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**CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS'
PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR LEARNING AND
SOCIAL EXPERIENCES IN NEW ZEALAND**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Management in Communication Management at
Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand**

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ABSTRACT

Chinese students' participation in New Zealand educational institutions plays a critical role in the New Zealand export education industry. The significant decline in the numbers of Chinese students in New Zealand since 2003 has attracted considerable attention from New Zealand governments, educational providers and researchers. This study was conducted from July to September 2007. It adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches, involving 86 Chinese students in a student survey, 20 in individual interviews, and 21 of their parents in a parent survey.

The study found that Chinese tertiary students perceived their learning and social experiences in New Zealand both positively and negatively, and their perceptions were affected by multiple factors. They generally gave positive evaluations to New Zealand tertiary education which encouraged them to be independent and critical thinkers, and developed their analytical and problem solving skills. They also gave positive ratings to academic teaching competence, university programmes and course structures, but low ratings to their lecturers' understanding their academic needs, availability to help them outside class times, and sense of responsibility for them. Significant minority of Chinese students were not happy with the quality of services provided by their tertiary institutions. Chinese students' perceptions of their learning experiences in New Zealand were also related to their difficulties in social and cultural adaptation, especially difficulties accessing employment to help them gain local work experiences. Prejudices and discrimination inside and outside their educational institutions contributed to the negative perceptions of Chinese students in their learning and social activities. Moreover, parental expectations and concerns were an important contributing factor to Chinese students' learning expectations and future plans.

This study recommended that staff at New Zealand tertiary institutions develop their cultural awareness and sensitivity in order to understand Chinese students' needs, adopt better approaches to teaching, management and servicing, and provide adequate support and pastoral care to them. Also, it recommended that Chinese students need to prepare themselves better for reality when they are learning in the New Zealand context. Furthermore, this study suggested that as parents are an important source of social support for Chinese international students, the better they understand their children's situations, the more likely it is that Chinese students will have better learning experiences in New Zealand.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Since China adopted its open-door policies in the late 1970s, its economic and cultural exchanges with other countries have developed dramatically. According to a report by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in 2007, the number of overseas Chinese has reached 35 million, making it the largest migrant group in the world (China View, 2007). Accompanying these developments, Chinese students have dreamed of going abroad to receive a better education and experience different cultures. The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China records that from 1978 onwards, a total of 934,000 Chinese students studied abroad across all sectors all over the world, and the majority of these were enrolled at the higher education level and were self-funded (Australian Education International, 2007; Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, n.d.; Guermanoff & Forsyth, 2007). In 2006, a record 134,000 Chinese students went abroad for study, an increase of around 13.0% compared to 2005 (Australian Education International, 2007). In fact, Chinese students have formed a major proportion of international students in the traditional destinations for international programs, e.g. the USA, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and New Zealand (Merrifield, 2006; New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007; Australian Education International, 2007).

In recent decades, international education has become a highly competitive industry for key developed countries. The export education industry contributes significantly to host country's economies and enriches both the educational providers and local communities which receive international students and host them (Merrifield, 2006). New Zealand export education industry has become the fourth biggest industry, creating thousands of jobs and contributing billions of dollars to the economy (New Zealand Ministry of

Education, 2007). When New Zealand increased the quota of Chinese students allowed to come to New Zealand to study in 1998, the number of Chinese students increased rapidly. This increase produced considerable economic benefits for New Zealand. According to the annual report provided by New Zealand Ministry of Education (2007), the overall growth in international students in New Zealand from 2000 to 2002 was clearly driven by a dramatic increase in enrolments of Chinese students. The number went from 10,906 Chinese enrolments (21.8% of 50,026 international students in total) in 2000 to 53,340 (42.0% of a total of 126,919 international students) in 2002, a rise of 389 per cent. Since the peak of 126,919 international students in 2002, the total enrolments of international students declined 26 percent to 93,421 in 2006, and this decrease is almost entirely due to reduction in the number of Chinese international students. There was a 40 per cent decline in Chinese enrolments to 31,905 in 2006 (see Table 1-1).

Table 1-1: Chinese Enrolments VS Total International Enrolments in NZ (2000-2006)¹

	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>
All international	50,026	79,030	126,919	117,621	110,817	94,246	93,421
Chinese*	10,906	25,182	53,340	53,175	46,800	35,482	31,905

* Not including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

According to the New Zealand Export Education Levy statistics for the first eight months of 2007, the total numbers of international fee-paying enrolments increased slightly from 76,173 in 2006 to 76,899 in 2007, but at the same time Chinese fee-paying enrolments in New Zealand still declined by 25 per cent from 28,757 to 21,670 (see Table 1-2, p.3). Total tuition income from international students, reported during the eight months up to 30 August 2007, fell by seven per cent since the same period in 2006, which equated to a decrease in revenue from \$568 to \$530 million. The great majority of tuition income is earned by tertiary providers (\$327 million), and this figure decreased by 12 per cent (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007).

¹ Source: International enrolments in New Zealand 2000-2006, New Zealand Ministry of Education (20 April 2007).

Table 1-2: Chinese Enrolments VS Total International Enrolments in NZ (2006-2007)²

	<i>1 Jan to 30 August 2006</i>	<i>1 Jan to 30 August 2007</i>	<i>Percentage of total, 2007</i>	<i>Percentage change, 2006 to 2007</i>
All international	76,173	76,899	100%	+1%
Chinese*	28,757	21,670	28%	-25%

* Not including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

As the biggest group of international students in New Zealand, Chinese students' participation in New Zealand educational institutions plays a critical role in the New Zealand export education industry. However, a national survey of experiences of international students in New Zealand reported that Chinese students were less satisfied with their experience in New Zealand than international students from other countries (Ward & Masgoret, 2004). The significant decline in the numbers of Chinese students in New Zealand since 2003 has attracted considerable attention from New Zealand governments, educational providers and researchers. The possible reasons for this decline have been ascribed to several main factors as below:

- Rising value of the New Zealand dollar³;
- Rising tuition fees, especially tertiary institutions (Zhang, 2004);
- Competition from other English language speaking destinations for international programmes for Chinese students, e.g. Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007);
- Improvements in and greater increased provision of Chinese higher education, the increase of Sino-foreign educational joint programs and the rapid increase of foreign investment in China (Europe News, 2005);
- Negative publicity:
 - (1) Two private educational providers in New Zealand closed down (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007);

² Source: International Education News, 19 December 2007: New Zealand Ministry of Education.

³ At its lowest point in November 2000, 1 \$NZ was worth 0.40 \$US; by January 2008 the value of the \$NZ had risen over double to 0.815 \$US (source: Reserve Bank of New Zealand).

(2) Many horror stories in both New Zealand and Chinese media about Chinese students' bad experiences in New Zealand including deaths, injuries, crimes, and kidnappings (Li, 2007a);

(3) Two books about Chinese international students were published in China in 2004 and 2006 respectively. The one entitled *Liuxue Yu Laji* was written by a Chinese journalist, Tieyuan Chen, who coined word "liuxue laji" (trash overseas) to describe Chinese international students in this book. The other book entitled *Christmas in Summer* described the loneliness, depression, disappointment, stress and depravity of life for Chinese students in New Zealand, written by two Chinese journalists, Mengmeng Xi and Ning Gu, who had studied in New Zealand. The bad news in the media and these two books presented negative views of the Chinese public of Chinese students in New Zealand, and New Zealand educational quality, pastoral care and security (Li, 2007b).

1.2 Why Research This Topic

The idea of researching the experiences of Chinese international students in New Zealand tertiary institutions through gathering and examining views of Chinese students and their parents derived from three factors. As a Chinese international student myself, my personal learning and social experiences in New Zealand provided the initial source of inspiration for this study. I also had a strong desire to share stories with my Chinese peers about adapting to tertiary studies and social life, and discuss the benefits and challenges of studying in New Zealand. Moreover, a review of literature suggested that in-depth research on the experiences of Chinese international students in New Zealand was necessary but little research existed on perceptions and influences of Chinese parents on their children studying abroad. I arrived in New Zealand in 2004. It was my first time to leave home to study in a Western country. I have experienced frustration in adapting to the differences between New Zealand and Chinese university educational systems, teaching and learning styles, and social life. This personal experience has

given me insights into Chinese international students' low level of satisfaction with learning and living in New Zealand, and this has given rise to my interest in exploring how my Chinese peers adapt to their tertiary studies and perceive their experiences in New Zealand.

Research has shown that Chinese international students' levels of satisfaction with aspects of their experiences in New Zealand are low (e.g. Sherry, Bhat, Beaver & Ling, 2003; Ward and Masgoret, 2004; Sandbrook, 2006). Ward and Masgoret (2004) suggested that further research with Chinese international students was needed to understand their experiences in New Zealand. More recently, Ho, Li, Cooper, and Holmes' study (2007) identified that Chinese students had more difficulties learning at tertiary institutions than at secondary or language schools in New Zealand.

Although Chinese international students are less satisfied with their experience in New Zealand, they are more likely to plan to remain in New Zealand than students from Europe, North America, South America, Australia and students from other Asian countries (Ward & Masgoret, 2004). To explore factors influencing Chinese students' intentions, Ho et al. (2007) undertook a qualitative study of Chinese international students in New Zealand. They found that Chinese tertiary students were uncertain about future employment prospects both back in China and in New Zealand. Their decision to remain in New Zealand or return to China tended to depend on where they had better job opportunities. This result was consistent with comments made to me by my friends, especially my friends who were final year students and graduates. They were in a dilemma about whether to stay in New Zealand or go back to China to look for a job. On the one hand, they thought international students did not have equal opportunities with local graduates in the job market in New Zealand, and English as a second language was believed to be a major barrier for their employment. On the other hand, the rapid development and stiff competition for jobs in China made the prospect of returning unappealing, while New Zealand qualifications were not deemed as competitive as they thought to be before they came to New Zealand.

In addition to their own feelings about whether to remain in New Zealand or go home when they finished their studies, they were also subject to the wishes and expectations of their parents and the need to honour them. Completing an overseas degree is perceived as the main purpose of studying in New Zealand. However, it is expected that excellence is achieved and family face gained through the son or daughter who is able to attain suitable work experience in the overseas country before returning to China, not to mention the improved chances for employment in the strongly competitive Chinese labour market. In traditional Chinese culture, one of the characteristics is the strong emphasis on family system (Tseng & Wu, 1985). The Chinese concept holds that the family and individual behaviour are inseparable. If someone accomplishes some extraordinary achievement, their parents and even the whole family gain face. If one member fails, the whole family loses face (Hsu, 1985).

Chinese children are taught to respect their elders and to show filial obedience (Li, 1985). In many Chinese families, “the parents make the decisions and their children are expected to obey” (Hsu, 1985, p. 98). According to Ward and Masgoret’s (2004) study in New Zealand, Asian international students are more influenced by parents than international students from other countries, but their research did not specifically explore the relationship between Asian parents and their children studying overseas. Ho et al.’s study (2007) indicated that for more than half of Chinese students, the decision and plan to study abroad actually originated with their parents. Thus, it can be assumed that parents’ perceptions and family expectations can affect Chinese international students’ own perceptions and expectations. Therefore, to better understand the perceptions and expectations of Chinese international students it is crucial to look at those of their parents.

