   4

o. Some things are too personal to talk to anyone about   1   2   3   4

p. It's fairly easy to tell whom you can trust and whom you can't   1   2   3   4

q. In the past, I have been hurt by people I confided in   1   2   3   4

r. If you confide in other people, they will take advantage of you   1   2   3   4

s. It's OK to ask favours of people   1   2   3   4

t. Even if I need something, I would hesitate to borrow it from someone   1   2   3   4

Section 3. Coping

Q20. How do you *generally* cope with the issues arising from being at university?

People deal with problems in different ways. Often there is no 'right' or 'wrong' way, and what works for one person may not work for another. We are interested in how you deal with it.

Using the scale below please read each statement and circle the response that best describes how often you use a particular strategy.

1	2	3	4
I do not do this at all	I do this a little bit	I do this medium amount	I do this a lot

a. I turn to work or other activities to take my mind off
   things.   1   2   3   4

b. I concentrate my efforts on doing something about the
   situation I'm in.   1   2   3   4

c. I say to myself "this isn't real".   1   2   3   4

d. I use alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better.   1   2   3   4

e. I get emotional support from others.   1   2   3   4

f. I give up trying to deal with the problem.   1   2   3   4

g. I take action to try to make the situation better.   1   2   3   4

h. I refuse to believe it has happened
   (feeling stressed about University)   1   2   3   4

i. I say things to let my unpleasant feelings escape.   1   2   3   4

j. I get help and advice from other people.	1	2	3	4
k. I use alcohol or other drugs to help get me through it.	1	2	3	4
l. I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive.	1	2	3	4
m. I criticise myself.	1	2	3	4
n. I try to come up with a strategy about what to do.	1	2	3	4
o. I get comfort and understanding from someone.	1	2	3	4
p. I give up the attempt to cope.	1	2	3	4
q. I look for something good in what is happening.	1	2	3	4
r. I make jokes about it.	1	2	3	4
s. I do something to think about it less, such as going to the movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping or shopping	1	2	3	4
t. I accept the reality of the fact that it has happened	1	2	3	4
u. I express my negative feelings.	1	2	3	4
v. I try to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs.	1	2	3	4
w. I try to get advice or help from other people about what to do.	1	2	3	4
x. I try to learn to live with it.	1	2	3	4
y. I think hard about what steps to take.	1	2	3	4
z. I blame myself for things that happen.	1	2	3	4
aa. I pray or meditate.	1	2	3	4
bb. I make fun of the situation.	1	2	3	4

<u>**Section 4. Psychosocial Status**</u>

Q21. How have you felt during the past seven days including today? Use the following scale to describe how distressing you have found these things over this time.

Not at all	A little distressing	Quite a bit distressing	Extremely distressing
1	2	3	4

a. Difficulty in speaking when you are excited   1   2   3   4

b. Trouble remembering things   1   2   3   4

c. Worried about sloppiness or carelessness   1   2   3   4

d. Blaming yourself for things   1   2   3   4

e. Pains in the lower part of your back   1   2   3   4

f. Feeling lonely   1   2   3   4

g. Feeling Blue (also meaning feeling low or down)   1   2   3   4

h. Your feelings being easily hurt   1   2   3   4

i. Feeling others do not understand you or are unsympathetic   1   2   3   4

j. Feeling that people are unfriendly or dislike you   1   2   3   4

k. Having to do things very slowly in order to be sure you are doing them right   1   2   3   4

l. Feeling inferior to others   1   2   3   4

m. Soreness of your muscles   1   2   3   4

n. Having to check and double check what you do   1   2   3   4

o. Hot or cold spells (hot or cold feelings in your body)   1   2   3   4

p. Your mind going blank   1   2   3   4

q. Numbness or tingling in parts of your body   1   2   3   4

r. A lump in your throat (feeling upset)	1	2	3	4
s. Weakness in parts of your body	1	2	3	4
t. Heavy feelings in your arms and legs	1	2	3	4
u. Trouble concentrating	1	2	3	4

Section 5. Daily Hassles

INSTRUCTIONS: This scale is designed to measure the "hassles" experienced by university students. Please use the following definition of hassles as a guide to responding to this scale.

"HASSLES ARE IRRITANTS THAT CAN RANGE PROM MINOR ANNOYANCES TO FAIRLY MAJOR PRESSURES, PROBLEMS, OR DIFFICULTIES. THEY CAN OCCUR FEW OR MANY TIMES".

We are interested in identifying "hassles" in a number of different areas which are outlined below. We are further interested in determining the persistence of the various "hassles" that students report. Would you please use the scale below to appraise the extent to which you are hassled in <u>each </u>of the "areas" listed. Circle the appropriate number to the right of each item.

PERSISTENCE refers to the combination of the frequency and duration of a hassle. Some hassles may occur very frequently and last for a long time whereas others may occur rarely and not be very enduring. Various other combinations are possible.

REMEMBER: Hassles are irritants that you experience in your everyday life

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No hassle; Not at all persistent duration						Extremely persistent hassle; high frequency and/or duration

For example, the first area listed below is "Academic Deadlines". Of course all students have deadlines imposed on them but this is not necessarily a "hassle" to all students. If you are not at all hassled by such deadlines you should circle 1. However, if you perceive academic deadlines to be an extremely persistent hassle one that occurs with a high frequency and/or duration then you should circle 7. Of course if your appraisal is that you are actually hassled by such deadlines but this hassle is not extremely persistent, then you

should decide on the number between 2 and 6 that best represents your appraisal.   Please follow this strategy in responding to all of the other areas listed below.

Q22. How frequently and/or persistently are you hassled by the following situations?

a. Academic deadlines	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. Contact with girl/boy friend	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. Future job prospects	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. Relationships with people at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. Money for necessary expenses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. Noise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
g. Organization of time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
h. Weight	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
i. Household chores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
j. Family expectations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
k. Relationship with mother And/or father	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
l. Academic bureaucracy (academic processes taking too long)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
m. Preparing meals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
n. Exercise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
o. Owing money	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
p. Job satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
q. Financial security	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
r. Relationship with girl/boy friend	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
s. Relationship with brother And/or sister	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

t. University programme
   requirements   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Q23. **Please write in this space any comments you may have about this questionnaire or**
       any other issues related to your experience of being at this University.
       _____

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION SHEET, CONSENT FORM AND QUESTIONNAIRE

ADMINISTERED TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM CHINA AND

INDONESIA

INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Student,

Experiences of International Students

You are invited to take part in this study aimed at helping the University to better understand the experiences of International students in their process of adjustment to University and Australian life. We hope the study will help to better address the specific needs of International students.

Please give a few minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Participation is of course voluntary. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Questionnaires will be assigned a unique subject number and numbers will not be linked to names. E-mail address, phone/mobile number and/or home address are only provided if you choose to participate in the follow up surveys at four, and eight months periods. No individual will be identified or identifiable in the report. Before you proceed to complete this questionnaire please read and sign the Subject Information Sheet and Consent Form.

If you have any enquiries, please contact Hugo Gonzales on (02) 98507796, mobile 0401348975 and e-mail: hugonzales8@hotmail.com

Yours sincerely

Hugo Gonzales

[2] SUBJECT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

Dear participant

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study which aims to enable the University to better understand the experiences of International students in their process of adjustment to the University and Australian life. We hope this study may assist to better address the specific needs of International students. My name is Hugo Gonzales, PhD student at Macquarie University. You can contact me on (02) 98507796 and my office location is in the building C3B, room 410, Department of Psychology, Macquarie University. I am conducting the above study to meet the requirements for the PhD of Philosophy, Psychology. I am working on this topic under the supervision of Dr John Cunningham, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Psychology. He can be contacted on (02) 98508070.

Your contribution to this study will comprise completion of a questionnaire which will take about 15 to 20 minutes of your time to complete. This study will take place over eight months which means I will need you to complete this questionnaire when you commence university and repeat the process at four months and finally after eight months. The reason for repeating the process at four and eight months is to determine whether International students' adjustment to Australia and University life changes over the first eight months. If you find any question in this questionnaire of a concern to you, please feel free to talk to me about it. If you require counselling you may want to contact your University International Student Counselling Service.

Your views are completely confidential and the information you provided will securely stored for some time after which they will be destroyed. As the researcher, only I will have access to these records. I would also like to stress that the results of this study will **only be released in statistical form** and no personal data will be revealed. If you request it, I can provide you with a summary of the results of this study by contacting me on 0401348975. If you have any inquiries about this study or any matter related to it, please feel free to contact me on the above number or by e-mail; hugonzales8@hotmail.com. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary for which I am deeply appreciative. However, you can withdraw from this study at any stage if you wish. Please sign and date this consent form.

"I agree to participate in this research"

Signature of participant ……………………………………………

Date……………………………………………….

Signature of Researcher……………………………………………

Date…………………………………………………..

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[2] "The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Ethics Review Committee (Human Research). If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (telephone [02] 9850 7854, fax [02] 9850 8799, email: kdesilva@vc.mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome."

Questionnaire – Entry Stage
International Students – Adjustment to University Life and Australia

The aim of this questionnaire is for your University to better understand the experiences of international students in their process of adjustment to the University and Australian life.

This is the first of three questionnaires to be completed. This one marks your entry to the University. There will be another questionnaire to fill in after your first four months at University, and the final one after your first eight months.

To fill in the questionnaire, please circle the most appropriate answer. If there is not an appropriate answer given for your situation, please write in your answer in the space provided next to "other".

Please provide your address and a contact telephone number so that I can contact you again after four months and finally at eight months. This is very important otherwise I cannot use the information you have provided in this Questionnaire. I would like to remind you that your details are completely confidential and no one else will have access to this information other than the researcher

Subject number…………………….
Address…………………………………
Phone/mobile number………………
Level of study: a) Undergraduate studies
**   b) Postgraduate Studies**

Section 1. **Socio-Demographic Data Section**

Q1. Which university do you attend in Australia?

   a.   University of NSW

   b.   Macquarie University

c. University of Sydney

d. Central Queensland University

e. Other (please specify) _____

Q2. Your e-mail address _____

Q3. Age

a. 17 years old or younger

b. 18 years old

c. 19 years old

d. 20 years old

e. 21 years old

f. 22 years old

g. 23 years or older. Please indicate your age………

Q4. Gender

a. Female   b. Male

Q5. In which country were you born?

a. Indonesia   b. China

c. Other (please specify) _____

Q6. When did you arrive in Australia?

a. February 2003

b. January 2003

c.   December 2002

d.   November 2002

e.   October 2002

f.   before October 2002
      (please specify both the month and year):   month   ………..   year ………….