1.3 Research Objectives

The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of Chinese international tertiary students in relation to their learning and social experiences in New Zealand as well as the views of their parents for understanding Chinese students' learning and social needs, and to improve their level of satisfaction with their experiences in New Zealand. Five research questions guiding the study are as follows:

RQ 1: How do Chinese international students evaluate their learning experiences in New Zealand (including teaching, the learning context, and the quality of services in their tertiary institutions)?

RQ 2: How do Chinese international students perceive their social experiences in New Zealand (including social support, social relationship, and the attitudes of the host institutions and receiving society)?

RQ 3: What expectations do Chinese international students hold in relation to their study in New Zealand?

RQ 4: How do parents perceive their children's learning experiences in New Zealand and what expectations do they have of their children studying in New Zealand?

RQ 5: In the view of Chinese international students and their parents, how can Chinese students' levels of satisfaction with their New Zealand experience be improved?

Definition: A *Chinese international student* in this study is operationally defined as a Chinese student who does not have a New Zealand "permanent resident" status, and is granted a student visa from the New Zealand government to remain in New Zealand for the purpose of study.

1.4 Importance of the Study

The focus of this study is to investigate the perceptions of Chinese international students in relation to their learning and social experiences while studying at New Zealand tertiary institutions. The value of this study lies in its contribution to a growing body of research on intercultural communication in international education in New Zealand. Through investigating the experiences of Chinese tertiary students in New Zealand, the benefits would be three-fold. Firstly, the findings of this study would be useful for improving the satisfaction of Chinese international students in New Zealand. Secondly, this study would provide a reference source for future Chinese students who want to study in New Zealand. Thirdly, the findings would also be significant to New Zealand tertiary institutions in terms of understanding the needs of Chinese international students and building a better reputation for international higher education in New Zealand.

This study also makes a contribution to the literature by investigating the perceptions of parents in relation to experiences of Chinese international students in New Zealand. A great deal of research regarding Chinese international students in New Zealand focuses only on exploring the views of Chinese international students themselves (e.g. Holmes, 2005; Campbell & Zeng, 2006). Previous research has shown that the relationship between Chinese children and their parents is cohesive and parents' decisions and expectations strongly influence their children (Hsu, 1985). Investigating the views of parents would allow a new perspective on issues relating to the experiences of Chinese international students.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organised into six chapters. Chapter 1 gives an introduction to the study. It begins by describing the background of the study and then offers a brief overview of the factors that led the researcher to pursue the research questions about the perceptions of

Chinese international students regarding their learning and social experiences in New Zealand as well as the views of their parents.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature. It begins by considering the general factors that are likely to affect student perceptions and satisfaction. It then reviews major difficulties challenging international students, in particular Chinese students, in their adaptation to Western learning and social contexts. Also, parental influences on Chinese students are considered.

Chapter 3 describes the research design issues in relation to the methods used for collecting and analysing the data, selection of the participants, and ethical considerations. The research design constraints are also discussed at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the data collection. It summarises the findings of the student survey, the parent survey and the student interviews separately. A discussion of the results appears in chapter 5.

Finally, conclusions and recommendations as well as a discussion of the limitations of this study and the implications for future research that arise are presented in chapter 6. The following section will present the literature review of this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The research aimed to investigate Chinese students' learning and social needs, and improve their level of satisfaction with their experiences in New Zealand as was described in chapter 1.3.

This chapter is a review of the literature. It began by considering general factors that are likely to affect students' perceptions and satisfaction with their learning experiences, especially international students. Then this chapter reviews the major difficulties facing Asian international students, in particular Chinese, in adapting to the life in Western countries, in particular in New Zealand. Language difficulties have been identified as a major problem for international students learning and living in host countries. Living in a different culture, however, requires more than communication in a different language, with international students needing to adapt to cultural differences as well. In addition, differences in learning and teaching styles and educational objectives create difficulties in international students' learning process and impact on their learning outcomes. Finally, this chapter reviews the literature regarding the influence of Chinese parents on the perceptions of their children.

The literature review is organised under the following headings:

- Perception and student satisfaction;
- Language problems;
- Cultural adjustment;
- Learning and teaching styles;
- Parental influences on Chinese students.

2.1 Perception and Student Satisfaction

Cultural influences, gender, age, and career roles affect and shape people's perceptions (Kelly, 2006). Because of differences in backgrounds, experiences, and values, people see the world somewhat differently (Sligo, Fountaine, O'Neil, & Sayers, 2004; Kelly, 2006). Understanding students' perceptions and expectations can help educational institutions improve student satisfaction (East, 2001).

Research has shown that student satisfaction with university is related to students' academic performance and student persistence (Pascarella, 1985; Pike, 1991). In order to have a better chance of satisfying the needs of students more effectively, educational institutions may need to better understand consumer-oriented principles and utilise a more consumer-oriented philosophy in delivering their services (Kara & DeShields, 2004). East (2001) argued that universities are expected to change to meet students' needs by identifying international students as customers to understand their expectations and perceptions of service quality. From an opposing point of view, Brennan and Bennington (1999) stated that students are not customers for many reasons. For example, universities can fail students, so that students, despite having paid money for the service, will not receive the desired credentials, and switching to another provider is not an easy option for dissatisfied students. Indeed, students are not exactly the same as customers (Brennan & Bennington, 1999), but since higher education in many countries is being urged to operate more commercially in the global export education market, academic institutions gain advantage by understanding and meeting students' expectations and needs, and improving the quality of services (East, 2001; Kara & DeShields, 2004).

Service quality has been documented in much literature as an important concern of students in terms of their satisfaction (e.g. Cheng & Tam, 1997). Oldfield and Baron's (2000) survey of 333 undergraduate students on their perceptions of service quality concluded that three main factors consisting of "essential", "non-essential but desirable", and "practical" elements contributed to student satisfaction. According to their study,

students change perceptions of service quality over a period of study, with “non-essential but desirable” elements having increasing importance through students comparing perceptions of service quality in their first and final years.

In order to satisfy students’ needs, Li and Kaye (1998) suggested that there needs to be a high level of general commitment to teaching service quality. Mavondo and Zaman (2000) identified quality in terms of teachers, the reputation of an academic institution as well as its market orientation as significant predictors of student satisfaction.

There are wide and important differences within every cultural group (DeVito, 2006). Cultural differences affect people’s perceptions (Kelly, 2006), and the differences in perceptions are described as one of the most common barriers to effective communication (Sligo et al., 2004). Hence, increasing cultural awareness is likely to increase accuracy in perception (DeVito, 2006).

Research has indicated that factors influencing the satisfaction of host and international students with university differ. For example, the conceptual model of student satisfaction was developed by Tsarenko and Mavondo (2001) to identify differences between local and foreign students in terms of their resource requirements at Australian universities. This model shows that resources and capabilities consist of teaching, learning, technology, library, student services and market orientation in relation to student satisfaction and recommendation. The results of this study indicated that foreign students perceive a narrower set of resources as more important for their satisfaction than their local counterparts. Furthermore, compared with quality of teaching and educational technology, three other factors are more related to international students’ satisfaction: learning experience, library services and provision of support student services (Gabbott, Mavondo & Tsarenko, 2002). However, although the quality of teaching is not significantly associated with international student satisfaction, it is critical to students when recommending an institution to others (Tsarenko & Mavondo, 2001; Gabbott, Mavondo & Tsarenko, 2002).

Sam's (2000) exploratory study of life satisfaction among international students indicated that the financial situation, the number of friends and perceived discrimination are strongly related to the life satisfaction of international students. Furthermore, these factors appear to be more important for the students from developing countries than those from developed countries.

Another survey on factors in relation to student satisfaction was undertaken by Lee, Jolly, Kench, and Gelonesi (2000) in an Australian university. Whether or not English is the main language spoken at home, the willingness of students to change courses and students' expectations versus their actual marks are factors identified in this study which have some impact on student satisfaction.

In 2004, a national survey of the experiences of international students in New Zealand was conducted by Ward and Masgoret. The results of this study indicated that Asian international students were less satisfied with their experiences in New Zealand than international students from other countries, and Chinese students were less satisfied with their experiences than other Asian students. More recently, five New Zealand universities participated in the I-graduate International Student Barometer survey: The University of Canterbury, Massey University, University of Otago, University of Waikato and Victoria University of Wellington, with 3,862 student responses at an average response rate of 36%. Forty-five per cent of participants were Chinese international students. The findings of this survey suggested that although a large majority of international students (81%) were satisfied with their learning experiences in New Zealand, 79% with support for international students, and 75% with the living experience, Chinese students from mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong were most critical (Archer, 2007).

In terms of suggestions for actions to increase international student satisfaction levels, Tompson and Tompson (1996) provide strategies for faculty members to improve international student satisfaction in classrooms. The strategies include modifying

classroom policies and procedures to accommodate multiple learning styles and using small groups frequently to increase social integration. Butcher and McGrath (2003) reviewed the academic, social, health and safety, and financial needs of international students in New Zealand and suggested proactive pastoral care in responding to these needs.

2.2 Language Problems

Language difficulties have been felt to be another challenge for non-English speaking international students (Samuelowicz, 1987; Lin & Yi, 1997; Mills, 1997; Mori, 2000; Hughes, 2004), especially the difficulty in understanding colloquial language (Robertson, Line, Jones & Thomas, 2000). Lee (1997) described the main problems in US classrooms identified by international students whose native language is not English as listening ability, oral communication skills, vocabulary and writing. Beaver and Tuck's (1998) investigation into the adjustment of international students in a New Zealand tertiary institution revealed that Asian students rate themselves as less competent in a number of language related study skills.

Inadequate proficiency in English language is a major problem for international students in terms of academic learning (Fletcher & Stren, 1989; Li, Baker & Marshall, 2002). There is a significant association between English proficiency and international students' academic progress, which indicated that students with better English language ability tend to achieve better academic performance (Li & Kaye, 1998). James and Watts (1992), who reviewed the problems of international students in New Zealand universities, found that overseas students perceive their low proficiency in English and difficulty in expressing themselves orally as barriers to their studies. Moreover, Barker's (1991) study of Asian and Chinese international students in Australian universities reported that Asian students, especially Chinese, could not express their opinion in English confidently, which led to difficulties in participating in tutorials and seminars.

English language competency is one of the key factors in international students' social adaptation (Campbell & Zeng, 2006; Fletcher & Stren, 1989). Campbell and Zeng's (2006) study in New Zealand reported that the main problem for Chinese international students is a lack of English language skills, which underpinned their social and cultural communication difficulties. Similar results were also reported by Ho et al. (2007) in their recent study where they found that language problems hampered Chinese international students' friendships and intercultural communication with New Zealanders. As a result, Asian international students who have better English language skills, especially spoken language skills, tend to better interact socially (Toyokawa & Toyokawa, 2002).

From a different point of view, Ginsburg (1992) has described cultural differences, and cognitive and rhetorical differences as more significantly influencing Asian international students' learning in Australia than English language problems. Similarly, Mills (1997) concluded that English language problems were perceived as a major barrier for Asian students, but suggested that some Asian students' communication difficulties at a New Zealand university arose from concentrating on language problems without fully addressing the knowledge of what is needed to communicate effectively as well as a lack of motivation to communicate with people who are different from them.

2.3 Cultural Adjustment

Students who live in a different culture need to deal more than just language difficulties; they also have to adjust to cultural differences (Mills, 1997; Holmes, 2000). People adapting to a new culture are faced with a different set of values, behavioural patterns, and communication systems (Neuliep, 2003). Burns (1991) found that overseas student groups, especially from Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong, had significantly greater difficulties adjusting to academic requirements than their local Australian counterparts, and these overseas student groups had significantly higher degrees of various kinds of

stress than local students. This is consistent with the results of a survey of the experience of international and local students at three Australian universities by Mullins, Quintrell and Hancock (1995) who found that international students experience more problems than their Australian counterparts, particularly in relation to study and finances. More recently, Yeh and Inose's (2003) study in the US found that international students from Asia, Central/Latin America, and Africa experienced more acculturative stress than their European counterparts. The predictors of their acculturative stress included English fluency, social support satisfaction, and social connectedness.

One's social experience in a cross-cultural context is critically important for new arrivals to adapt to the new culture (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). In the process of cultural learning, making friends with locals can facilitate new sojourners' adjustment and adaptation and lift their level of satisfaction in the new country (Campbell & Zeng, 2006). However, cross-cultural studies have demonstrated that there is a lack of interaction between host and international students, from Asian backgrounds in particular, and that international students are dissatisfied with collaborative relationships and friendships with domestic students and local people (East, 2001; Holmes, 2002; Volet & Ang, 1998). Nesdale and Todd (1993) surveyed 357 international and 359 Australian students in Australian universities and concluded that international students were not satisfied with relationships with local students, whereas Australian students were relatively satisfied with the relationship. Similarly, East's (2001) study in Australia reported that international students feel disappointed with the lack of interaction with local students and have a feeling of being excluded in their classes.

Compared with international students in Australia, Ward and Masgoret (2004) found that a majority of international students in New Zealand wanted more New Zealand friends and only a minority felt that New Zealanders had positive attitudes towards international students. The findings of Holmes's (2002) study in New Zealand with Confucian heritage culture students shared that over half the participants thought one of the objectives in studying abroad is to understand its people and culture, but they felt that it was difficult to go beyond initial and superficial levels of contact with New Zealand

- ✓ students and local resident in both academic and social contexts. This result was similar to Zhang's (2004) study which reported Chinese international students' desire to have more New Zealand friends, but they lack opportunities to make New Zealand friends. Furthermore, Holmes' (2005) study in a New Zealand university classroom context indicated that ethnic Chinese students often experience difficulties in intercultural communication when they are aspiring to collaborative relationships with their New Zealand peers.

The reasons of a low level of interactions between international and host students are various. International students' background characteristics, personality traits, and situational issues are found to affect their cultural communication and adaptation (Cigularova, 2005). Research has shown that differences in interests and habits with local students, and language problems are perceived to be major barriers to making friends for international students (Campbell & Zeng, 2006). Also, the views of both local and international students impact on their interactions (Volet & Ang, 1998). Volet and Ang (1998) found that international students often think Australian students are not interested in communicating with them, whereas Australian students often think that international students prefer to keep to themselves. Ward's (2001) study in New Zealand found host students have less interest in initiating communication with international students.

The findings of Li and Kaye's (1998) study in the UK indicate that gender and age are two variables that affect international students' perceptions of the problems they face. Their study shows that female students reported feelings of isolation more than their male counterparts, and younger students are more concerned about their relationship with domestic students than their older counterparts. Because of differences in common characteristics, international students demonstrated a degree of difference in reconstruction of their intercultural communication patterns in light of their communication experience (Holmes, 2005).

2.4 Learning and Teaching Styles

Research studies show that studying in a different country can be an exciting and challenging experience for international students who have to experience many adjustment problems, particularly those relating to academic, socio-cultural and psychological adjustments (Ward & Kenney, 1993). While engaging in “cultural learning”, international students have to make academic adjustments in a new territory where there are different patterns of teacher-student interactions, classroom cultures, academic requirements and expectations, and different concepts and definitions of what constitutes good teaching and learning (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001). Fundamental differences in the culture of learning and teaching contribute to colliding expectations between teachers and students, and difficulties in adaptation (Li, Baker & Marshall, 2002; Cortazzi & Jin, 1997).

Asian students have difficulties adjusting to the unfamiliar Western culture of learning where Socratic dialogical practices are the norm featuring “questioning, criticising, refuting, arguing, debating and persuading” (Major, 2005, p. 85). Byrne’s (2001) study of learning experiences of Asian and Caucasian students found that Asians were more depressed, had more fears of loss of face, held more negative beliefs about the self and the world, and they perceived to have received less social support when compared to Caucasians.

International students from Asian backgrounds experienced difficulties in their studies because of the differences in learning and teaching styles (Choi, 1997). Li, Baker and Marshall (2002) have reported differing learning expectations between Asian students and New Zealand teachers which contribute to difficulties in the process of Asian students’ learning and cultural adaptation in New Zealand tertiary institutions. Choi’s (1997) study in Australia identified unclear requirements, lack of materials, different research methods, and class discussion as barriers or difficulties for Asian students. Similarly, Campbell and Li (in press) found that insufficient knowledge of academic

norms and conventions, and unfamiliar teaching methods in classroom communications underpin many of the learning difficulties experienced by international students in New Zealand tertiary institutions.

In Chinese culture, teaching and learning in the classroom context tend to be formal and serious (Ching, 1992). Teachers are regarded as “people who already have mastered a body of knowledge and are prepared to impart this to students” (Ching, 1992, p. 9). Teachers are perceived as givers and students as receivers, who are not expected to argue with the teacher (Ching, 1992). The Chinese culture of learning is characterised by rote memorisation and repetition, and is passive, receptive, and unquestioning (Ferris & Tagg, 1996; Hammond & Gao, 2002, cited in Zhang, 2004). In contrast Western learning is generally described as Socratic dialogic practice whereby knowledge is constructed through a process of questioning, criticising, and evaluating of beliefs (Holmes, 2004; Major, 2005). Creative thinking and analysis skills and problem solving are considered important in Western learning (Greenholz, 2003; Holmes, 2004) but they are unfamiliar to Chinese students.

Turner’s (2006) interviews with nine postgraduate students from China in a UK business school indicated that learning in China is structured and teacher-centred, whereas learning in the UK is more student-centred and discovery-based. Their notional models of Chinese and British students in this study show that Chinese students are passive-receptive learners, and they listen to the teacher and study privately, which contrasts with British students who are active learners that ask lots of questions and participate vocally in class. Students in Asian educational systems almost always depend on lectures and textbooks, in contrast with New Zealand and Australian universities, where students are expected to access information from tutorials, libraries, and online sources as well as formal lectures (Mack, 2004).

Mills’ (1997) study of international students’ experience of classroom interaction at a New Zealand university indicated that differences in teacher-student interaction and lack

of common experience with local students constituted barriers to in-class communication by Asian students. In addition, Holmes (2004) who conducted a longitudinal study in a New Zealand university found that ethnic Chinese students were not prepared for the dialogic nature of classroom communication which created difficulties in their listening, understanding and interacting.

Research has shown international students, in particular those from Asian backgrounds, experienced problems with participation in tutorials, seminars, and group discussion (Barker et al, 1991; Mullins, 1995; Ward, 2001). Bird and Holmes' (2004) study of New Zealand university students found that international students were "quiet, withdrawn, and waiting for the host students to bring up the ideas" (p. 15) during group work and tutorial sessions. Mullins, Quintrell, and Hancock (1995) reported 66 per cent of international students perceive participation in tutorial and seminars as problems, and these problems did not decrease over time.

In spite of difficulties experienced in group situations, Asian international students tend to have high level of satisfaction with group work. Gatfield's (1999) study in Australia show that international students, with the majority being of Asian origin, have significantly higher levels of satisfaction with group work than their Australian counterparts. Furthermore, Selvarajah's (2006) study in New Zealand indicated that compared with New Zealand European students, Asian international students prefer group assignments and tend to feel that they learn most from group assignments. However, this result is inconsistent with a study of Asian students' perceptions of group work and assignments undertaken by Campbell and Li (2006) in New Zealand. They found that Asian students have positive views about group discussion, which provide them with more opportunities to improve their English language skills and communication with others, but they were intensely dissatisfied with group assignments that require group members to share marks.

Furthermore, the differing expectations in teaching and learning of Asian students and

New Zealand teachers contribute to difficulties in the process of learning and impact on Asian students' learning outcomes (Li, Baker & Marshall, 2002). Selvarajah's (2006) survey of 110 postgraduate students in a New Zealand university indicated that Chinese-speaking Asian students' educational objectives are different from those of New Zealand European students. The Chinese students reported their most important educational objective was "to obtain a qualification essential to my career" (p. 147), whereas the European students saw theirs as being "to learn new skills so that I can change my career" (p. 147). Gaining qualifications for employment and developing English language competence are the main education drivers for the Chinese students in New Zealand (Selvarajah, 2006). Giving this difference in learning and teaching styles, expectations, and educational objectives, it may be problematic to force international students into an existing host educational mould (Selvarajah, 2006).

2.5 Parental Influences on Chinese Students

In Chinese societies, the hierarchical structure of authority ranking in the family (Yeh, n.d., cited in Yang, Hwang, Pederson, & Daibo, 2003), respect for parents and obedience toward parents are traditional Confucian values embodied in the concept of filial piety (Ho, 1989). The relationship between Chinese parents and children is conceived of parental leadership with power; children are expected to obey (Tseng & Wu, cited in Quoss & Zhao, 1995).

The maxims "Glorify One's Parents" and "Oppress Oneself" are two sub factors for authoritarian filial piety (Yang et al, 2003). To "glorify one's parents" means "continuing the succession of the family lineage and maintaining the parents' reputation because of the force of role requirements" (p. 75). To "oppress oneself" implies "sacrificing one's own wishes and complying with and deferring to one's parents' wishes because of their seniority" (p. 75). Chinese children are taught to focus on the exertion of effort and their obligation to bring glory to their parents and family rather than emphasise their own desires and abilities (Stevenson & Lee, 1996).

Traditionally, Chinese parents have been more concerned with impulse control in their children than Western parents (Bond, 1996). Chinese parenting has been described as “restrictive”, “controlling”, and “authoritarian” styles in many cross-cultural studies (Chiu, 1987; Quoss & Zhao, 1995; Lau & Cheung, 1987; Lin & Fu, 1990; Chao, 1994; Shek, 2005). For example, Lin and Fu’s (1990) comparative study of Chinese, immigrant Chinese, and Caucasian-American parents found that Chinese and immigrant Chinese parents tended to rate higher on parental control than their Caucasian-American counterparts. Leung, Lau and Lam’s (1998) study in parenting styles and academic achievement indicated that Chinese parents were more generally authoritarian than Australian and American parents. The results of Chiu’s (1987) study in child-rearing attitudes of mothers found that Chinese mothers were more restrictive than Chinese-American and Anglo-American mothers.