Q7.   At home, back in your country, what is the main language spoken?

a. English

b. Language other than English

Q8.   At home, in Australia, what is the main language spoken?

a. English

b. Language other than English

Q9.   What is your <u>main</u> source(s) of financial support?

a. Austudy   d. Employment

b. Family – parents   e. Other (please specify)_____

c. Family – partner   f.   I do not know

Q10. What is your marital status?

a. Single   d. Widowed

b. Divorced   e. Other please specify)_____

c. Married

Q11.   What is the highest level of education completed by your parents?

a. **Mother**   b. **Father**

Primary School	1	1
Secondary School	2	2
Technical or trade	3	3
University	4	4
Other (please specify) _____	5	5

Q12. **Please estimate in Australian dollars, which of the following gives the best estimate of the total of both your parents' combined annual income?**

    a. Less than $10,000

    b. $10,000 - $29,000

    c. $30,000 - $49,000

    d. $50,000 - $69,000

    e. $70,000 - $89,000

    f. $90,000 - $119,000

    g. $120,000 or more

    h. Don't know

Q13. **Please circle the statement that best applies to you. Circle only one**.

    a. **First generation:** You were born overseas

    b. **Second generation:** You were born in Australia. Either parent born in another country.

    c. **Third generation:** You were born in Australia. Both parents were born in Australia and all grandparents born in another country other than Australia.

    d. **Fourth Generation:** You and your parents were born in Australia and at least one grandparent was born in another country and the other grandparents born in Australia.

e. Fifth Generation: You and your parents were born in Australia and all grand parents born in Australia.

f. Don't know

Q14. Which of the following best describes where you lived before you moved to Australia?

a. City with more than 10 million people

b. City with between 5 and 10 million people

c. City with between 1 and 4 million people

d. Town with between 100,000 and 999,000 people

e. Town with between 50,000 and 99,000 people

f. Town with less than 50,000 people

g. Remote location far away from another city or town where less than 1,000 people live

h. Don't know the population of where I lived

Q15. Which language do you prefer to speak in Australia?

a. English

b. Language other than English (please specify)_____

Q16. How well do you think you can read English?

a. very well

b. well enough to get by

c. not very well

d. not at all

e. I do not know

Q17. **How many visits did you make to a General Practitioner (Medical Doctor) during the past three months?**

    a.   none

    b. 1 visit

    c. 2 visits

    d. 3 visits

    e. 4 visits

    f.   5 visits or more

    g. I do not know

Q18. **How would you rate your health during the past three months?**

    a.   Very good

    b.   Quite good

    c.   Not very good

    d. Not good at all

    e. I do not know

Q19. **In the last six months, how often have you experienced mental health problems such as depression and anxiety for example?**

    a. Not at all

    b. Occasionally

    c. Frequently

    d. All the time

    e. I do not know

Q20. **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: A person with an emotional problem is not likely to solve it alone. He or she is likely to solve it with professional help.**

    a. Strongly Disagree

    b. Disagree

    c. Agree

    d. Strongly Agree

    e. I do not know

Section 2. Ethnic Identity

In Australia, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or <u>ethnic groups.</u> Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Chinese, Indonesian, Indo-Chinese, Chinese-Indonesian, Singaporean, Asian Australian, Filipino, Australian Indigenous people, Caucasian or White, Italian, Greek, Vietnamese and many others. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

Q21. In terms of ethnic group, meaning the culture to which I belong, I consider myself to be_____

Q22. Please use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

(5) Strongly agree   (4) Agree   (3) Neutral   (2) Disagree   (1) Strongly disagree

For example, if you strongly agree with the first statement: I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs; you would place a 5 in the space provided, eg _5_ next to the statement.
Please answer the questions as it applies since you arrived in Australia.

Remember, your ethnic group refers to the culture you feel you belong to.

  a. I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.   _____

b. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members
    of my own ethnic group.   _____

c. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.   _____

d. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership. _____

e. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.   _____

f.   I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.   _____

g. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.   _____

h. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked
    to other people about my ethnic group.   _____

i. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.   _____

j. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food,
    music, or customs.   _____

k. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.   _____

l. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.   _____

Section 3. Social Support

**Q23. This section relates to the level of social support you receive. Please use the
numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following
statements by circling the number that best suits your response.**

1 **Strongly** **Disagree**	**2** **Disagree**	**3** **Agree**	**4** **Strongly** **Agree**

a. Sometimes it's necessary to talk to someone about your problems   1 2 3 4

b. Friends often have good advice to give   1 2 3 4

c. You have to be careful to whom you tell personal things   1 2 3 4

d. I often get good information from other people 1 2 3 4

e. People should keep their problems to themselves 1 2 3 4

f. It's easy for me to talk about personal and private matters 1 2 3 4

g. In the past, friends have really helped me out when I've had a problem 1 2 3 4

h. You can never trust people to keep a secret 1 2 3 4

i. When a person gets upset they should talk it over with a friend 1 2 3 4

j. Other people never understand my problems 1 2 3 4

k. Almost everyone knows someone they can trust with a personal secret 1 2 3 4

l. If you can't figure out your problems, nobody can 1 2 3 4

m. In the past, I have rarely found other people's opinions helpful when
  I've had a problem 1 2 3 4

n. It really helps when you are angry to tell a friend what happened 1 2 3 4

o. Some things are too personal to talk to anyone about 1 2 3 4

p. It's fairly easy to tell whom you can trust and whom you can't 1 2 3 4

q. In the past, I have been hurt by people I confided in 1 2 3 4

r. If you confide in other people, they will take advantage of you 1 2 3 4

s. It's OK to ask favours of people 1 2 3 4

t. Even if I need something, I would hesitate to borrow it from someone 1 2 3 4

Section 4. Acculturative Stress

Q24. Below are a number of statements, which might be seen, as stressful. For each statement, circle only one of the following numbers (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that best describes how stressful you see the statement. If the statement does not apply to you, mark number 0: Have Not Experienced.

0 = **Have not experienced**
1 = **Not at all stressful**
2 = **Somewhat stressful**
3 = **Moderately stressful**
4 = **Very stressful**
5 = **Extremely stressful**

a. I feel uncomfortable when others make jokes about
   or put down people of my ethnic background.   0   1   2   3   4   5

b. I have more barriers to overcome than most people.   0   1   2   3   4   5

c. It bothers me that family members I am close to do
   not understand my new values.   0   1   2   3   4   5

d. Close family members have different expectations
   about my future than I do.   0   1   2   3   4   5

e. It is hard to express to my friends how I really feel.   0   1   2   3   4   5

f. My family did not want me to move away to study
   but I wanted to.   0   1   2   3   4   5

g. It bothers me to think that so many people use drugs.   0   1   2   3   4   5

   h. It bothers me that I cannot be with my family.   0   1   2   3   4   5

i. In looking for a good job, I sometimes feel that my
   ethnicity is a limitation.   0   1   2   3   4   5

j. I don't have any close friends.   0   1   2   3   4   5

k. Many people have stereotypes about my culture or
   ethnic group and treat me as if they are true.   0   1   2   3   4   5

l. I don't feel at home.   0   1   2   3   4   5

m. People think I am unsociable when in fact I have

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trouble communicating in English.   0   1   2   3   4   5

n. I often feel that people actively try to stop me from
   advancing.   0   1   2   3   4   5

o. It bothers me when people pressure me to become
   part of the main culture.   0   1   2   3   4   5

p. I often feel ignored by people who are supposed
   to assist me.   0   1   2   3   4   5

q. Because I am different I do not get enough credit
   for the work I do.   0   1   2   3   4   5

r. It bothers me that I have an accent   0   1   2   3   4   5

s. Loosening the ties with my country is difficult   0   1   2   3   4   5

t. I often think about my cultural background   0   1   2   3   4   5

u. Because of my ethnic background, I feel that others
   often exclude me from participating in their activities.   0   1   2   3   4   5

v. It is difficult for me to "show off" my family   0   1   2   3   4   5

w. People look down upon me if I practice customs of
   my culture.   0   1   2   3   4   5

x. I have trouble understanding others when they speak   0   1   2   3   4   5

y. I feel guilty because I have left family or friends in
   my home country.   0   1   2   3   4   5

z. I feel that I will never gain the respect that I had
   in my home country.   0   1   2   3   4   5

Section 5. Coping

Q25. How do you *generally* cope with the issues arising from living in a new culture?

   **People deal with problems in different ways. Often there is no 'right' or 'wrong'
   way, and what works for one person may not work for another. We are
   interested in how you deal with it.**

Using the scale below please read each statement and circle the response that best describes how often you use a particular strategy in coping with a new culture. REMEMBER: All questions relate to your difficulties adjusting into a new culture and the cultural shock resulting from it.

1	2	3	4
I do not do this at all	I do this a little bit	I do this medium amount	I do this a lot

a. I turn to work or other activities to take my mind off things.   1   2   3   4

b. I concentrate my efforts on doing something about the situation I'm in.   1   2   3   4

c. I say to myself "this isn't real".   1   2   3   4

d. I use alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better.   1   2   3   4

e. I get emotional support from others.   1   2   3   4

f. I give up trying to deal with the problem.   1   2   3   4

g. I take action to try to make the situation better.   1   2   3   4

h. I refuse to believe it has happened (feeling stressed about new culture)   1   2   3   4

i. I say things to let my unpleasant feelings escape.   1   2   3   4

j. I get help and advice from other people.   1   2   3   4

k. I use alcohol or other drugs to help get me through it.   1   2   3   4

l. I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive.   1   2   3   4

m. I criticise myself.   1   2   3   4

n. I try to come up with a strategy about what to do.   1   2   3   4

o. I get comfort and understanding from someone.   1   2   3   4

p. I give up the attempt to cope.   1   2   3   4

q. I look for something good in what is happening. 1 2 3 4

r. I make jokes about it. 1 2 3 4

s. I do something to think about it less, such as going to the
   movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping or
   shopping 1 2 3 4

t. I accept the reality of the fact that it has happened
   (moving to a new culture) 1 2 3 4

u. I express my negative feelings. 1 2 3 4

v. I try to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs. 1 2 3 4

w. I try to get advice or help from other people about
    what to do. 1 2 3 4

x. I try to learn to live with it. 1 2 3 4

y. I think hard about what steps to take. 1 2 3 4

z. I blame myself for things that happen. 1 2 3 4

aa. I pray or meditate. 1 2 3 4

bb. I make fun of the situation. 1 2 3 4

Section 6. Psychosocial Status

**Q26. How have you felt during the past seven days including today? Use the
following scale to describe how distressing you have found these things over
this time.**

Not at all	A little distressing	Quite a bit distressing	Extremely distressing
1	2	3	4

a. Difficulty in speaking when you are excited 1 2 3 4

b. Trouble remembering things 1 2 3 4

c. Worried about sloppiness or carelessness 1 2 3 4

d. Blaming yourself for things 1 2 3 4

e. Pains in the lower part of your back	1	2	3	4
f. Feeling lonely	1	2	3	4
g. Feeling Blue (also meaning feeling low or down)	1	2	3	4
h. Your feelings being easily hurt	1	2	3	4
i. Feeling others do not understand you or are unsympathetic	1	2	3	4
j. Feeling that people are unfriendly or dislike you	1	2	3	4
k. Having to do things very slowly in order to be sure you are doing them right	1	2	3	4
l. Feeling inferior to others	1	2	3	4
m. Soreness of your muscles	1	2	3	4
n. Having to check and double check what you do	1	2	3	4
o. Hot or cold spells (hot or cold feelings in your body)	1	2	3	4
p. Your mind going blank	1	2	3	4
q. Numbness or tingling in parts of your body	1	2	3	4
r. A lump in your throat (feeling upset)	1	2	3	4
s. Weakness in parts of your body	1	2	3	4
t. Heavy feelings in your arms and legs	1	2	3	4
u. Trouble concentrating	1	2	3	4

Section 7. Daily Hassles

INSTRUCTIONS: This scale is designed to measure the "hassles" experienced by university students. Please use the following definition of hassles as a guide to responding to this scale.