Ward and Masgoret’s (2004) study in New Zealand indicated that international students from Asian countries are more influenced by parents than international students from other countries. Also, Campbell and Zeng (2006) reported that one of important social networks for Chinese international students in New Zealand is family. Ho et al.’s (2007) study of Chinese international students in New Zealand found that their parents were the main influence in their decision to study abroad. This study also revealed that around 15% of participants considered that their parents were a major source of support in relation to their emotional needs, and around 40% of the participants thought that their parents were a major source of support in relation to their studies and accommodation, but Chinese international students had not discussed emotional problems with their parents because Chinese international students did not want their parents to worry about them and they also thought their parents would not understand their situation (Ho et al., 2007).

As a result, in the review of literature, it has been shown that various factors affect international students’ perceptions of their learning experiences and levels of satisfaction. Asian students, Chinese students in particular, experienced various difficulties in

adapting to a new learning environment. The major difficulties included English language problems, cultural differences, and the different learning and teaching styles. In addition, it has been shown that the relationship between Chinese children and their parents is cohesive and parents' decisions and expectations strongly influence their children. Many studies sought to investigate views of international students themselves, and few research studies sought to gain sights of the perceptions of their parents. Most of these studies were conducted by either quantitative or qualitative methods in isolation. Therefore, the present study explores experiences of Chinese international tertiary students in New Zealand through investigating both the views of Chinese students and their parents, and combining quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data to obtain more comprehensive findings. The following chapter will present the research methodology of this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As described in chapter 1, this study aimed to investigate Chinese international students' perceptions of their own learning experiences in New Zealand. This not only required obtaining relatively general views, but also needed to seek participants' insider perspectives. Therefore, a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches was applied in this study. Using both approaches would enhance both the precision of the data gathered and help to gain a better understanding of contextual influences on those data (Frey et al, 2000). In this study, data were collected via three instruments: student survey, student semi-structured individual interviews and parent survey. The student survey was conducted first, and then student interviews were carried out. The purpose of conducting interviews after participants completed the questionnaire was to learn more from respondents about their questionnaire answers (Frey et al, 2000).

The first part of this chapter describes the data collection processes and the sampling of this research. Then the rationales of instruments applied in the study as well as the ethical issues are described. It also identifies the data analysis methods involved in this research study. Finally, the research design limitations of this study are explained.

3.1 Data Collection Processes

The review of the literature in chapter 2 demonstrated that parents' perceptions influence Chinese students' decision to study in New Zealand. Thus, to better understand the perceptions of Chinese international students, it is crucial to look at those of their parents. In line with the research objectives, two groups of research subjects were involved in this study: Chinese international students and their parents. Each group would contribute to the importance of this study from varying angles.

3.1.1 The Pilot Study

Before the main survey and interview, a pilot study was conducted in July, 2007. The purpose of this pilot study was to test the questionnaires and interview protocols to help the researcher to make sure these data collection instruments and processes would be as effective as possible in the main study (Yin, 1989; Frey et al., 2000). Involved in the pilot study were four volunteer Chinese international students and two of their parents. The participants in the pilot study were selected exactly in the same way as was intended in the main study.

The researcher distributed the Information Sheets to her friends and acquaintances who were potential participants for this study. If they were interested in this research, they could contact the researcher by contact details which provided in the Information Sheet. Four students gave feedback in a short time that they would like to participate in the pilot study of this research and invite their parents to join as well. In the pilot study, each student survey took around 15 minutes. The four student participants completed the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher in a student common room separately, which enabled any queries or uncertainties about the questionnaire to be addressed immediately. In addition, two of them participated in interviews. Each interview took around 25 minutes in the pilot study and conducted in the same student common room.

The two student participants' parents agreed to participate in the pilot study and they preferred completing the questionnaire online. The two students gave the address of the research webpage (<http://www.kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/>) to their parents. The parents completed the questionnaire through the webpage.

As a result of the pilot study, minor adjustments in both questionnaires and interview questions were made, such as the order and the wording of questions, and the elimination of a couple of initial insignificant questions. The revised questionnaires and interview questions were more considered therefore effective than the initial ones. Through the

pilot study, the validity, reliability, and practicability of the measurement technique were increased in the view of the researcher.

3.1.2 Student Survey

There are two criteria for the selection of student participants in the survey: Chinese international students from mainland China who were studying or had studied at any New Zealand tertiary institution for at least one semester.

Participants were recruited from New Zealand and mainland China using online advertising and the snowball technique, in which participants were asked to refer to the researcher other participants (Frey et al., 2000). The researcher distributed the Information Sheets to her friends and acquaintances who were potential participants for this study. People who were interested in this research were advised to contact the researcher by contact details which provided in the Information Sheet. These people were the original people for the snowball technique. The advertisement (see Appendix 1) was posted on a personal blog on <http://yiyangresearch.blog.sohu.com/>, plus two other websites used by Chinese international students in New Zealand, these being <http://www.skykiwi.com/> and <http://www.chinaren.com/> on the BBS (Bulletin Board System).

The Information Sheet for the student survey (see Appendix 2) was distributed to anyone who might be a potential participant. Potential participants, who were interested in this study, then contacted the researcher, using the contact details provided in the advertisement and the Information Sheet. Both hard copy and electronic questionnaires were made available to the participants. The hard copies with self-addressed prepaid envelopes were sent or distributed face to face for participants who preferred the hard copy questionnaire. Also, a research webpage (<http://www.kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/>) was designed for those who preferred to participate electronically. Potential participants were able to download the Information Sheet and questionnaire from this webpage and

send the completed questionnaire to the researcher anonymously.

3.1.3 Parent Survey

The researcher asked student participants to invite their parents to participate in this study. Parents were recruited from mainland China by their children's invitation. The children either gave the contact details of their parents to the researcher, the Information Sheets for the parent survey (see Appendix 3) and hard copy questionnaires with self-addressed prepaid envelopes were sent to them, or provide the research page address (<http://www.kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/>) to their parents, their parents completed the electronic questionnaires through this webpage.

3.1.4 Student Interviews

The interview selection criteria were: (1) any student who has participated in the student survey; (2) the "first 10 males and first 10 females"; and (3) those whose location was in Wellington.

The Information Sheets for the interviews (see Appendix 4) were provided for the potential participants. All face-to-face interviews were carried out in Wellington. The setting (including common rooms and cafés) was decided by the preferences of the participants. Each interview took around 30 minutes. The participants signed a consent form (see Appendix 5) before the commencement of interviews. Most of the interviews were conducted at the interviewee's campus and a few were carried out at cafes. All interviews were conducted in Mandarin, which is both the researcher's and participants' first language. Fourteen interviews were audio-taped. Six participants were not comfortable with their conversations being recorded in this way, so notes were taken instead.

3.2 Research Participants

The total participants in the study were 86 current students or graduates from mainland China as well as 21 of their parents. The characteristics of participants in student survey, interviews, and parent survey are presented separately as shown below.

3.2.1 Chinese International Students

Participants in Student Survey

A total of 86 Chinese international students, including 48 males and 38 females from mainland China, participated in the student survey. Their ages ranged from 20 to 35 years, and the mean age was 25.6 years. The distribution of the Chinese students' age groups is presented in Table 3-1. They were from a range of cities and provinces in mainland China (see Table 3-2). Fifty-eight (67.4%) participants lived in Wellington, 15 (17.4%) in Palmerston North, six (7%) in Auckland, three (3.5%) in Christchurch, and four (4.7%) in China.

Table 3-1: Distribution of Student Participants' Age Groups

<i>20-24 years</i>	<i>25-29 years</i>	<i>30-34 years</i>	<i>35-40 years</i>	<i>Total</i>
30	47	8	1	86

Table 3-2: Student Participants' Place of Origin (Total N= 86)

Anhui	3	Heilongjiang	1	Jiangsu	7	Shanghai	14
Beijing	10	Henan	6	Jiangxi	3	Shanxi	2
Chongqi	1	Hubei	3	Jilin	2	Sichuan	4
Fujian	2	Hunan	2	Liaoning	8	Tianjing	2
Guangdong	6	Inner Mongolia	1	Shandong	8	Zhejiang	1

Before coming to New Zealand, participants' highest level of education was as categorised: 27 (31.4%) secondary school certificates, 30 (34.9%) diplomas, 18 (20.9%) bachelor's degrees, and three (3.5%) master's degrees. Seven participants reported their

highest level of education before coming to New Zealand as “other”; one participant did not answer.

The sample comprised 64 (74.4%) current students and 22 (25.6%) graduates. Most of the participants were either studying for or had completed bachelor’s degrees in New Zealand, 21 (24.4%) were or had been postgraduate students, seven (8.1%) were either studying for or had completed diplomas, one (1.2%) was a PhD student, and three participants identified their qualification as “None”. The details of participants’ education level are presented in the Table 3-3 below.

Table 3-3: The Level of Education of Participants in NZ

	<i>Current students</i>	<i>Graduates</i>	<i>Total</i>
Diploma	3	4	7
Bachelor’s Degree	41	13	54
Postgraduate Diploma	3	1	4
Master’s Degree	13	4	17
PhD	1	0	1
None	3	0	3
<i>Total</i>	64	22	86

Moreover, participants in the survey were either studying towards or had graduated with more than twenty different majors. Most (91.9%) of the participants’ education was mainly paid for by their parents. Six (7%) students financially supported themselves. One (1.2%) student was on a scholarship. Moreover, 73 (84.9%) participants were currently or had been full-time students and 13 (15.1%) were part-time students.

Participants in Student Interviews

The participants in the interviews were nine males and eleven females. Their age ranged from 22 to 30 years, with a mean age of 25.45 years. They were originally from ten different cities and provinces of China: Shanghai (4), Beijing (3), Shangdong (3), Sichuan (2), Anhui (2), Guangzhong (2), Jiangsu (1), Liaoning (1), Hubei (1), and Inner Mongolia (1). In addition, fourteen of the interviewees were current students and six were graduates. They had been in New Zealand between one and six years. All interviewees' education in New Zealand was supported financially by their parents. The details of background information for interviewees are shown in the following Table 3-4.

Table 3-4: Background Information of Interviewees

<i>ID</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Time in NZ</i>	<i>Current students or Graduates</i>
<i>1</i>	29	Male	3-4 years	Graduate
<i>2</i>	28	Male	3-4 years	Graduate
<i>3</i>	25	Male	5-6 years	Current student
<i>4</i>	27	Female	3-4 years	Current student
<i>5</i>	26	Female	3-4 years	Current student
<i>6</i>	26	Male	3-4 years	Current student
<i>7</i>	25	Female	5-6 years	Graduate
<i>8</i>	30	Female	5-6 years	Graduate
<i>9</i>	27	Female	5-6 years	Current student
<i>10</i>	23	Female	3-4 years	Current student
<i>11</i>	23	Female	3-4 years	Current student
<i>12</i>	26	Male	3-4 years	Graduate
<i>13</i>	22	Male	1-2 year/s	Current student
<i>14</i>	27	Male	5-6 years	Current student
<i>15</i>	25	Female	3-4 years	Current student
<i>16</i>	23	Female	3-4 years	Current student
<i>17</i>	25	Female	1-2 year/s	Current student
<i>18</i>	23	Male	3-4 years	Current student
<i>19</i>	25	Female	1-2 year/s	Current student
<i>20</i>	24	Male	5-6 years	Graduate

3.2.2 Parents

The details of characteristics of parent participants are presented in Table 3-5. A total of 21 parents participated in this study, including twelve (57.1%) males and nine (42.9%) females. They were all Chinese residents and currently living in mainland China at the time the survey was conducted. Two of them visited New Zealand once while their children were studying in New Zealand.

Table 3-5: Background Information of Parent Participants

<i>ID</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Education Level</i>	<i>Where is child now</i>	<i>Length of their Children's stay in NZ</i>
1	50	M	Journalist	Tertiary	NZ	3-4 years
2	54	M	Office worker	Secondary	NZ	1-2 year/s
3	50	F	Government worker	Tertiary	NZ	3-4 years
4	52	M	Teacher	Tertiary	NZ	3-4 years
5	51	F	Office worker	Secondary	NZ	5-6 years
6	51	F	Engineer	Tertiary	NZ	3-4 years
7	50	M	Government worker	Tertiary	NZ	5-6 years
8	55	M	Business person	Tertiary	NZ	5-6 years
9	50	M	Government worker	Tertiary	NZ	3-4 years
10	51	M	-*	Secondary	NZ	3-4 years
11	50	F	Government worker	Tertiary	NZ	3-4 years
12	50	F	Doctor	Tertiary	NZ	1-2 year/s
13	53	F	Teacher	Tertiary	CN	3-4 years
14	50	F	Doctor	Tertiary	NZ	3-4 years
15	51	M	Government worker	Tertiary	NZ	3-4 years
16	51	F	Government worker	Tertiary	CN	1-2 year/s
17	50	F	Office worker	Tertiary	NZ	3-4 years
18	53	M	Business person	Secondary	NZ	3-4 years
19	57	M	Business person	Secondary	NZ	5-6 years
20	55	M	Business person	Tertiary	NZ	1-2 year/s
21	54	M	Business person	Secondary	NZ	1-2 year/s

* Participant 10 did not provide his occupation.

Parent participants were from diverse occupations, e.g. government workers, teachers, doctors, office workers, and business people. Their ages ranged from 50 to 57 years, and

the mean age was 51.8 years. Six (28.6%) parents had received secondary education and fifteen (71.4%) tertiary education. Most of their children (19 out of 21) were living in New Zealand at the time the survey was done. For 23.8% of parent participants' children had been in New Zealand, for one to two years, 57.1% for two to three years, and 19.0% for five to six years.

3.3 The Research Instruments

3.3.1 The Student Questionnaire

The English and the Chinese versions of the student questionnaire are presented in Appendix 6. This student questionnaire includes both closed and open-ended questions. The 5-point Likert scales were applied in the questionnaire to rate participants' attitudes or feelings range from (1) strongly dissatisfied to (5) strongly satisfied, from (1) very poor to (5) very good, or from (1) not at all to (5) very much.

The student questionnaire includes three main sections. The first section was intended to identify the background information of the student participants, such as age, gender, time in New Zealand, current location, main field or subject of study, part-time or full-time status and educational qualification. This section also asks if Chinese students would apply for New Zealand permanent residency; if New Zealand education is good value for money, and if they would recommend New Zealand as a study destination.

The second section of the questionnaire consists of five themes that examine students' satisfaction with teaching related variables, learning contexts related variables, the quality of services at tertiary institutions, social experiences related variables, and the availability of sources of help and social support:

Teaching-Related Factors

As shown in Table 3-6, a total of fifteen variables are examined in this theme.

Table 3-6: Teaching-Related Variables

(1)	The quality of the content of your programmes
(2)	The structure of your programmes
(3)	The international applicability of programmes
(4)	The ability of your lecturers to inspire and motivate international students
(5)	The ability of your lecturers to explain concepts
(6)	The preparation by your lecturers for each class session
(7)	Lecturers' understanding of the academic needs of Chinese international students
(8)	Lecturers' encouragement of international student participation in discussion in class
(9)	The efforts of your lecturers to help international students
(10)	Lecturers' sense of responsibility for international students
(11)	Lecturers' availability to help you in your study outside class time
(12)	The teaching styles of your lecturers
(13)	The clarity and usefulness of the feedback from your lecturers
(14)	The assessment procedures
(15)	The fairness of the marking criteria for assessment

According to Ward and Masgoret's (2004) study in New Zealand, Chinese students gave more negative evaluations of their study programmes than students from Europe, North America, South America and Australia countries. To further examine Chinese tertiary students' perceptions of their study programmes, three variables that (1) the programme content, (2) the programme structure, and (3) the international applicability of programmes are examined in this study.

Different cultural values, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes cause teachers and students to bring to the classroom different sets of expectations and to interpret different respective roles in teacher-student interactions (Scollon & Scollon, 1995; Hofstede, 1986; Widdowson 1993). These differences in expectations and respective roles might cause students' dissatisfaction with aspects of lecturers' abilities and attitudes. Thus, this part also examines Chinese student satisfaction with their (4) lecturers' ability to inspire and motivate international students; (5) lecturers' ability to explain concepts; (6) lecturers' preparation for each class session; (7) lecturers' understanding of their academic needs; (8)

lecturers' encouragement of their participation in discussion in class; (9) lecturers' efforts to help international students; (10) lecturers' sense of responsibility for international students; (12) lecturers' teaching styles; and (13) the clarity and usefulness of the feedback from lecturers.

The researcher conducted a study in a New Zealand university in 2006 for one of her postgraduate papers (219.790 Research Methods in Communication) and found that Chinese international students have a significantly higher frequency of communication with lecturers outside the classroom than New Zealand-born students. The availability of outside of class time may affect Chinese students' satisfaction with teaching. So the satisfaction level of (11) lecturers' availability to help students outside of class time is examined.

In addition, Asian students (mainly Chinese students) have a different conception from their lecturers in terms of what is required to successfully complete an assessment and that this difference in understanding caused many of their learning problems as well as confusion (Li, Baker & Marshall, 2002; Li, 2002). This study examines student satisfaction with the assessment procedures (variable 14) and the fairness of the marking criteria for assessment (variable 15).

Learning Contexts

The theme examines four variables regarding learning contexts, which are presented in Table 3-7.

Table 3-7: Learning Contexts-Related Variables

(1)	The size of the class in your courses
(2)	The helpfulness of local students in your studies
(3)	The helpfulness of other international students in your studies
(4)	The online support for your studies

Class sizes in China are usually larger than in New Zealand. This difference could

influence Chinese students' perceptions of their learning environment. Thus, satisfaction with the size of the class (variable 1) is examined. In terms of Chinese students' level of satisfaction with learning contexts, variables (2) to (4) were selected based on my own experiences and discussions with other Chinese students.

Services at Tertiary Institutions

Service quality of educational institutions is an important concern of students in terms of their satisfaction (East, 2001; Cheng & Tam, 1997). This theme focuses on evaluation of services at tertiary institutions (see Table 3-8).

Table 3-8: Services-Related Variables

(1)	Learning support services
(2)	Language skills support
(3)	Computing services
(4)	Library services
(5)	The services of the International Student Office
(6)	Student associations
(7)	Student orientation services
(8)	Career guidance
(9)	Counselling services
(10)	Accommodation services
(11)	Sporting facilities
(12)	Medical health services
(13)	Financial advice services
(14)	Catering services

Variables (1) to (13) have been used in previous research into the experiences of international students in New Zealand and the experiences of Chinese international students in New Zealand (Ward & Masgoret, 2004; Ho et al., 2007). Moreover, Chinese dietary habits are different from those of New Zealanders. Chinese friends of the researcher have often commented that the eating facilities at their tertiary institutions were not "international". Thus (14) catering services, as a variable that may influence Chinese students' evaluation of their institutions' quality of services, is examined in this

study. In the end, it explores the perception of overall quality of the services.

Social Experiences

Communication and interactions with host students are an important factor in international students' social adjustment (Abe, Talbot & Geelhoed, 1998; Zimmerman, 1995). However, previous research has shown that Chinese students experienced difficulty in making friends with local students (Zhang, 2004; Holmes, 2005). As presented in Table 3-9, (1) the level of difficulty in making friends with local students and (2) the level of difficulty in making friends with other international students are examined.

Table 3-9: Social Experiences Related Variables

(1)	The level of difficulty in making friends with kiwis
(2)	The level of difficulty in making friends with other international students
(3)	The level of satisfaction with local information services
(4)	The level of satisfaction with local medical health services
(5)	The level of satisfaction with accommodation

In addition, compared with other students, Chinese students are least satisfied with their accommodation in New Zealand (Ward & Masgoret, 2004). To identify Chinese tertiary students' perceptions of their accommodation, their level of satisfaction with accommodation (5) is examined in this study. From the comments of the researcher's Chinese friends, local information and medical health services were perceived as important factors influencing their satisfaction. Therefore, these two variables (3, 4) are considered.

Sources of Social Support

Research has shown that the importance of social support and its positive benefits for international students in adapting to university life (Jou & Fukada, 1995). This theme examines the sources and perceived availability of social support for Chinese international students in New Zealand. The sources of social support and perceived

availability have been previously used in assessing all international students in New Zealand (see Ward & Masgoret, 2004), and Chinese international students across five educational sectors (language school, private tertiary establishment, high school, polytechnic, and university) in New Zealand (see Ho et al., 2007). This study focuses on Chinese tertiary students' sources of social support.

In line with the objective of the current study, these variables were either used in their original form or adapted for the survey in this study. Seven areas of social support include: (1) talk with you if you have difficulties in your studies; (2) discuss relationship issues or concerns with you; (3) comfort you when you are lonely or homesick; (4) help you with language or communication problems; (5) provide information and counselling about sexual health issues; (6) help you with your living arrangements; and (7) help you if you are sick. Seven sources of social support availability include: staff at your institution; Kiwi friends; international students; people from clubs or the community; parents; other people in China; and others.

In the third section of the questionnaire, two open questions are asked to obtain suggestions, recommendations, or comments for improving Chinese students' satisfaction with their learning experiences in New Zealand. The purpose of asking open questions at the end of this questionnaire is to allow participants to respond with whatever is on their mind (Burns, 2000; Frey et al., 2000). The open questions serve as an important part of the questionnaire to collect data that may not be easily available through the closed questions.

3.3.2 The Parent Questionnaire

The parent questionnaire includes both closed and open-ended questions. The 5-point Likert scales were applied in the second section of the questionnaire. The English and the Chinese versions of the questionnaire for parent participants are presented in Appendix 7.

As described in chapter 1.3, one of purposes of this study is to explore the views of parents in relation to Chinese students' learning and social experiences in New Zealand for understanding Chinese students' needs from a different angle. In line with this purpose of the study, the parent questionnaire consists of three main sections.

The first section is divided into four parts. The first part is intended to identify background information about their children including whether their children are in New Zealand or China; their children' time in New Zealand; if the parents mainly paid for their children's education in New Zealand. It also asks who made the decision for their children to study and the motivators of the parents who support Chinese students studying in New Zealand.