"HASSLES ARE IRRITANTS THAT CAN RANGE PROM MINOR ANNOYANCES TO FAIRLY MAJOR PRESSURES, PROBLEMS, OR DIFFICULTIES. THEY CAN OCCUR FEW OR MANY TIMES".

We are interested in identifying "hassles" in a number of different areas which are outlined below. We are further interested in determining the persistence of the various "hassles" that students report. Would you please use the scale below to appraise the extent to which you are hassled in each of the "areas" listed. Circle the appropriate number to the right of each item.

PERSISTENCE refers to the combination of the frequency and duration of a hassle. Some hassles may occur very frequently and last for a long time whereas others may occur rarely and not be very enduring. Various other combinations are possible.

REMEMBER: Hassles are irritants that you experience in your everyday life

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No hassle; Not at all persistent duration						Extremely persistent hassle; high frequency and/or duration

For example, the first area listed below is "Academic Deadlines". Of course all students have deadlines imposed on them but this is not necessarily a "hassle" to all students. If you are not at all hassled by such deadlines you should circle 1. However, if you perceive academic deadlines to be an extremely persistent hassle one that occurs with a high frequency and/or duration then you should circle 7. Of course if your appraisal is that you are actually hassled by such deadlines but this hassle is not extremely persistent, then you should decide on the number between 2 and 6 that best represents your appraisal. Please follow this strategy in responding to all of the other areas listed below.

Q27. How frequently and/or persistently are you hassled by the following situations?

a. Academic deadlines	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. Contact with girl/boy friend	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. Future job prospects	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. Relationships with people at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. Money for necessary expenses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. Noise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

g. Organization of time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
h. Weight	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
i. Household chores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
j. Family expectations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
k. Relationship with mother And/or father	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
l. Academic bureaucracy (academic processes taking too long)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
m. Preparing meals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
n. Exercise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
o. Owing money	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
p. Job satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
q. Financial security	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
r. Relationship with girl/boy friend	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
s. Relationship with brother And/or sister	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
t. University programme requirements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q28.   Please write in this space any comments, concerns and/or fears you may have about your experience of settling in Australia._____

APPENDIX C

INFORMATION SHEET, CONSENT FORM AND QUESTIONNAIRE

ADMINISTERED TO INDONESIAN STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITAS, INDONESIA

LEMBAR INFORMASI

Rekan-rekan Mahasiswa/i,

Pengalaman-pengalaman sebagai Mahasiswa

Kami memohon kesediaan anda untuk berpartisipasi dalam studi ini yang ditujukan untuk membantu Universitas untuk memperoleh pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang proses-proses penyesuian diri yang harus ditempuh mahasiswa dalam beradaptasi dengan kehidupan kampus. Kami berharap bahwa studi ini dapat membantu Universitas kita untuk lebih mampu mengetahui setiap kebutuhan para mahasiswa.

Kontribusi anda dalam studi ini terdiri dari pengisian kuesioner berikut, yang akan memakan waktu sekitar 15 sampai 20 menit. Studi ini dilaksanakan dalam jangka waktu delapan bulan dimana anda akan diminta mengisi kuesioner pada saat anda baru memulai studi anda, dan mengulangi proses yang sama pada bulan keempat dan kedelapan setelahnya. Alasan pengulangan dalam pengambilan data pada tiga dan enam bulan kemudian ini adalah untuk menentukan apakah penyesuaian diri anda dalam kehidupan kampus berubah setelah delapan bulan.

Mohon luangkan beberapa menit dari waktu anda untuk mengisi kuesioner berikut ini. Partisipasi anda sepenuhnya atas dasar kesukarelaan. Respon-respon anda akan dijaga kerahasiaannya. Kuesioner akan ditandai berdasarkan spesifikasi nomer subyek dimana nomer ini tidak akan dikorelasikan dengan nama partisipan. Alamat email, nomor telepon/ponsel dan atau telepon rumah hanya diminta jika anda bersedia untuk berpartisipasi dalam *follow-up* survey yang akan diadakan pada periode bulan ke-4 dan ke-8. Identitas pribadi anda tidak akan ditampilkan dalam laporan penelitian. Sebelum memulai pengisian kuesioner, lebih dahulu mohon anda membaca dan menandatangani Lembar Informasi Subyek dan Lembar Persetujuan (halaman berikut). Baik Lembar Informasi Subyek maupun Lembar Persetujuan keduanya dilengkapi masing-masing satu salinan yang diperuntukkan untuk keperluan anda.

Segala pertanyaan atau informasi berkenaan dengan studi ini, dapat ditujukan pada:

Erita Narhetali

Bagian Sosial – Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Indonesia Depok – Indonesia 16424

Tilp. 021-7863524   Email: embunbeku@yahoo.com

Hormat kami,

Erita Narhetali
 "Saya bersedia untuk berpartisipasi dalam studi ini"

Tanda tangan partisipan………………………………Tanggal……………………………………………

Tandatangan Peneliti………………………………Tanggal………………………………………………….

Kuesioner – Tahap Permulaan

Penyesuaian Mahasiswa dalam Kehidupan Kampus

Tujuan dari kuesioner ini adalah menambah pemahaman Universitas akan proses-proses penyesuaian diri yang dialami mahasiswa baru dalam menjalani kehidupan kampusnya.
Kuesioner ini adalah yang pertama yang harus anda isi. Artinya, kuesioner ini diberikan pada saat yang anda baru mulai kuliah. Berikutnya akan ada kuesioner lain yang harus anda isi setelah tiga bulan pertama kuliah, dan yang terakhir setelah bulan keenam kuliah.

Untuk mengisi kuesioner ini, mohon lingkari pilihan jawaban yang paling tepat menurut anda. Jika tidak ada pilihan jawaban yang paling sesuai menurut anda, mohon tulis jawaban anda pada kolom pilihan "lain-lain".

Mohon cantumkan alamat dan nomor telepon anda agar saya dapat menghubungi anda kembali setelah bulan ke-3 dan ke-6. Hal ini penting mengingat partisipasi anda hanya akan bisa digunakan dalam studi ini jika seluruh tahapan studi terpenuhi. Sekali lagi, segala detail dan informasi pribadi anda akan dijaga kerahasiaannya dan tidak ada pihak lain yang dapat mengakses informasi tersebut selain peneliti yang bersangkutan.

Nomber subyek………………………………

Alamat………………………………………..

Telepon/Ponsel………………………………..

Bagian Data Sosio-Demografik

Q1. Di Universitas mana anda berkuliah di Indonesia?_____

Q2. Alamat email anda _____

Q3. Usia. Harap tuliskan usia anda_____

Q4. Jenis kelamin

a. Perempuan   b. Laki-laki

Q5. Di Negara mana anda lahir?

    a. Indonesia   b. lain-lain (harap jelaskan)_____

Q6. Jika tempat kelahiran anda bukan Indonesia, tahun kedatangan anda di Indonesia_____

Q7. Apakah Bahasa Indonesia adalah bahasa sehari-hari di rumah?

    a.   Ya

    b.   Tidak(Harap jelaskan)_____

Q8. Apa sumber keuangan anda yang paling utama?

    a. Pekerjaan   d. Tabungan

    b. Keluarga-orangtua   e. Lain-lain(harap
        jelaskan)_____

    c. Keluarga-pasangan   f. Saya tidak tahu

Q9. Apa status keluarga anda?

    a. Lajang

    b. Cerai e. Lain-lain (harap jelaskan)_____

    c. Menikah

    d. Janda/duda

Q10. Apa tingkat pendidikan orang tua anda yang paling tinggi?

	a. Ibu	b. Ayah
Sekolah Dasar	1	1
Sekolah Menengah	2	2
Sekolah Kejuruan	3	3

Universitas	4	4
Lain-lain (harap jelaskan) _____	5	5

Q11. Harap berikan estimasi total pemasukan orangtua anda (dalam rupiah) dalam satu tahun? _____

Q12. Harap lingkari pernyataan yang paling sesuai dengan situasi anda. Lingkari hanya satu pernyataan saja.

  a. **Generasi pertama:** Anda lahir di Indonesia.

  b. **Generasi kedua:** Anda lahir di Indonesia. Kedua orangtua lahir di Negara lain.

  c. **Generasi ketiga:** Anda lahir di Indonesia. Kedua orangtua lahir di Indonesia dan semua kakek/nenek anda lahir di negara selain Indonesia.

  d. **Generasi keempat:** Anda dan kedua orang tua anda lahir di Indonesia dan setidaknya satu dari kakek atau nenek anda lahir di Negara lain, dan yang lainnya lahir di Indonesia.

  e. **Generasi kelima:** Anda dan kedua orangtua anda lahir di Indonesia dan seluruh kakek/nenek anda lahir di Indonesia.

  f. **Tidak tahu**

Q13. Bahasa pertama semasa anak-anak

  a. Bahasa Indonesia

  b. Bahasa lain selain Bahasa Indonesia (harap jelaskan)_____

Q14. Berapa sering anda mengunjungi dokter dalam waktu tiga bulan terakhir ini?

  a.   tidak pernah

  b. 1 kali

  c. 2 kali

  d. 3 kali

e.   4 kali

f.   5 kali atau lebih

g.   saya tidak tahu

Q15. Bagaimana anda menilai kesehatan anda dalam tiga bulan terakhir?

a.   Sangat baik

b.   Cukup baik

c.   Tidak terlalu baik

d.   Sama sekali tidak baik

e.   Saya tidak tahu

Q16. Dalam waktu enam bulan belakangan ini, berapa sering anda mengalami masalah mental seperti depresi dan cemas, misalnya?

a.   Tidak sama sekali

b.   Sesekali

c.   Sering

d.   Setiap saat

e.   Saya tidak tahu

Q17. Seberapa setuju anda terhadap pernyataan berikut: Seseorang yang memiliki masalah emosional tidak mungkin menyelesaikannya sendiri. Dia semestinya meminta bantuan profesional.

a.   Sangat tidak setuju

b.   Tidak setuju

c.   Setuju

d.   Sangat setuju

e.   Saya tidak tahu

Bagian 1. Dukungan Sosial

Q18. Bagian ini berkaitan dengan tingkat dukungan sosial yang anda terima. Harap lingkari nomor yang paling mewakili pendapat anda terhadap pernyataan-pernyataan di bawah ini.

1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Sangat Tidak setuju	**Tidak setuju**	**Setuju**	**Sangat setuju**

a. Terkadang kita butuh bicara dengan orang lain tentang

masalah kita   1   2   3   4

b. Teman seringkali punya nasihat yang bagus   1   2   3   4

c. Anda harus berhati-hati memilih orang untuk bercerita

tentang hal-hal yang personal sifatnya   1   2   3   4

d. Saya sering mendapat informasi yang bermanfaat dari

orang lain   1   2   3   4

e. Orang seharusnya tidak menceritakan masalahnya kepada

orang lain   1   2   3   4

f. Buat saya tidak sulit untuk mengungkapkan hal-hal

yang bersifat personal dan pribadi   1   2   3   4

g. Di masa lalu, teman telah seringkali menolong saya

menyelesaikan masalah   1   2   3   4

h. Anda tidak pernah bisa mempercayai seseorang

untuk mampu menjaga rahasia   1   2   3   4

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i. Ketika seseorang merasa kecewa sebaiknya ia berbagi

rasa dengan temannya   1   2   3   4

j. Orang lain tidak pernah memahami masalah saya   1   2   3   4

k. Hampir setiap orang punya seseorang yang dapat

dipercayainya untuk bercerita tentang masalah pribadi   1   2   3   4

l. Jika anda tidak mampu menjelaskan permasalahan anda,

maka tak seorang pun bisa.   1   2   3   4

m. Di masa lalu, jarang sekali pendapat orang lain bisa

membantu masalah yang saya hadapi   1   2   3   4

n. Kalau sedang marah, menceritakan masalahnya dengan

 orang lain akan sangat membantu   1   2   3   4

o. Ada beberapa hal yang terlalu personal sifatnya untuk

diceritakan pada orang lain   1   2   3   4

p. Cukup mudah untuk mengatakan siapa-siapa orang

yang anda percayai, dan siapa-siapa yang tidak anda percayai 1   2   3   4

q. Di masa lalu, saya pernah dilukai oleh seseorang

yang saya percayai   1   2   3   4

r. Jika anda mempercayai orang lain, mereka akan

memanfaatkan anda   1   2   3   4

s. Tidak masalah bila kita meminta bantuan orang lain   1   2   3   4

t. Meskipun saya membutuhkan sesuatu, saya akan

ragu-ragu untuk meminjamnya dari orang lain   1   2   3   4

Bagian 2. Identitas Etnis

Masyarakat Indonesia berasal dari berbagai bangsa dan Negara, dan ada banyak perbendaharaan istilah untuk mendeskripsikan perbedaan latar belakang atau kelompok etnis. Beberapa contoh perbedaan istilah di Indonesia misalnya dari kelompok etnis Tionghoa, Jawa, Batak, Sunda, dan banyak lagi lainnya. Pertanyaan-pertanyaan berikut adalah mengenai etnisitas anda atau kelompok etnis anda dan bagaimana perasaan anda tentang hal tersebut.

Q19. Dalam istilah kelompok etnis, yang bermakna budaya yang anda pahami sebagai budaya saya, saya menilai kelompok etnis saya adalah
_____

Q20. Harap gunakan nomor-nomor berikut untuk mengindikasikan tentang seberapa jauh anda setuju atau tidak setuju dengan setiap pernyataan berikut,

(5) Sangat setuju   (4) Setuju   (3) Netral (2) Tidak setuju   (1) Sangat tidak setuju

Sebagai contoh, jika anda sangat setuju dengan pernyataan pertama: Saya telah menghabiskan

banyak waktu untuk mempelajari lebih jauh tentang kelompok etnis saya, seperti sejarah,

tradisi, kebiasaan; anda akan menuliskan 5 di kolom yang tersedia, misalnya _5_ di sebelah pertanyaan tersebut.

Ingat, kelompok etnis anda mengacu pada budaya yang anda rasakan sebagai budaya anda.

a. Saya telah menghabiskan banyak waktu untuk

mempelajari lebih jauh tentang kelompok etnis saya seperti

sejarahnya, tradisi dan kebiasaan-kebiasaannya.   _____

b. Saya terlibat aktif dalam organisasi atau kelompok sosial

dimana anggotanya kebanyakan berasal dari kelompok

etnis yang sama dengan saya   _____

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c. Saya memiliki perasaan yang jelas tentang latar belakang

  etnis saya dan apa maknanya buat saya.   _____

d. Saya telah banyak berpikir tentang bagaimana hidup

  saya akan dipengaruhi oleh keanggotaan saya dalam

  suatu kelompok etnis.   _____

e. Saya merasa bahagia bahwa saya adalah anggota dari suatu

  kelompok dimana saya merasa memiliki.   _____

f. Saya punya rasa memiliki yang sangat kuat terhadap

  kelompok etnis saya.   _____

g. Saya cukup paham apa makna keanggotaan saya dalam

  kelompok etnis   _____

h. Dalam rangka lebih memahami tentang latar

  belakang etnis saya, saya sering berbicara dengan

  orang lain tentang kelompok etnis saya.   _____

i. Saya sangat bangga dengan kelompok etnis saya.   _____

j. Saya berpartisipasi dalam berbagai praktek budaya kelompok

  saya, seperti makanan, musik atau tradisi   _____

k. Saya merasa kedekatan yang sangat kuat dengan kelompok etnis saya   _____

l. Saya merasa nyaman dengan budaya atau latar belakang etnis saya   _____

Bagian 3. Cara menghadapi masalah

Q21. Secara umum, bagaimana anda menghadapi berbagai kondisi yang berkaitan dengan status baru anda sebagai mahasiswa di perguruan tinggi?

Orang menghadapi masalahnya dalam berbagai cara. Seringkali tidak ada istilah cara yang 'benar' atau 'salah', dan apa yang sesuai bagi seseorang bisa jadi tidak sesuai bagi orang lain. Kami tertarik untuk mengetahui bagaimana cara anda menghadapi hal-hal tersebut.

Dengan menggunakan skala di bawah ini, harap baca tiak pernyataan dan lingkari respon yang paling menggambarkan berapa sering anda menggunakan strategi tersebut.

1	2	3	4
Saya tidak pernah melakukan hal ini	Saya melakukannya sedikit	Saya melakukannya dalam jumlah yang sedang-sedang saja	Saya sangat sering melakukan hal ini

a. Saya memilih bekerja atau melakukan aktivitas lain untuk

   membuat saya berhenti memikirkan sesuatu   1 2 3 4

b. Saya berkonsentrasi terhadap usaha yang saya lakukan ketika

   sedang mengerjakan sesuatu   1 2 3 4

c. Saya mengatakan pada diri sendiri "ini tidak benar-benar terjadi".   1 2 3 4

d. Saya mengkonsumsi alkohol atau obat-obatan untuk membuat

   diri saya merasa lebih baik.   1 2 3 4

e. Saya mendapatkan dukungan emosional dari orang lain   1 2 3 4

f. Saya putus asa dalam mencoba mengatasi masalah tersebut.   1 2 3 4

g. Saya mengambil tindakan tertentu untuk membuat

   situasi lebih baik   1 2 3 4

h. Saya menolak untuk percaya bahwa hal ini benar terjadi

   (merasa stress tentang kehidupan kampus)   1 2 3 4

i. Saya mengucapkan sesuatu untuk mengeluarkan

   perasaan yang tidak menyenangkan.   1 2 3 4

j. Saya mendapat bantuan dan nasihan dari orang lain   1 2 3 4

k. Saya mengkonsumsi alkohol atau obat-obatan untuk

   menolong saya melewati masa-masa sulit   1 2 3 4

l. Saya mencoba melihatnya dari sudut lain, untuk

   mendapatkan sisi yang lebih positif.   1 2 3 4

m. Saya mengkritisi diri saya sendiri   1 2 3 4

n. Saya mencoba mencari strategi dan langkah yang harus

   yang dilakukan.   1 2 3 4

o. Saya mencoba memperoleh kedekatan dan pemahaman

   dari seseorang.   1 2 3 4

p. Saya menyerah dalam usaha saya menghadapi masalah.   1 2 3 4

q. Saya mencari hal-hal yang baik tentang apa yang sedang terjadi.   1 2 3 4

r. Saya membuat humor tentang hal itu   1 2 3 4

s. Saya melakukan hal-hal lain untuk mencoba tidak terlalu

   memikirkannya, misalnya dengan cara pergi nonton film, tv,

   membaca, berkhayal, tidur atau belanja.   1 2 3 4

t. Saya menerima kenyataan bahwa hal tersebut benar telah terjadi.   1 2 3 4

u. Saya mengekspresikan perasaan-perasaan negatif saya.   1 2 3 4

v. Saya mencoba mendapatkan kedamaian dan ketentraman

   hati melalui agama atau keyakinan saya.   1 2 3 4

w. Saya mencoba mendapatkan bantuan atau nasihat dari orang

   lain tentang apa yang sebagaiknya saya lakukan.   1 2 3 4

x. Saya mencoba belajar untuk menerima kenyataan.   1 2 3 4

y. Saya berpikir keras tentang langkah-langkah yang harus saya ambil.   1 2 3 4

z. Saya menyalahkan diri saya sendiri atas hal yang telah terjadi.   1 2 3 4

aa. Saya berdoa atau melakukan meditasi.   1 2 3 4

bb. Saya mencandai situasi tersebut.   1 2 3 4

Bagian 4. Status Psikososial

Q22. Bagaimana perasaan anda dalam kurun waktu tujuh hari belakangan hingga hari ini? Gunakan skala berikut untuk menggambarkan seberapa tertekannya anda akibat hal-hal tersebut selama ini.

Tidak sama sekali	Agak tertekan	Cukup menekan	Sangat menekan
1	2	3	4

a. Kesulitan berbicara saat anda sedang merasa bersemangat   1 2 3 4

b. Kesulitan mengingat sesuatu   1 2 3 4

c. Kekhawatiran tentang kecerobohan atau kurangnya perhatian   1 2 3 4

d. Menyalahkan diri atas berbagai hal   1 2 3 4

e. Sakit di bagian bawah punggung   1 2 3 4

f.   Merasa kesepian   1 2 3 4

g. Merasa nelangsa (juga berarti sedih atau terabaikan)   1 2 3 4

h. Perasaan anda mudah terluka   1 2 3 4

i.   Merasa orang lain tidak memahami anda atau

   menunjukkan perilaku tidak simpatik.   1 2 3 4

j. Merasa bahwa orang lain bersikap tidak ramah

   atau tidak menyukai anda.   1 2 3 4

k. Menyelesaikan pekerjaan dengan lambat untuk

memastikan bahwa pekerjaan anda benar. 1 2 3 4

l. Merasa inferior (tidak mampu) di hadapan orang lain 1 2 3 4

m. Ketegangan atau nyeri pada otot anda 1 2 3 4

n. Selalu memeriksa ulang pekerjaan anda 1 2 3 4

o. Merasa tubuh panas atau dingin 1 2 3 4

p. Pikiran anda buntu 1 2 3 4

q. Merasa kebal atau hilang rasa

terhadap bagian-bagian tertentu dari tubuh anda. 1 2 3 4

r. Merasa kecewa atau sedih 1 2 3 4

s. Bagian-bagian tubuh tertentu terasa lemah 1 2 3 4

t. Tangan dan kaki terasa berat 1 2 3 4

u. Sulit berkonsentrasi 1 2 3 4

Bagian 5. Gangguan Sehari-hari hassles

INSTRUKSI: Skala ini didisain untuk mengukur "gangguan" yang dialami para mahasiswa. Harap gunakan definisi "gangguan" berikut ini sebagai panduan dalam mengisi bagian ini.

"GANGGUAN ADALAH IRITASI PERASAAN YANG DAPAT BERVARIASI MULAI DARI IRITASI KECIL HINGGA TEKANAN YANG AMAT BESAR, PROBLEMA, ATAU KESULITAN. HAL INI BISA TERJADI SESEKALI ATAU SERINGKALI.

Kami tertarik untuk mengidentifikasi "gangguan" dalam bentuk sejumlah area yang berbeda seperti diurai di bawah ini. Lebih jauh kami tertarik untuk menentukan persistensi dari berbagai jenis gangguan tersebut dialami mahasiswa. Harap gunakan skala di bawah untuk menunjukkan seberapa jauh anda terganggu oleh hal-hal di bawah ini. Lingkari nomor di sebelah kanan setiap pernyataan yang paling sesuai bagi anda.