The purpose of asking the parents' motivations is to find out if their motivations might be similar to or different from those of their children. Motivators (1) to (6) (see Table 3-10) were perceived as important factors for Chinese students choosing New Zealand for study (Ward & Masgoret, 2004; Ho et al., 2007). In addition, (7) cultivating children's independence is put on the list because many Chinese families have only one child after 1980s. The only one child usually gets spoiled (Huang, 1982; Pfeifer & Sussman, 1991). Chinese parents may perceive cultivating children's independence as an important factor to sending their children to study abroad.

Table 3-10: Motivators for Parents Supporting Chinese Students Studying in New Zealand

(1) The quality of education
(2) The living environment
(3) The cost
(4) Without IELTS
(5) Relative and/or other family members in New Zealand
(6) Safe
(7) Cultivating children's independence

The parents are asked to rank from the most important motivators to less important ones. If the parents had other important motivators, they could specify them in the space

provided. Furthermore, the qualifications the parents expected their children to get in New Zealand are examined.

One reason that Chinese international students did not discuss their problems in New Zealand was because they thought their parents did not understand their children's situation (Ho et al., 2007). Hence, it is important to examine if the parents had ever visited New Zealand while their children were studying here, and the frequency of their visits.

The second part is to look at the level of satisfaction with their children's academic performance and overall experiences in New Zealand. There might be a difference between Chinese students and of their parents in expectations of study and evaluation of New Zealand education. It examines if the parents wish their children to apply for New Zealand permanent residency and look for a job in New Zealand, if their children's New Zealand education is good value for money, if the parents would like to recommend New Zealand as a study destination. Similar questions were put to the student participants in the student questionnaire (see Chapter 3.3.1).

Parents as a source of social support in seven areas are examined in the student questionnaire (see Chapter 3.3.1 *Sources of Social Support*). The third part is to look at the perception of the parents in frequency of parent-child communication when their child needed social support in the same seven areas.

The fourth part includes five statements (see Table 3-11, p. 41) regarding parents' perceptions of children's attitudes to their experiences in New Zealand, and changes undergone by their children during their time in New Zealand. The parents are asked to rate the statements from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Table 3-11: Five Statements

(1)	Your child often speaks positively about their learning experience in New Zealand.
(2)	Your child often speaks positively about their social experience in New Zealand.
(3)	Your child has made/ made a big progress in their study in New Zealand, in comparison to their study in China.
(4)	Your child has become/became more independent in their life when in New Zealand.
(5)	You allow my child to make decisions on their education by themselves when in New Zealand.

The second section asks two open questions to obtain suggestions, recommendations, for improving Chinese international students' learning experiences in New Zealand, or other comments regarding the experiences of Chinese students in New Zealand. Because of time and financial constraints, the researcher could not interview parents. Therefore, the open questions were especially important as a part of the parent survey questionnaire and they would allow parent respondents to provide more information about their perspectives than closed questions.

The final section includes items concerning personal characteristics (e.g., age, gender, country of residence, occupation, and educational level).

3.3.3 The Semi-Structured Interview

Hitchcock & Hughes (1989) divided interviews into three categories: unstructured, semi-structured, and structured. The objectives of this study were to obtain the perceptions of Chinese international students (see Chapter 1.3). The semi-structured interview was applied in this study, which helps to achieve a further depth of study through probing into the issues being discussed (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989). Rather than having a specific interview schedule or none at all, a semi-structured interview "permits greater flexibility than the closed-ended type and permits a more valid response from the informant's perception of reality" (Burns, 2000, p. 424).

An interview guide (see Appendix 8) was designed to ensure the consistency of

information, but participants had sufficient opportunity to express any viewpoint they thought important. The interview questions include both closed and open questions. Closed questions can “provide respondents with pre-selected answers from which they choose or call for a precise bit of information” (Frey et al., 2000, p. 100). In contrast, open questions can “provide more information than closed questions about the particular perspectives of individual respondents” (Frey et al., 2000, p. 100).

The interview questions covered three key information areas: learning experiences, social experiences, and purposes, plans or expectations to be addressed in this research. The first group of questions is related to learning experiences. It intended to explore the benefits and difficulties of Chinese students studying in New Zealand, the perceptions of differences between the New Zealand and the Chinese tertiary education systems, and the process of Chinese students in adaptation to tertiary studies. The second group of questions concerns social experiences. It discusses Chinese students’ friendship, social activities, and experiences of prejudice or discrimination in New Zealand. The third group of questions is to understand Chinese students’ purposes, plans or expectations. It includes questions in relation to purpose of coming to New Zealand, future plans after study, and changes of the plans.

3.4 Ethical Issues

In the initial research phases, the researcher sent a draft of the ethical considerations regarding this project to the supervisors for comments, and then the ethical issues were discussed with supervisors. The surveys and interviews were conducted after the Massey University Ethics Committee: Southern B approved this study on 9 July, 2007 (see Appendix 9).

Several key ethical issues of this study were identified by the Committee: benefits or risk of harm; informed and voluntary consent; privacy or confidentiality issues;

deception; conflict of role or interest; compensation to participants; cultural issues; and sharing research findings. The first ethical application was sent to the Committee on 26 March 2007 and was provisionally approved, subject to the fulfilment of 33 questions on 12 April 2007 by the Committee. Then the 33 questions were responded to the researcher on 21 May 2007. The committee approved the research subject to the researcher's response in regard to the questions regarding researcher safety on 5 June 2007. Finally, the researcher sent the response of researcher safety and interview schedule to the committee on 2 July 2007, and the Committee approved this research on 9 July 2007.

All participants in this research were voluntary. Because the data collection included three sections, an information sheet was designed separately for each section. The Information Sheet (see Appendices 2, 3, 4) provided basic information about the researcher, background to the study, and the rights and involvement of the participants.

In the survey, all participants were anonymous. The research webpage <http://www.kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/> was developed for those who completed the electronic questionnaire so that they were able to participate without providing any identifiable information. This research webpage was designed by the researcher and developed by a professional web developer. This webpage was written in Chinese characters and included three main parts: background information of the study; download of the Information Sheets; download and upload of the questionnaire.

In the interview section, participants signed a consent form (see Appendix 5) before the commencement of interviews. Also, before the researcher asked questions which might cause participants any discomfort or embarrassment, the researcher would remind the participants that they had the right to decline to answer any particular question and withdraw from the study.

Each participant's identity and answers were treated in strictest confidence. Any

identifiable characteristics of the participants in this study or their institutions were not being disclosed in any of the written reports produced in the course of this research.

3.5 Analysing the Data

Data collection netted in total 89 student questionnaires, 21 parent questionnaires, 14 taped-recorded interviews, and 6 summarised (taking notes) interviews. However, there were three respondents who failed to fill in some parts of the questionnaire. The mechanism for dealing with missing data applied in this study was to delete the cases with the missing data (Vavra, 1997). Three questionnaires in which respondents failed to answer up to 10% of the questions were not considered for the analysis. Thus, the data from 86 completed student questionnaires, 21 parent questionnaires, and 20 interviews were analysed.

All data from the questionnaires were analysed by SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Data checking was done by double-checking the original data from the returned survey and examining the frequency table for all the questionnaire items.

All the tape recordings of interviews were transcribed either into Chinese or English. The researcher translated parts of certain interview transcripts into English when the subject matter was considered to be of especial importance to the research, such as when important points were made which were desirable to quote in entirety. The transcripts and translations were examined by one of the researcher's supervisors who is a native Chinese speaker familiar with English as well as an English language teacher. Then the transcriptions and notes were analysed to identify themes.

3.6 Research Design Constraints

It is important to recognise the constraints of the research design. The nature of the

current study research design posed certain limitations to the outcome of this research.

The first limitation is related to the non-random sampling methods. When non-random samples are used, researchers had difficulty computing the amount of sampling error (Burns, 2000). For reasons of time and financial constraints, the snowball technique and online advertising were applied to recruit participants, which generated a non-random sample in this study. Most of student participants in the survey section were from Wellington, and as well, all interviews in this study were conducted in Wellington. Nevertheless, the researcher tried to decrease the sampling error by obtaining samples from various backgrounds. This included approaching acquaintances from different tertiary institutions, main study fields, age groups, and place of origin in an attempt to obtain a broader representation of responds. The details of the background information were shown in chapter 3.2.1.

The second limitation concerned the way of administering questionnaires to collect the data. In this study, both the student and parent survey were self-administered questionnaires without the presence of the researcher. The absence of the researcher has its advantages. It can avoid the potential threat or pressure to the respondents, and more anonymous than having the researcher presents (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The limitation, however, is that respondents may wrongly interpret questions and answer questions inaccurately (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

The third limitation was that the researcher effect was unlikely to have been eliminated completely in the study. The interviews involved interpersonal involvement, some degree of the researcher effect, or “the influence of a researcher on the people being studied” (Frey et al., 2000, p. 123) derived from communication seemed inevitable. For instance, the researcher’s characteristics and personal attitude can affect research participants’ responses (Frey et al., 2000; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Especially, the researcher was a Chinese international student herself who had interpersonal communication with participants who had the same status as she talked about similar

experiences. However, the researcher tried to minimise the effect by asking questions neutrally and maintaining an impersonal attitude during interviews.

The fourth limitation is concerned with the translation from Chinese to English. All questionnaires were presented and responded to in Chinese and all interviews were conducted in Mandarin. It is possible (though not thought likely) that the researcher misrepresented the interviewees' opinions when translating. Six interviews were recorded as hand-written notes rather than onto an audiotape, which caused minor difficulties in the researcher's translation. However, the researcher tried to minimise translation errors by translating the notes at the conclusion of each interview. Translating the notes within a short period after an interview helped to maintain consistency in terms of the content and tone of the conversation, since the researcher's memory of this was fresh. The researcher listened to each recorded conversation several times, and the translation was double-checked to the consistency with original conversations.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The objective of this study as described in chapter 1 was for the researcher to understand the perceptions of Chinese international tertiary students regarding their experiences in New Zealand. This objective was subdivided into five main research questions concerning the views of Chinese students themselves and those of their parents. This chapter presents summaries of all data collected in this study. Where appropriate, the findings from the student survey, parent survey, and student interviews are reported separately.

The participants' viewpoints were obtained using multiple data collection methods, including the questionnaires and interviews, described in chapter 3. The findings in this chapter provide evidence concerning Chinese students' perceptions of their experiences in New Zealand. Chapter 5 will discuss the implications to be drawn from these results and chapter 6 will present suggestions by participants and recommendations to improve the experiences of Chinese international students in New Zealand.

4.1 Findings from the Student Survey

This first section summarises responses to the questionnaires by student participants. Sixty-five hard copies and 24 electronic questionnaires in total were received between July and August 2007. The purpose was to obtain general information regarding student participants' feelings about their learning and social experiences during their study in New Zealand tertiary institutions. This survey set the scene for further exploring the further perceptions of Chinese international students by listening to their voices through individual interviews.

The demographics of 86 respondents in the student survey were described in chapter 3.2.1.