PERSISTENSI mengacu pada kombinasi antara frekuensi dan durasi dari suatu gangguan. Beberapa gangguan dapat terjadi sangat sering dan berlangsung lama sementara yang lainnya mungkin jarang terjadi dan kalaupun terjadi hanya sebentar. Variasi kombinasi dari keduanya juga bisa terjadi.

INGAT: Gangguan adalah iritasi yang anda alami dalam kehidupan sehari-hari anda

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Bukan gangguan;   Sangat mengganggu

Sama sekali tidak   Frekuensi dan

sering dan   durasinya tinggi

                                                  hanya sebentar

Sebagai contoh, area pertama dalam daftar di bawah ini adalah "Tenggat waktu akademik". Tentu semua mahasiswa punya tenggat waktu masing-masing namun tidak selalu semua mahasiswa menganggapnya sebagai sesuatu yang "mengganggu". Jika anda sama sekali tidak terganggu oleh hal ini, harap lingkari nomor 1. Namun jika menurut anda tenggat waktu akademik sangat mengganggu ada dan anda merasakannya terus menerus maka anda lingkari nomor 7. Jika penilaian anda terhadap tenggat waktu akademik adalah sebagai salah satu hal yang mengganggu anda, namun tidak terlalu kerap, maka anda lingkari salah satu nomor antara 2 dan 6, yang paling sesuai menurut anda. Demikain seterusnya. .

Q23. Berapa sering/kerap anda terganggu oleh situasi-situasi berikut ini?

a. Tenggat waktu akademik   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

b. Kontak dengan teman laki-laki/perempuan   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

c. Prospek kerja masa depan   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

d. Relasi dengan orang lain di tempat kerja   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

e. Uang untuk pengeluaran yang wajar   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

f. Kebisingan   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

g. Pengaturan waktu   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

h. Berat badan   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

i. Pekerjaan rumah tangga   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

j. Harapan keluarga   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

k. Relasi dengan ibu dan/atau ayah   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

l. Birokrasi akademik   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

m. Menyiapkan makanan   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

n. Olah raga   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

o. Hutang   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

p. Kepuasan kerja   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

q. Kondisi keuangan   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

r. Relasi dengan teman laki-laki/perempuan   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

s. Relasi dengan saudara laki-laki/perempuan   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

t. Persyaratan program di Universitas   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Q24. Mohon tuliskan komentar anda tentang kuesioner ini atau berbagai hal lain berkenaan dengan pengalaman anda di Universitas ini.

_____

APPENDIX D

PERSONAL STORIES OF SOJOURN ACROSS TIME

Daniel*
International student from Indonesia
*Not the real name of respondent. The name Daniel has been used to protect the person's true identity.

Entry Interview

<u>Family background and reasons to study in Australia</u>

Daniel has both parents working in Indonesia. He has also a younger sibling. When Daniel finished high school in Malaysia, he thought about studying in Canada or Australia. He decided on Australia because it is closer to Asia and because many other Indonesian students chose to study business at a local Sydney university. He decided to come to Australia as he explained, "Indonesia is only six hours away from Australia. Travelling from Europe or Canada back to Indonesia is too far. If something happened like an accident, Daniel says, it would be difficult for my family to be with me. If something happened to me in Australia, my parents may just come here and help me out. It is more convenient."

Daniel went to junior high school in Indonesia. He then studied his A levels, and Cambridge levels in Malaysia. He feels very lucky that he went to Malaysia before he came to Australia. He found Malaysia not that different to Indonesia, so there was not the pressure he has in Australia to have to pick up things quickly. In Malaysia he had the opportunity to learn English.

<u>Initial impressions on entry to Australia</u>

When Daniel first arrived in Australia the weather was very cold. He suffered from the cold weather and was not prepared for it. His initial impression was that people in Australia were friendlier than in Indonesia. For example, when he first arrived at the airport, he found he had lost a box. People at the airport readily helped him to retrieve it. He also commented on the friendly atmosphere at immigration. They just asked him if he had anything to declare and then let him go. Previously, Daniel had studied in Malaysia and found Malaysian people not so friendly towards Indonesian people.

His first impression of the suburb where he lives was that that after 5pm everything is closed. In Asia, the shops are open at night. Sometimes when he walked around the suburb, it felt like it was midnight because nobody was there.

When asked about his first impressions of Macquarie University he said: "I was shocked because I am used to one-building unis. I felt that the uni here was like a city. I couldn't find anything like the post office". Daniel found that having the shopping centre close by meant he didn't need to go to the city.

Preparation before arriving in Australia

Daniel's mental preparation in coming to study in Australia was to look at it as a challenge. "I took it as a challenge. If I want to score and want to take a step forward, I have to take it. I know that there are many difficulties that I will get through, but all these difficulties are for your own good."

Similarities and Differences

Daniel finds the weather very different. The atmosphere in Australia is also different. By comparison, Indonesia is very crowded; a lot of people. At Macquarie he finds it to be much quieter.

Problems experienced initially

Household chores such as laundry and ironing posed difficulties, as Daniel explained that in Indonesia they have servants who do everything for them. The food is very different. Daniel's impression is that in Australia, people tend to eat like Americans and Europeans. He has found it hard to cook but is learning how to do so.

Daniel finds that when he is at the university he does not have much time to socialise during class, but after classes he socialises with friends from college where he lives.

Being treated differently

When asked if he felt he was treated differently, Daniel replied: "People here give equal rights. People in Australia are open minded and that is one of the reasons I am coming to Australia to study. People even though we are Asians they still accept us with open arms. I believe that people will help us to study. I think people here are good."

Missing family and friends

When asked if he misses his family, Daniel replied: "Yeah, sometimes. When you are alone at night and can't sleep. I miss my food. Every time we have a conversation with my friend we always say I want to go home to eat my food. It is the food. Compared with missing our friends there, we miss more our food."

Daniel's friends also come from other countries and are friendly. They want to make friends like he does. He has some local friends who are "OK". "Some they help you. If you ask people, they help you".

Daniel keeps in touch with his friends back in Indonesia and finds it easy via email. Daniel has friends studying in New Zealand so when they go back to Indonesia for

a holiday they catch up and share their experiences; how they have changed and how they find Australia and New Zealand.

Trusting people

Daniel was asked if he trusted people here in Australia. He mentioned that although he trusts people, he prefers to keep things to himself. "In here, it is not that I don't trust people but because I have travelled so far from my country I think that the best person to trust is yourself. Of course you can trust people but there are things that you got to keep to yourself. It is more convenient for yourself to keep it for yourself."

Fears

When asked about his fears, Daniel said that apart from the exams he finds coping with university life very hard. "How the lecturer teaches. In Malaysia (the) teacher also teaches in English, but they don't teach as far (in terms of depth) and fast as people here does. Teachers teach very fast and of course I came here to study and fear of failing subjects is very high".

Another fear is the environment. Daniel describes the people in Indonesia as being very closed-minded, whereas people in Australia are very open-minded. "You can see the difference between Australia and Indonesia. In Australia you can sell beer, all these things on the streets, people gambling. My fear is one day I start gambling, drinking and cannot stop. That is a great fear. People take drugs and once you step in drugs you cannot get out of that. It is very hard".

Problems

Daniel indicated that living away from home presents many problems, problems in Australia as well as problems back home. "When you are outside your country many problems. There are two kinds of problems I can identify. There is the problem here and other that of my country town. The problem here is for example I cannot pass my exams, I have a fight with my friend, sometimes girlfriend/boyfriend problem. My problem back home is my mother sick, my father sick. Sometimes parents fight. When they do this, even when you are studying, you keep on thinking on your family back home".

Coping strategies

To cope with his problems, Daniel relies on his religion and going out with his friends, going to the cinema. "They help me to take problems from my mind. If I have a problem, you don't go there and sit on a chair and think about it, because it is very bad for you. If you cannot do anything about the problem, is better to stop thinking about it. Think positively".

<u>Three main difficulties since arriving in Australia</u>

Daniel was asked to describe three problems he has had since arriving in Australia. The three problems he described are his accommodation, travelling around Sydney, and communication.

"First is my accommodation. I am sharing accommodation with people and two people are using one room. It is really inconvenient. When you have to go to classes, people next to you are taking showers too long. I want to tell them to hurry up and this is very distracting. It is part of your personal life".

"Travelling. I don't really understand how people travel here because you got this trains, ferries, and buses. When I was back in Asia, you just take the subway train and is much more convenient. The train here goes to different parts. Sometimes I end up in the wrong place here. It is very inconvenient. You spend a lot of money going from one place to another".

"Maybe communication. Because (it) is very hard when we are here and I want to talk with my father. It is very expensive here. The time difference between here and there. It is difficult when you have a problem because when you call your family maybe already (be) sleeping".

<u>Aspirations</u>

When asked what his aspirations are, Daniel mentioned firstly his degree, then thanking his parents for all they have given him by taking them on a trip, and thirdly, securing a job that will enable him to travel. "First of all I want to have a degree. It is very important to me to have a degree. It is a status for me you know. Second, I want to take my parents and all my family to travel all around the world because when you are studying outside your parents you start to think that actually my parents gave a lot for me so that I can be able to study here you know. I cannot think in any other best way to thank them for all that they have given to me. My third wish is that, I am not that kind of person that wants to sit (at) on a desk and stay in the same country for the rest of their life. I wish that I can work so I can travel around the world like working as a consultant where you can work around Europe and that will be good. I like to see new people".

<u>Ethnic Identity</u>

Daniel describes the Indonesian people as hardworking. "Being Indonesian, there are so many people who go outside the country. People there are very hardworking people. Although some people in Indonesia do stupid things but not all people are like that".

<u>Advice to a new student</u>

Daniel's advice to new international students would be to get as much information as they can before they come to Australia because the information they get can help them prepare themselves mentally and physically. He would encourage them to ask people for help and information.

Four months follow up

<u>Impressions at four months</u>

After his first four months at Macquarie University, Daniel was asked how things were going. He mentioned how he had made many friends and how he enjoyed making friends from different countries – he found it exciting. Even if they are not students, he mentioned how he liked making friends with lots of people. With regard to making friends with local students, he has found that his interest in PC games has helped him make friends with Australians.

<u>Unequal treatment</u>

Daniel was asked if he had experienced any inequalities in the first four months at university in Australia. He indicated that personally he had not experienced it but has heard that Australians treat overseas students differently.

<u>Ethnic identity</u>

When asked how he felt about being Indonesian, Daniel said: "It is alright to be Indonesian but in my country (it) is difficult to stay. There is too much violence and crime".

<u>Similarities and differences</u>

Daniel describes Australia as being cleaner than Indonesia. He also finds Australia enables him to make friends with people from everywhere, whereas in Indonesia he would only be making friends with Indonesians.

<u>Homesickness</u>

With regard to homesickness, Daniel confirmed he was homesick, especially at the beginning, but now with his new friends it is easier.