The data from this survey was analysed through SPSS. As described in chapter 3.3.1, the questionnaire for student participants includes three main sections. The findings of the student survey are organised in line with the layout of *The Questionnaire for Student Participants* (see Appendix 6), under six themes:

- *Teaching related factors.* This theme presents the findings from examining 15 variables of teaching. Three variables concern the quality and international applicability of programmes. Two variables are related to the assessment. Ten variables concern lecturers.
- *Learning contexts.* This theme includes findings of examining four factors in relation to learning contexts such as the size of the class and helpfulness of other students.
- *Services at tertiary institutions.* This theme shows findings of evaluating fourteen aspects of services at tertiary institutions.
- *Social experiences.* This theme presents results of evaluating five variables in relation to social experiences such as friendship and accommodation.
- *Sources of social support.* This theme shows results of the sources of social support available to help Chinese students in New Zealand in seven areas.
- *Plans and evaluations.* This theme presents results of whether Chinese students would like to apply for New Zealand permanent residency, if New Zealand education is good value for money, and how likely it is that they would recommend New Zealand education to other Chinese prospective students.

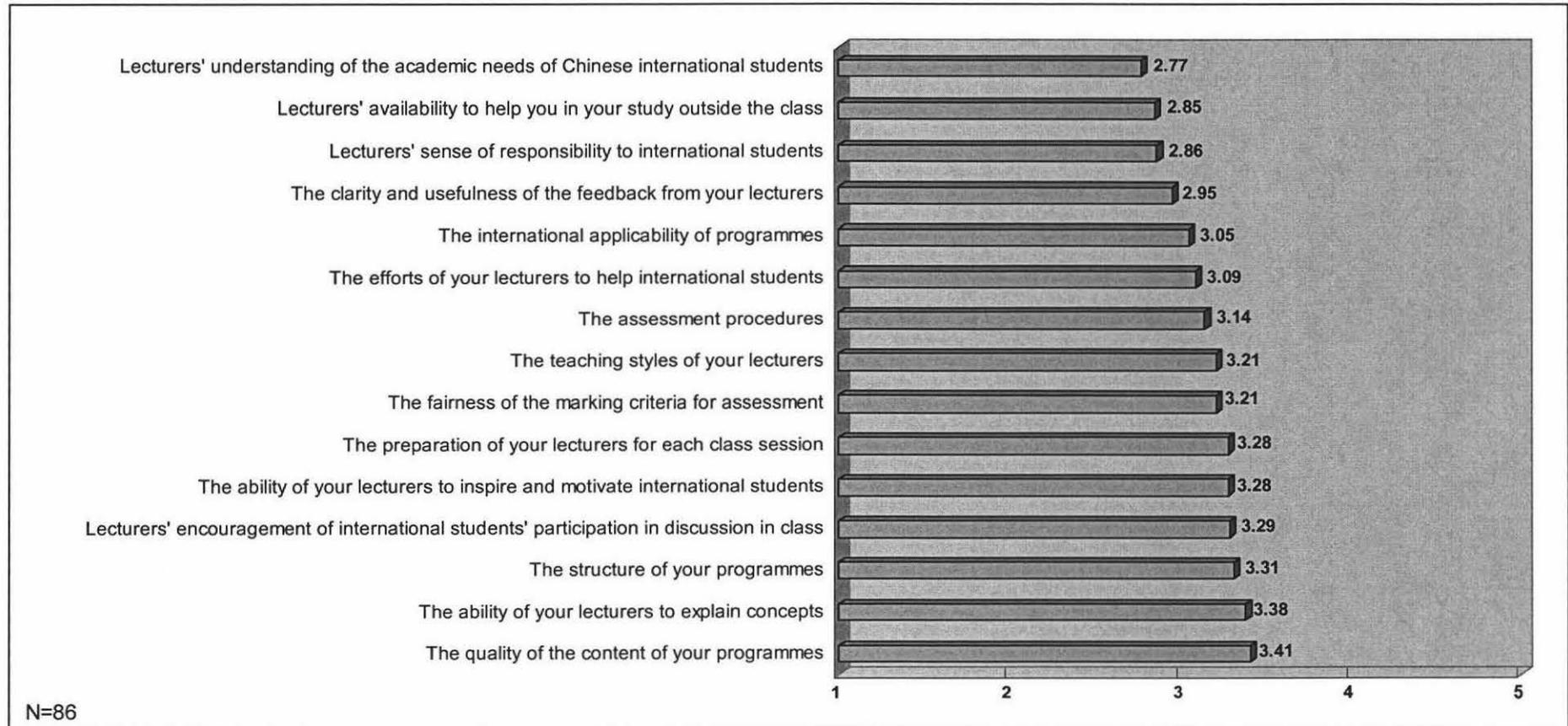
4.1.1 Teaching Related Factors

Figure 4-1 (see p. 50) presents the mean ratings of satisfaction with fifteen variables regarding teaching at tertiary institutions, on a scale of 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied), with a mid-point of 3 (moderately satisfied). As mentioned in chapter 3.3.1, fifteen teaching-related variables included factors regarding programmes, lecturers' teaching competence and attitudes, as well as the assessment procedures. Mean ratings of these fifteen variables were between 2.77 and 3.41, indicating Chinese international students who completed this survey were moderately satisfied with those aspects of teaching at their tertiary institutions.

The Chinese students were most satisfied with the quality of their programmes (mean=3.41), the ability of lecturers to explain concepts (mean=3.38), and the structure of programmes (mean=3.31). In contrast, students were least satisfied with lecturers' understanding of the academic needs of Chinese international students (mean=2.77), lecturers' availability to help them with their study outside the classroom (mean=2.85), lecturers' sense of responsibility for international students (mean=2.86) and, the clarity and usefulness of the feedback from their lecturers (mean=2.95).

Moreover, the Chinese students were relatively moderately satisfied with other aspects of teaching. They gave middle-ranking ratings to the following items: the international applicability of programmes (3.05), the effort of lecturers to help international students (3.09), the assessment procedures (3.14), the teaching styles of lecturers (3.21), the fairness of marking criteria for assessment (3.21), the preparation of lecturers for each class session (3.28), and the ability of lecturers to inspire and motivate in discussion in class (3.28). The implications of Chinese students' perceptions of learning and teaching in New Zealand will be considered in chapter 5.

Figure 4-1: Ratings of Satisfaction with Teaching Related Factors



Note: 1=strongly dissatisfied; 3=moderately satisfied; 5=strongly satisfied.

The statistics from SPSS analysis shows satisfaction with aspects of teaching varied by gender and according to whether the participant was currently studying or had graduated. Table 4-1 (see p. 52) presents satisfaction ratings with teaching related factors by contrasting males and females. The mean of satisfaction ratings with aspects of teaching by male Chinese students is generally higher than female students. Using the Pearson Two-sided Chi-Square Test, the difference between males and females in satisfaction with lecturers' ability to explain concepts was found to be significant at 0.034 (N=86). While other findings are not statistically significant, possibly associated with the relatively small N, nevertheless a non-significant but discernibly different trend can be identified whereby females' satisfaction is lower in most instances.

In addition, Table 4-2 (see p. 53) presents satisfaction ratings with teaching related-factors by contrasting current students and graduates. The Chinese graduates reported higher mean scores than current students to most aspects of teaching. In contrast, current students gave higher mean scores than graduates to lecturers' understanding of their academic needs, the quality of the content of their programmes, the preparation of your lecturers for each class session, lecturers' encouragement of international students' participation in discussion in class, and the assessment of procedures. The Pearson Two-sided Chi-Square Test indicated that the difference between current students and graduates in the satisfaction with the quality of the content of your programmes was found to be significant at 0.045 (N=86). A mixed pattern exists between graduates' and current students' satisfaction levels, but it is noteworthy that the only statistically significant result was in respect of programme content quality. There is also a minor but insignificant trend for graduates' satisfaction to be higher than current students'.

Table 4-1: Ratings of Satisfaction with Teaching Related Factors: Males and Females

<i>Teaching Related Factors</i>	<i>Mean</i>		<i>Asymp.Sig. (2-sided) (N=86)</i>
	<i>Males (N=48)</i>	<i>Females (N=38)</i>	
1. The quality of the content of your programmes	3.54	3.24	0.268
2. The structure of your programmes	3.44	3.16	0.296
3. The international applicability of programmes	3.17	2.99	0.502
4. The ability of your lecturers to inspire and motivate international students	3.38	3.16	0.697
5. The ability of your lecturers to explain concepts	3.48	3.26	0.034
6. The preparation by your lecturers for each class session	3.42	3.11	0.120
7. Lecturers' understanding of the academic needs of Chinese international students	2.85	2.66	0.296
8. Lecturers' encouragement of international student participation in discussion in class	3.42	3.13	0.124
9. The efforts of your lecturers to help international students	3.23	2.92	0.180
10. Lecturers' sense of responsibility for international students	2.96	2.74	0.517
11. Lecturers' availability to help you in your study outside class time	3.00	2.66	0.234
12. The teaching styles of your lecturers	3.23	3.18	0.376
13. The clarity and usefulness of the feedback from your lecturers	3.02	2.87	0.449
14. The assessment procedures	3.17	3.11	0.173
15. The fairness of the marking criteria for assessment	3.17	3.26	0.635

Note: The table reports mean ratings where 1=strongly dissatisfied; 3=moderately satisfied; 5=strongly satisfied.

Table 4-2: Ratings of Satisfaction with Teaching Related Factors: Current Students and Graduates

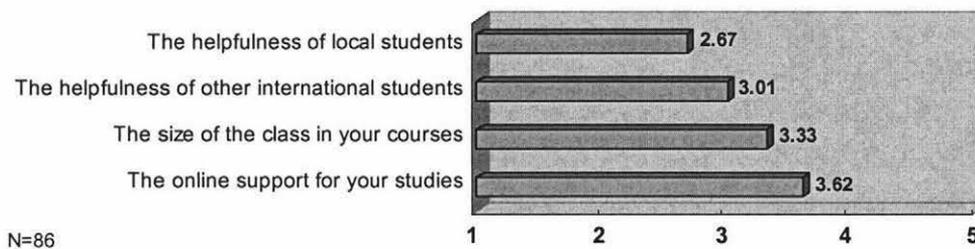
<i>Teaching Related Factors</i>	<i>Mean</i>		<i>Asymp.Sig. (2-sided) (N=86)</i>
	<i>Current Students (N=64)</i>	<i>Graduates (N=22)</i>	
1. The quality of the content of your programmes	3.47	3.22	0.045
2. The structure of your programmes	3.30	3.35	0.934
3. The international applicability of programmes	3.03	3.09	0.987
4. The ability of your lecturers to inspire and motivate international students	3.25	3.35	0.817
5. The ability of your lecturers to explain concepts	3.35	3.48	0.314
6. The preparation by your lecturers for each class session	3.33	3.14	0.504
7. Lecturers' understanding of the academic needs of Chinese international students	2.86	2.52	0.337
8. Lecturers' encouragement of international student participation in discussion in class	3.32	3.22	0.817
9. The efforts of your lecturers to help international students	3.05	3.22	0.651
10. Lecturers' sense of responsibility for international students	2.75	3.17	0.141
11. Lecturers' availability to help you in your study outside class time	2.76	3.09	0.232
12. The teaching styles of your lecturers	3.21	3.22	0.324
13. The clarity and usefulness of the feedback from your lecturers	2.89	3.13	0.124
14. The assessment procedures	3.14	3.13	0.557
15. The fairness of the marking criteria for assessment	3.17	3.31	0.861

Note: The table reports mean ratings where 1=strongly dissatisfied; 3=moderately satisfied; 5=strongly satisfied.