Eight months follow up

<u>Impressions at eight months</u>

Within the first eight months at university, Daniel had returned to Indonesia for a holiday.
When he got to Indonesia, he didn't feel like going back to Australia. "I went everywhere in Indonesia and I don't feel like going back. I travel around with my parents. In here (referring to Indonesia) I have friends. I stay with my family. I go to my grandparents' house. My family are good in Indonesia. If I am not around, home is quiet. When I am around things start happening. My parents miss me and (are) happy when I (get) am gone back. When I go, I help my father with his office job, my mother with groceries, shopping. It is fun".

<u>Homesickness</u>

Daniel misses his family and Indonesian food the most. "Back there I don't have to do things on my own. All I have to do is to be there. They arrange everything for you. I have to do all the stuff including laundry here. It is nice to be back at home because at least you have someone to talk to. When you are with your friends and your family is not the same. With your friends you don't have a real discussion like with your family. You can talk about complications in your life. It is good to have family around".

<u>Finances</u>

Daniel is proud of his ability to manage his living expenses whilst in Australia. "When my parents put money in my account, I pay all the money for fees, all what needs to be paid. I have to save as much as I can because if I spent too much, I won't have any money. Australians are very different. As soon as they get their money they go to the pub".

<u>Accommodation at Campus College</u>

At campus College (on-site university accommodation for students), Daniel has his own room. He likes being there. He says that some people find it a boring place but he doesn't. He says that there are people at campus College who look after you. "After study, do cook, it is very tiring. I pay for one semester and that is all. I don't have to pay electricity bills and my parents know how much I am spending and they send me the money".

<u>Ethnic identity</u>

Daniel describes Indonesians as being more traditional than Australians. Some are open-minded but Daniel describes most Indonesians as being very traditional. For example, when he returned to Indonesia and he told his parents he goes to pubs with friends, they were surprised and concerned. They think he will turn into an alcoholic. He tried to explain to them the different culture in Australia and that going to a bar is for the purpose of meeting your friends and just relaxing; you don't have to drink if you don't want to. Took time to re-adjust when back in Australia.

Daniel describes sometimes feeling Indonesian whilst in Australia but has now compartmentalised his life where he sees his working life in Australia and his personal life in Indonesia. " I feel I have my friends, my study here and feel sometimes Indonesian. If I had to choose where to live I choose Australia, and if I had to choose where to go for holidays, I say Indonesia. If I am working I need to separate my family from my work. When I go to Indonesia I feel like having holidays, being with my family. Does not feel like a place to work. So for you to keep separated work from holidays, I work here and go Indonesia for holidays. When I was in Indonesia I did not study at all".

<u>Friends in Australia</u>

Daniel says 80% of his friends are in Australia. He still has his friends in Indonesia but believes you have to keep growing as your life changes and make new relationships. "I still keep my friends from Indonesia but I need to make new friends and life keeps changing. You cannot stay forever with your old friends and they are so far away".

Daniel is enjoying the opportunity to make friends from all over the world. He is pleased though that he had Indonesian friends in Australia to help him settle when he first arrived. "I meet everyday new people and I make friends from everywhere not just from Indonesia. It is fun. If you have friends only from your country have not much to talk about but if you have friends from all over the world it is fun. From the very beginning my friends were from Indonesia. When I come to Australia, I have to find friends. At least I have friends from Indonesia to help me to settle. When I had no friends I suffered. When you first come, you need someone to help you with basic stuff like how to take the bus. When I first came from Indonesia my friend picked me up from the airport. I did not know how to even catch a taxi or anything and it was good to have my friend. Now I can do it all by myself".

Daniel says he gets along well with Australians. He describes some Australians however, as having bad drinking habits. Since living in Australia, Daniel describes that when people pass someone they say hi, he finds that when he returns to Indonesia he is friendlier with people because of this experience.

<u>Adjustments</u>

Daniel feels well adjusted after living eight months here. He describes the first eight months as being difficult in terms of how to do things.

Daniel feels he still needs to manage better his time with friends and study. "When you have friends around you play too much. I try to control myself. When I am working in my room, my friends come and tell me let's watch a movie, and if you say no they say what is wrong with you. If you do that, the next thing is that you have to wake up 3am in the morning because you forgot to do your assignment. I am trying to draw my own timetable. From Monday to Thursday, I am trying to stick to work. I don't want to mix study with play. Some people can mix things. I can't do that".

<u>Stresses</u>

Daniel's major stress is his studies, as this is the reason for coming to Australia. For example, he finds that the deadlines for assignments in his four subjects seem to come at the same time. "Assignments for four subjects. All the assignments come together. All your friends are playing outside your room and you think I am stuck here".

<u>Coping strategies</u>

Daniel has developed coping skills, particularly with regard to exams. "When I have an exam I just do my best studying and then go to sleep and take my mind away from my studies. If you keep on thinking on your studies, you are going to be more worried because there are things that you don't understand".

<u>Fears</u>

Daniel described fears about safety, especially at night. "I didn't hear much stuff but now I fear walking around the gym. A friend told me that (he) was walking around the gym and two black guys come to him and took all his belongings. Makes me worry. Here at night everybody is at home, while in Indonesia people stays out 24 hours and I worry who helps if somebody attacks me. I don't go out. If I have to, I do it with my friends".

Susan*

International student from Indonesia

*Not the real name of respondent. The name Susan has been used to protect the person's true identity.

Entry Interview

Initial impressions on entry to Australia

Susan arrived in winter and found it very cold. She felt excited when she first arrived but uncomfortable due to the weather. She has a boyfriend here and he showed her around.

Her main problem is English. She feels she cannot communicate well. Even when she wanted to open a bank account, the lady suspected that she wasn't who she said she was because of her English. She did it by phone.

This is her first trip away from Indonesia except for a few days in Singapore. In Australia she has to do everything by herself and her English is not good.

With regard to her first impressions of Macquarie University, Susan is studying four units and has problems with English. She finds it hard to understand what the lecturer is saying. She also finds the assignments are a heavy load.

Reasons for studying in Australia

Susan already has a degree but her father wanted her to continue with a Masters degree. Initially she did not want to because she was tired from studying and had a job. Her boyfriend came to Australia however, and suggested she do her Masters here. She started to get bored with her job and thought the new experience of living in Australia would be good for her.

She found out about Macquarie University through her agent who said it was a good university for business studies.

Family background

Susan is the eldest child in her family. As she is the first child to leave home, her parents have high expectations. She is concerned she may not meet their expectations but thinks she can do it.

<u>Homesickness</u>

Her mother was with her when she arrived for the first couple of weeks. Since her mother returned to Indonesia, she keeps in touch with her family at least once a week by calling them.

<u>Why she chose to commence at the second semester intake</u>

"I made decision to study my master December last year. I found that currency in my country has little value here. I am confused what I will take to Australia".

<u>Making friends</u>

There are many Indonesians in her classes so most of her time is spent with Indonesians. "I tried to make friends with Chinese and was uncomfortable because I don't understand what he says and he does not understand me".

With regard to making contact with Australians, Susan's flatmate is Australian and she rarely sees him because he is working. He is the only Australian she knows. In her class the majority are Chinese and only two Australians. She did not expect to find so many Chinese in her class.

<u>Finding accommodation</u>

Susan likes her accommodation but it is about 45 minutes from the university. She rarely sees her Australian flatmate.

<u>Similarities and differences</u>

In Indonesia, Susan's mother does the cooking. Since arriving in Australia, Susan has had to learn to cook.

Susan finds the transportation in Australia different to Indonesia. "Transportation is very different in my country. You just take the train and in the middle of the journey an officer will take your card. Here you have to buy it, go the station, insert the card, etc. Here the trains are on time, it is great. In my country never happens. You never see the timetables in my country. I have started using the timetables. In the bus back home the officer collects money from you, not like here you pay first. The fare is the same, does not matter where you go, but here you need to know how many areas you need to go".

Susan finds that Australians value time more than Indonesians. "People here value the time. They expect you to be on time whereas my country never on time. In my country you walk slowly but here you walk fast as if the time is very valuable to them."

Susan finds the issue around divorce different here in Australia. "It is very common here to divorce. In my country is very uncommon to divorce and if divorced, people look down on you. It is good to have your family but is very silly to get divorced".

Susan finds Australians lead a more independent lifestyle than Indonesians. "Here people are very independent. Sometimes (in Indonesia) even if they marry and have children live with their family because they don't have money to buy house. It is not good, because if you are married you need to live separately".

Problems experienced initially

Initially Susan had problems opening a bank account. "When I open my bank account, I don't have my student ID and only have my passport. The officer said passport is not enough to get 100 points. I gave credit card and said is not enough. Finally the officer felt tired because I cannot explain in English".

Expectations

In Australia, Susan did not expect to see so many Asian people.

Susan expected to feel safe here and she does. "It is very safe here. My parents encourage me to get used to living here. Even though that I find trouble communicating here, it is safe here".

Coping Strategies

Susan feels she is coping with her studies. She has no problems with reading English textbooks. "I have no much problem with that (reading English text books). I feel that is not only me with the problem with English because I ask my friend who also has difficulties. I will handle the situation better, if I get use to study more".

To cope with problems Susan talks to her friends in Indonesia. "We contact on email, sometimes I call friend. I talk about my personal problems only to my boyfriend. If I have problem with my study I ask my boyfriend for help. Sometimes he cannot help me either".

Three difficulties since arriving in Australia

The three main difficulties since arriving in Australia for Susan are speaking English, finances, and her sleeping patterns.

"My English, financial problem. There is not enough money. In Jakarta my money is enough, but here is very expensive. I have to do the household things, clean the room, wash the dishes, and shopping. In Jakarta if I have no time I can ask my mum or sister for

help with house chores but here if I have no time I still need to do it. My sleeping has changed. I have to wake 3 in the morning to do assignment".

"English is very hard. I had to take my driving test (although) I drove in Jakarta. I talked to the officer and misunderstood me. I felt down because of that. I always avoid things that I should speak. Because there will be misunderstanding. If I go out I always ask my boyfriend. He encourages me to talk, I talk but find hard".

Ethnic identity

Susan is self-conscious of being Indonesian at present as a result of the recent events in Indonesia, e.g. riots, etc.

Aspirations

Susan's aspirations are to have a family, get a job and have a good career, and live happily.

Advice to new students

"To live here is great but is tough for the first time because you have many problems. Soon you will cope with the problems and life is better than Indonesia".

Four months follow-up

Impressions after four months

Susan describes her life as being better. Her English has also improved. "I can communicate better. When I first came to Australia I found difficult to communicate with people, now is better. If I want to find information, ask the officer or anybody else. In the past, I don't ask because I am afraid that nobody is going to understand my English".

At university she is finding she can understand the lessons better. "In the past I ask my friend to ask the lecturer. Now I ask directly to the lecturer. I feel more confident. The lecturer understands me now".

Making friends

Susan meets her classmates on the bus or train and talks with them. "In the past, they don't understand me or I don't understand them. I met a Chinese girl and had an interesting conversation. Life is more interesting. Have made new friends but Indonesians. It is more comfortable to socialise with people from my own culture. There will not be any misunderstanding if you come from the same country. The topic will be similar because come from the same country. We talk about food and we understand".

Susan misses her friends in Indonesia. "I have new friends but not the same. My best friends are my schoolmates in Jakarta. I can't trust friends here but I don't have other options. I have to keep friends here". Susan is socialising more with her Australian housemate.

Homesickness

Susan misses her family and the food. She says she does not miss her Indonesian culture.

Similarities and differences

In Indonesia the shops are open to 9pm. In Australia they are only open to 5pm. "I used to shop at night but I have to do it earlier here".

Susan finds that it is the same for women and men in Australia, whereas in Indonesia it is not the same.

Coping strategies

Susan confides in family and friends. She sends emails to friends once a week.

She also has a close Indonesian friend here in Australia. "I have a very close friend from Indonesia who is going through the same problems than me. Too many assignments and I am working hard so I can concentrate in (on) my exams".

Problems

Susan's key problems are her exams and finances. "I feel very unconfident because I am sitting for my first examination. Here everything is very expensive. Because of our monetary crisis, it is very low. My father says care about money. I feel anxious about that. I am trying to work but can't because of study pressure".

Discrimination

Susan has not experienced any discrimination.

Things noticed about oneself that are different from when first arrived in Australia

Susan says she is now more careful about money. "I am more careful with money. Other people just like (to) party. I need to save money. In Indonesia I just want to party and spend money. Even though is your parents' money, I like to spend money".

The Bali bombing has created stress for Susan. She worries about what people may think about Indonesians. "There are demonstrations against Australia in Indonesia and worry what if the same happens here. Even though that is not going to happen but is a worry".

Advice to a new student

"Improve your English before you come. I feel frustrated because I did not speak English well. When you feel your English better, your life will be more interesting".

Eight months follow-up

Impressions at eight months

Susan feels more settled in Australia. Now she has had experience in doing assignments the 'Australian way' and her English has improved. Her studies are less stressful compared with first semester.

"In my group assignments I had one Indonesians and two Thai girls and we can communicate well. In my first semester I always afraid talking with them".

With the improvement in her language skills, Susan applied for a job. She hasn't got one yet and does not feel that confident at interviews but in semester two she did not even want to apply for jobs.

Susan feels safe in Australia. "It is very safe living here. The criminal rate is very high in Indonesia. I feel very secure here".

Susan is happy with her decision to study at Macquarie University. "I am better here. I like Macquarie more than other unis. There are many international students here. Can learn English better here".

Friendships

Her friends in Australia are not as close as those in Indonesia.

Problems

Doing assignments and studying for exams are Susan's major concerns at present.

Adjustments

When Susan was in Indonesia she was keen to be independent and now in Australia she has had to learn to depend on herself.

Homesickness

Susan's studies mean that she does not contact her family as much as she did when she first arrived. Her parents are thinking of coming to visit her. Susan feels that when they visit they will understand her life in Australia better.

She misses her relationships with family and friends back home. "When I was working, I had contact with friends. I felt happy because I had contact with people. Here I have some friends. They are OK but I don't trust them. It is difficult to talk. I don't think I can trust anybody".

Susan says she plans to live in Australia and says she will miss her family, friends, and Indonesian food. However, she thinks life in Australia is better as she feels it is not safe anymore in Indonesia.

Stresses

Her main stresses are to find a job in the future and communicating with people.

Susan felt depressed from the time she arrived in Australia and cried a lot. "Yeah, I only have my boyfriend; nobody else here. I was very lonely here, felt like crying in the past. I cried a lot here".

Aspirations

Susan wants to find a job and plans to live in Australia.

Advice to a new student

"In Indonesia they think it is easy to find a job here but it isn't for me".

Entry Interview

Initial impressions on entry to Australia

Jenny's first impression of Australia when she arrived was that she found it to be beautiful and that there were many Chinese people living here. At first she did not feel she was in a foreign place because when she first arrived she lived in Chinatown.   There she saw many Chinese faces and rarely needed to speak English.

When Jenny applied to study at Macquarie University, she found the people at the international office to be nice. She paid by courier. After 3 days she did not receive any information so she rang the international office. "This girl in IO was very nice. I think they should be faster".

When she first went to classes she found there were too many students. She found it too crowded in her class but found the teacher to be good.

Jenny joined an English program when she first arrived. After a while she stopped because she found it boring.

Knowledge about Australia previous to arrival

Her knowledge came from what she had seen on TV.

Making friends

Jenny tends to make friends with Chinese students. She knows people from other countries such as Thailand and Indonesia, but not Australian people, just international people.

She was asked why she had little interaction with the local students. Her command of English is a key reason, making it difficult to express herself. "One lecturer said that we have to go to another class when I had already chosen to go to this class. But I don't know how to fight back because I don't know enough English. It is very frustrating".

Problems experienced initially

Jenny said that she did not have many problems at first, apart from trying to find accommodation, not being able to understand her teacher, and too much homework. She says she is trying to improve her English.

Educational system differences

Jenny finds the Australian education offers more practical experience whereas in China it is more theoretical. She finds the teachers to be "OK" in Australia.

Ethnic Identity

Jenny says her Chinese identity is strong because China is her homeland. She is proud of her Chinese culture, its long history, its economy is growing fast now, and the fact that China is becoming more and more important in the world.

Coping strategies

A key coping strategy is to talk with friends to resolve any difficulties.

Trusting people

Jenny says she trusts people.

Fears

Jenny did not identify any fears.

Homesickness

Jenny says she is a homesick. She is used to living away from family though as she boarded at school when she lived in China. She calls her family in China a lot because the telephone is not expensive. She calls her family twice a week and emails friends.

Three difficulties since arriving in Australia

Speaking in English has been difficult.

Jenny suggests that Macquarie University should do more to help international students to fit in, such as encouraging opportunities for the international students to share their experiences with each other.

Aspirations

Jenny's goals are to have a happy life, to make herself happy and bring happiness to others.

She wants to find a proper job in order to fit into Australian society. She also wants to go to church. In China she says it is not allowed, so she wants to see how it feels to go to church.

Returning to China

Jenny wants to apply for residency in Australia but eventually go back to China to work as she sees China offering her more work opportunities.

Four months follow-up

Impressions at four months

Jenny says that everything so far is going fine. She has met a lot of people. She enjoys her course. It is better than in China. The teachers are more practical. She is getting used to the teachers and finds them to be kind.

Making friends

Jenny is making a few new friends. Most of them are from China or Asia. She has met them at the university or via the Internet. An Australian man asked her to teach him Chinese and he pays her.

Similarities and Differences

Jenny is trying to see more places in Sydney and get to know the society better. She finds it difficult to do this due to her study commitments. She finds Australia more open than China. For example, the way that it is natural among girls to talk about sex in Australia. In China you cannot talk about it, according to Jenny.

Educational system differences

Jenny describes how in Australia you get to work on a project with other students. She finds the teamwork good with people sharing their ideas.

Homesickness

Jenny is a little homesick. She is going back to see family after exams. She does not have much time to think about family because she is very busy with her studies. She also writes to them.

She finds the Internet convenient to keep in touch with friends. She emails them. Many of her friends are in USA, England and other countries, so communicating via the internet is good.

Jenny shares accommodation with other females. They cook together, and sometimes they get takeaway together. They don't get homesick much. They hire videos and watch the same movies that their families are watching back in China.

Problems

Communicating in English has been the main problem. Jenny says she does not get much chance to speak it. She says she doesn't like to communicate in English. She prefers to speak with friends in Chinese most of the time.

Jenny indicated that when she watches TV she can understand it a lot more. Her ability to understand English has improved.

Stresses

Jenny says she doesn't have many stresses. Most of the time she is happy. Her philosophy is that tomorrow is another day so does not get too worried about everyday problems.

Coping strategies

Her coping strategy is to share her concerns with her friends. Jenny's friends share their feelings with each other, and this makes them close.

Aspirations

She wants to get good marks. Her friends say that she is always studying.

Eight Months follow-up

Impressions at eight months

At eight months, Jenny found a part-time job and then resigned. She found a job in a Pharmacy in Chinatown because people were looking for someone to speak Cantonese when she applied for that position. She was working 20hrs a week. She worked there for 2 months and then quit because she was too busy with her studies. She said the pay was OK but her boss was a bit critical.

Whilst working in the Pharmacy she would meet mainly Chinese people but also some foreigners.

She now has a boyfriend.

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Homesickness

Jenny is going home for the holidays and is excited about this. She worked to pay for her ticket as her family could not afford it.

Jenny is close to her family. She can talk to them about most things. If she finds something dangerous in Australia, she won't tell them because she doesn't want them to worry.

Problems

Jenny was robbed. One day after class at 8.30pm she took the security bus to the train station. She was talking with her friend on the phone and suddenly somebody just grabbed her mobile. She started chasing the man for a while and could not get him. Then someone else came to her to say that he would retrieve the mobile for her if she paid him some money. She agreed because a new telephone costs more than that.

How she has changed since commencing her studies

Jenny describes herself as more independent. In China she is the only child in the family. Her mother did everything for her. Now she says she knows how to cook and how to find a job.

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Lily*

International student from China

*Not the real name of respondent. The name Lily has been used to protect the person's true identity.

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Entry Interview

Family Background and reasons to study in Australia

Lily chose to study a non-business Masters course at Macquarie University.

Initial impressions on entry to Australia

When Lily first arrived in Australia she felt lonely. The education system is different to that in China and there was the difficulty of the English language. "I just came here alone, no friends, relatives here. In China the university prepares everything but here I have to do everything by myself, where to study, rent house, buy books. All the things are more difficult when you are alone, so I felt a little bit lonely".

One of Lily's first impressions when she arrived was the environment. It impressed her. "The skies are blue here. In China there is a lot of pollution. The weather is beautiful."

Another first impression related to the people of Australia. "People is kind here always smile to you. People are warm hearted here. It made me feel excited".

Another discovery for Lily upon arriving in Australia was her independence. "You can make decisions all by yourself. In China, when you have to make a decision, your parents, friends, teacher influence you. Here, all you decide yourself and that makes me feel independent".

When asked if her arrival in Australia met her expectations, Lily indicated that it met some of them. Before she arrived she hoped that she would get along with Australians and do well. When she arrived she found that so many people were from China. In order to make her life a little easier upon arriving, she decided to live with people from China, particularly because communication is easier. She also thought she could call on them if she needed help. Also if she had something bad to say, she felt more comfortable sharing it with Chinese people.

One thing in particular that did not meet her expectations was her studies. She had expected her course at Macquarie University to be more practical but it did not turn out to be and this was a disappointment. "I just had working experience in China. When I chose universities in China, I thought that Macquarie may give me more practical experience, methodology, research. When I come here, it is not like that. It was more in my

imagination to think that Macquarie offer practical course. This also made me feel sad and disappointed".

Upon arriving in Australia, one of the main things Lily needed to do was to find accommodation. She felt fortunate in finding a house close to the university.

The next major thing to do was to go to orientation day and enrol. She located her university Department, got information about her studies, then visited other parts of the university to familiarise herself with the campus. Next, she investigated activities she could do that interested her because she didn't want to just participate in only studies whilst at the university. "The first week what I have done is to find all information about my future life and the second week I just enrol in the courses. Talked to my Dean from the Department and talk about which courses will fit with my ambitions. And then, I found books in library or second hand books. I prepare all the things to begin my studies. I also need to find people around me because I need friends, people I can talk with".

Preparation before arriving in Australia

Lily had studied English prior to her arrival. Her Bachelor is in English education. She was a teacher.

How discovered Macquarie University

Lily visited several universities in Sydney. She experiences a sense of freedom at Macquarie University where she can independently organise her studies and own activities. By comparison, she found that other universities in Sydney may have been better for her in terms of the facilities they offer. She mentions that the time schedule is not good for her at Macquarie University and unfortunately no one can help her with that. Lily further explains that friends at UTS think that the university can help them to improve their personalities and characters. She does not get a sense that Macquarie University can assist her with this. "I am here on my own. I have to master things by myself. In other universities they get more help to improve."

Similarities and Differences

In terms of scholastic record, Lily explains that in Australia your marks are private but in China the teacher will announce everyone's mark in class.

In terms of teaching styles, Lily finds that in Australia the Australian teachers outline the course for you but then you have to do everything by yourself, e.g. research in the library from the Internet. In China on the other hand, Lily explains that they teach you everything. You just ask and they give you the answer.

Lily finds her contact with neighbours very different to her experiences in China. She has lived in Australia for two weeks and still does not know her neighbours.   In

China it is very different. She knew all her neighbours and they visited each other's houses and were comfortable to invite themselves in for lunch.

Lily finds that living in a Western country she is not sure what topics are off limits to speak about socially. For example, she does not know whether she can freely ask people about the political system in Australia.

Lily finds in Australia that people tend to 'mind their own business' more.

In Australia Lily finds people talk more openly about their families than they do in China, and family is valued highly in Australia. "In China we work from 8am to 6pm. When they finish work they go to the pub, share with their friends. In Australia, the teachers say I should spend more time with my family. The teacher always talks about their family in the classroom. In China the teacher will never do that. Teachers here are very proud of their husbands, wife, and daughter. They say in class oh, my daughter sent me this bottle of wine. In China they will never talk about that. The family is a secret. They want hidden these. In Australia people want to express they are happy or sad about their families. They consider that their family is very important in life but in China is not. People they are working with are very important not their families."

Lily finds Australians are more ready to help strangers than they would be in China. "In China, is different. People are all to themselves, people think that others will hurt them. Here is different, people are more ready to help others. I think that this country is a good place to live."

Lily did not mention any similarities specifically.

Problems experienced initially

Generally having to do things for herself such as finding accommodation.

Being treated differently

Lily did not mention anything specifically about being treated differently.

Missing family and friends

Lily finds it relatively easy to keep in touch with family and friends as China is near and telephone calls are inexpensive.

Initially Lily missed her family but not now. They are busy with their own lives in China. Sometimes when she calls they are too busy to talk and this makes her feel angry.

Lily has made two very close friends from other countries whilst studying at Macquarie University. She finds them a great support to discuss her problems with and they have helped her meet other friends. She also has other friends including Australians.

Trusting people

Lily indicates she trusts her friends but not people in general when it comes to sharing her thoughts and feelings. "I can talk even my private secrets. In China I don't trust people. I have not hurt people here and feel people not hurt me. I ask opinions of people that (I) can trust. I have not been hurt here".

Fears

Lily fears things she has no control over. "I plan things before I do them I hope things go according to my plans. If the things change, I have no parents, family here, I have fear. If things are beyond what I have estimated, I will feel fear".

Coping strategies

Lily's first coping strategy is to cry. "First cry. It is my habit to cry. Because you can relax after you cry. You can think about the problem". Before she has to make an important decision she will consult with others. "I will consult people's opinions such as a friend, teachers. I have tutorials. After finish tutorials I can talk with them. I ask questions about my problems to get their opinions. Then I will make my decision. I am the person who always follows feelings. If I think that this is good, even I know the consequences are bad, I will do it. I always follow my feelings. So, when I find difficulties my first reaction is always cry. Sometimes cry all day. Then after I cry I am thinking."

Three main difficulties since arriving in Australia

Lily was asked to describe three problems she has had since arriving in Australia. The three problems she described are communication, accommodation and friendships. "Communication. Because when I first come to the IO to ask some information over my program change, the consultant is not Australian and is from Fiji. I don't understand her at all. The other is to rent house. I found a lot of advertisements about renting house. Some from ads in university and other paper are very expensive. I want to live with some of my classmates to discuss about classes, assignments. But all them live in the city. Maybe they are rich. They have car. They can drive car. It is different with me. I just rent a house near the campus. But the house is very small and we have 4 persons to share with. It is very crowded. And always we have different opinions and quarrel. All of them are from China. The third problem is must find some friends. I am lucky. I found a lot of friends."

Aspirations

Lily's wish is to be able to work when she returns to China. She also wishes is to be involved in the Australian society.

Advice to new students

Lily's advice to new students is to first focus on their studies, be prepared to do things for yourself and rely on yourself, and thirdly have a good command of the English language. "First you must prepare all the things for your study. You must do all the things by yourself. Because you are from China, you should spend a lot of time either reading, listening in English. When you speak in English it is more difficult to arrange your expressions, your words. You must learn to deal with your lonely (loneliness) because that is your business. Nobody will help you. Maybe sometimes they will help you. They will not help most of the time. Maybe in China you will say is better in Australia. But in reality, you will find that life here is more difficult. You have to earn your money, take part in native societies."

Four Months Follow-up

Impressions at four months

During vacation time Lily found the university very quiet and found there was not a lot to do. "In uni in China, there is always things to do at night, going to the pub, meeting friends or just walking in town. Nobody here. Vacations are too long and if you don't have (any) money, nothing to do".

Homesickness

Lily indicated that she is feeling lonely and feels like she is living in a desert. "No people to go out with. I can still do my preparation. I feel like in a desert here, no people, too quiet, too small population, the city has no spirit. That makes me feel lonely. It is not feeling homesick".

Friends

Lily is feeling particularly lonely at this time during vacations because her close friends have gone away travelling or back home to China so she cannot keep in touch with them. "All my friends also have their own business and nobody to talk that is why I feel lonely. I don't like to be silent and like to talk with people. When alone I feel unhappy. I cannot discuss things with people."

During the vacations, Lily got a part-time job during the day, which keeps her busy, but at night she feels lonely as she does not have anyone to talk to. Lily mentions she has a boyfriend but when they are studying they have no time to be together.
However, during the semester break they have more time for themselves so they tend to quarrel more but this is not a problem.

How she went last semester

Lily found it easy to pass last semester as assessment was based on assignments, i.e. there were no exams. Lily did not like the methodology involved in some of her courses. Her view is that research and methodology are not important in China. She is looking more for the practical experience and learning rather than the theory. "I think I need to know more about courses and programs during my studies because I don't want too much methodology courses."

Keeping in touch with family

Lily has moved to a new place where there is no phone or email access which makes it difficult to keep in contact with family. Accessing email from the library is not always convenient.

Communication and accommodation issues

Lily is finding her communication is improving. She has tried to do volunteer work as a means of being in contact with people and improving her communication skills.

Feeling settled

Lily is feeling settled as a result of improving her communication and making contact with people.

Trust people

Lily prefers to rely on her best friend to tell her 'secrets'. She also uses the Internet to communicate her 'secrets'. "The stranger in the Internet may be better able to tell you what to do. People who know you can hurt you if you tell a secret. Telling a stranger will not hurt you. So that is why I keep my friends from Internet. Because we don't know each other, there is no interest".

Fears

Possible changes to the immigration laws in Australia presents fears for Lily. "The day before yesterday the immigration department said that they will change the immigration law. That make me very fearful. They will change the law from January. So, fear that will have impact in my studies".

Advice for new students

Lily stresses the importance of making friends. She also advises that study in Australia is not easy and it is important to prepare well as it will cost a lot of money to change courses.

Safety

Lily only feels safe during the daytime. At night she perceives there are too many drunk people. "They told me not to go out at night because they rob you. When I finish my part time work at night I ask my friends or boyfriend to pick me up".

<u>Eight Months Follow-up</u>

<u>Impressions at eight months</u>

Lily is doing more part-time work, as she needs more money. She also has had the opportunity to travel in Australia and plans to do more and has only enrolled in three units this semester. Also her contact with friends is being affected as many of her Chinese friends have returned to China as they have now finished their studies. "Most of my friends have finished their degrees and returned to China. Sometime I feel lonely. Less and less people around you and sometime feel lonely. If you have troubles you have to face it on your own. Maybe I will make new friends because new semester starting. I will finish my degree next semester and when I am starting to know people I will leave them. That feels sad. It is a pity".

<u>Part-time work</u>

Lily finds it difficult to juggle part-time work and her studies. She finds she sleeps less and drinks coffee to stay awake.

<u>Stresses</u>

Lily says she feels stress "but does not matter". Finishing her assignments or being paid give her satisfaction. "Sometimes you need the pressure to do well. I have my timetable to know what to do. I know the deadlines and try my best. Divide my time so I work hard and in my experience less and less time cooking. So, I try to watch less TV. Spend less time talking with friends."

By comparison, her life in China was not as stressful as she had her family and friends to support her. "You have better communication with your boss (in China). You can talk with your boss and have many ways to ask to postpone the deadline because you can give many reasons in Chinese. Here, you can ask your professor to change the deadline but you need a good reason and no good communication. So you have to get your deadline. You can ask your friends to help you in China but here everybody has their own business, no time".

<u>Level of stress compared to when first arrived in Australia</u>

Communication was more difficult when Lily first arrived. "When I first arrived here the pressures of the study were huge because of my language difficulties. At the

beginning of the semester I don't understand my professor because pronunciation. You had to search the library lots and spent most time studying in the library. Now I know how to do my studies and know there are other pressures such as how to spend more time with friends, travelling, and work."

Lily finds she has different pressures now. "The pressure at the beginning is psychological. I can't deal with my studies. But now the pressure is physical. I have not time to do a lot of things".

Feelings about yourself

Lily feels she is improving because she is making new friends. However, when she just focuses on friends from China she feels she is not improving. "All improvement is not linear, forward and backward. At the beginning there is a big improvement forwards and second semester is backwards. First semester I made lots of new friends. Maybe next semester I will go forward. I should spend more time communicating with people from other countries."

Goals achieved

Lily says she sometimes feels disappointed in herself and feels she could do better. She stresses the need to step out of her own community whilst in a foreign country and spend more time with the local community.

She found in first semester her enthusiasm was greater. For example she was able to read 20 books in the first semester and the next semester only managed 10. She does not see that as good. "In the first semester I can read 20 books and now only 10 books. That is not good. You get less and less interested in things because first is the excitement of learning something new. People sometime are lazy, and gets lazier. If you can save time you do that even though it is not good."

Friends

In China, Lily made friends in the streets, and via the Internet. In Australia, she makes friends through volunteer activities, and by talking to people on the bus for example. "You keep in touch with friends by phone, remembering their birthday and sending a card."

Similarities and differences with education system

Lily makes the comparison that in China the education system encourages focus on learning in one area specifically. Whereas in Australia, the education system encourages learning across many areas. "If a student from China comes to Australia they would be a genius in one area, for example mathematics. In Australia learn widely and

here you learn a lot of areas, different areas. Maybe Chinese education system is good but universities in Australia are better because enhance your knowledge in different areas".

<u>Advice for new students</u>

Lily reinforces the need to not rely on your own community whilst studying in Australia, rather ensure one gets involved in the local community.

<u>Aspirations</u>

Lily wants to further her studies. Perhaps do a degree in another field. This will present her with more opportunities when she returns to China. Lily feels that being bilingual will provide opportunities for her back in China.