4.1.2 Learning Contexts

As described in chapter 3.3.1, four aspects of learning contexts which were considered by the researcher as important factors affecting Chinese students' satisfaction were put to respondents. Students' satisfaction levels with aspects of learning contexts are shown in Figure 4-2. Online support for students' study received the most positive evaluation with 59.3% describing this learning support as either satisfactory to very satisfactory and 32.6% was moderately satisfied. However, the helpfulness of local students was perceived as being least satisfactory, with 41.9% describing themselves as either dissatisfied or strongly dissatisfied.

Figure 4-2: Ratings of Satisfaction with Aspects of Learning Contexts



Note: 1=strongly dissatisfied; 3=moderately satisfied; 5=strongly satisfied.

The statistics from SPSS mean analysis shows males rated higher mean scores with aspects of learning contexts than females (see Table 4-3).

Table 4-3: Ratings of Satisfaction with Aspects of Learning Contexts: Males and Females

<i>Aspects of learning contexts</i>	<i>Mean</i>		<i>Asymp.Sig. (2-sided) (N=86)</i>
	<i>Males (N=48)</i>	<i>Females (N=38)</i>	
The size of the class in your courses	3.45	3.18	0.069
The helpfulness of local students	2.79	2.50	0.452
The helpfulness of other international students	3.19	2.79	0.050
The online support for your studies	3.69	3.53	0.152

Note: The table reports mean ratings where 1=strongly dissatisfied; 5=strongly satisfied.

Using the Pearson Two-sided Chi-Square Test, the difference in satisfaction with the

helpfulness of other international students between males and females was found to be significant at 0.05 (N=86). The difference in satisfaction with the size of the class is not significant at 0.05 level, but it is close to it at 0.069 (N=86). Again there is a consistent pattern of females being less satisfied than males, two of the four results significant.

Graduates rated mean scores of the helpfulness of local and other international students, and the online support for their studies higher than current students, whereas current students gave higher mean scores of the size of the class than graduates (see Table 4-4). Through the Pearson Two-sided Chi-Square Test, the difference in satisfaction with the size of the class between current students and graduates was found to be significant at 0.032 (N=86).

Table 4-4: Ratings of Satisfaction with Aspects of Learning Contexts: Current Students and Graduates

<i>Aspects of learning contexts</i>	<i>Mean</i>		<i>Asymp.Sig. (2-sided) (N=86)</i>
	<i>Current Students (N=64)</i>	<i>Graduates (N=22)</i>	
The size of the class in your courses	3.35	3.26	0.032
The helpfulness of local students	2.63	2.74	0.771
The helpfulness of other international students	2.94	3.22	0.746
The online support for your studies	3.60	3.65	0.278

Note: The table reports mean ratings where 1=strongly dissatisfied; 5=strongly satisfied.

4.1.3 Services at Tertiary Institutions

As seen in Table 4-5 (see p. 57), over half the students (52.3%) viewed the overall quality of services at tertiary institutions as average. Nearly a quarter of students (24.4%) rated the overall quality of services good or very good, whereas 23.3% rated them poor or very poor.

Student associations and catering services were rated lower than other services, with 46.5% considering student association services and 41.9% catering services as either poor or very poor. Furthermore, 38.4% perceived services in relation to accommodation and career guidance, as poor to very poor. By contrast, the quality of library services received a significantly higher rating than other services, with 59.3% describing library services as good to very good. Also, 47.7% described computing services and 41.8% learning support services as good to very good.

Students were less knowledgeable about services offering financial advice and student orientation. Fourteen (16.3%) participants did not know whether their institutions had financial advice services, and five (5.8%) were unaware of student orientation services. Moreover, some participants knew of the availability of services, but did not use some services. These services included sport facilities (11.6%), accommodation (9.3%), medical health (7.0%), student association (5.8%), career guidance (4.7%), counselling (4.7%), catering (3.5%), financial advice (2.3%), language skills support (1.2%), and international student office (1.2%).

Table 4-5: Ratings of Quality of Services at Tertiary Institutions (N=86)

<i>Aspects of Services</i>	<i>Very poor</i> %	<i>Poor</i> %	<i>Average</i> %	<i>Good</i> %	<i>Very good</i> %	<i>Not Applicable</i> %	<i>Don't know</i> %
Learning support services	4.7	2.3	51.2	39.5	2.3	-	-
Language skills support	3.5	11.6	47.7	33.7	2.3	1.2	-
Computing services	7.0	10.5	34.9	41.9	5.8	-	-
Library services	2.3	9.3	29.1	51.2	8.1	-	-
The services of the International Student Office	5.8	12.8	45.3	29.1	5.8	1.2	-
Student associations	22.1	24.4	32.6	12.8	2.3	5.8	-
Student orientation services	10.5	25.6	45.3	11.6	1.2	-	5.8
Career guidance	12.8	25.6	38.4	16.3	2.3	4.7	-
Counseling services	5.8	20.9	44.2	23.3	1.2	4.7	-
Accommodation services	8.1	30.2	34.9	12.8	4.7	9.3	-
Sporting facilities	5.8	9.3	40.7	23.3	9.3	11.6	-
Medical health services	4.7	19.8	38.4	22.1	8.1	7.0	-
Financial advice services	7.0	22.1	34.9	15.1	2.3	2.3	16.3
Catering services	8.1	33.7	34.9	16.3	3.5	3.5	-

The Pearson Two-sided Chi-Square Test indicated that the difference in satisfaction between males and females was found to be significant with medical health services at 0.019 (N=86), and accommodation services at 0.01 (N=86). Although the result of library services is not significant at 0.05 levels, it is close to it. As shown in Table 4-6, Male students generally rated the quality of all the services as “good” to “very good” more than females. In particular, males felt services such as counselling, accommodation, sporting facilities, and medical health services, were better than did females.

Table 4-6: Ratings of Satisfaction with Aspects of Services: Males and Females

<i>Aspects of services</i>	<i>Good to Very good</i>		<i>Asymp.Sig. (2-sided) (N=86)</i>
	<i>Males (N=48) %</i>	<i>Females (N=38) %</i>	
Learning support services	43.8	39.5	0.657
Language skills support	37.5	34.2	0.321
Computing services	56.2	36.8	0.138
Library services	68.7	47.4	0.055
The services of the International Student Office	43.7	23.7	0.149
Student associations	20.9	7.9	0.490
Student orientation services	18.8	5.3	0.169
Career guidance	23.0	13.2	0.208
Counseling services	35.4	10.5	0.122
Accommodation services	31.2	2.6	0.010
Sporting facilities	41.7	21.1	0.062
Medical health services	39.6	18.4	0.019
Financial advice services	25.0	7.9	0.145
Catering services	27.1	10.5	0.078

Moreover, more graduates rated “good” to “very good” to most aspects of services than current students. But current students rated the quality of library, sporting facilities, and catering services as “good” to “very good” slightly more than graduates. There was no significant difference in satisfaction with aspects of services between current students and graduates, by using the Pearson Two-sided Chi-Square Test. The details of rating satisfaction with aspects of services by current students and graduates see Table 4-7.

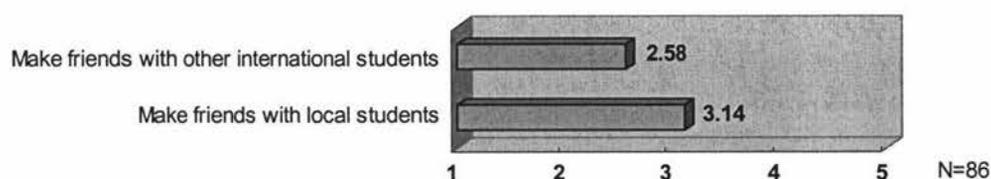
Table 4-7: Ratings of Satisfaction with Aspects of Services: Current Students and Graduates.

<i>Aspects of services</i>	<i>Good or Very good</i>		<i>Asymp.Sig. (2-sided) (N=86)</i>
	<i>Current Students (N=64)</i>	<i>Graduates (N=22)</i>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	
Learning support services	36.0	59.0	0.317
Language skills support	36.0	36.3	0.698
Computing services	46.9	50.0	0.810
Library services	59.4	59.1	0.414
The services of the International Student Office	28.1	54.6	0.225
Student associations	12.5	22.7	0.133
Student orientation services	10.9	18.1	0.494
Career guidance	17.2	22.7	0.716
Counseling services	23.5	27.3	0.988
Accommodation services	15.6	22.7	0.782
Sporting facilities	34.4	27.3	0.641
Medical health services	28.2	36.3	0.434
Financial advice services	15.7	22.7	0.826
Catering services	21.9	13.6	0.456

4.1.4 Social Experiences

The survey data in this study reflect Chinese students' difficulties in making friends in New Zealand. As Figure 4-3 shows, Chinese students realised that they had more difficulty making friends with local students than with other international students.

Figure 4-3: Ratings of Difficulty in Making Friends



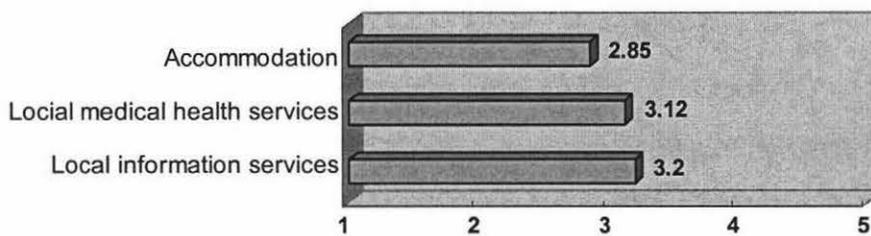
Note: 1= not difficult at all; 5= very difficult

SPSS analysis suggests that females found it more difficult to make friends with local students than males did. Forty-seven per cent of females considered making friends with

local students to be difficult or very difficult, whereas 35.5% of males had this same perception. There were no significant differences either between males and females or between current students and graduates in terms of perception of the difficulty of making friends with other international students.

The Chinese students were asked about their satisfaction with social support, local medical health services, accommodation and local information services. The details of these variables were described in chapter 3.3.1. Mean satisfaction ratings in relation to social support, local medical health services, accommodation and local information services are shown in Figure 4-4. Mean ratings were between 2.85 and 3.20, indicating Chinese students' satisfaction with these four aspects was moderate.

Figure 4-4: Ratings of Satisfaction with Three Aspects of Social Experiences



Note: 1=strongly dissatisfied; 5=strongly satisfied.

In addition, differences in the levels of satisfaction with these four aspects varied by gender and depended on whether the participant was currently studying or had graduated. As shown in Table 4-8 (see p. 61), the difference in satisfaction with accommodation between males and females was found to be significant at 0.03 (N=86), by using the Pearson Two-sided Chi-Square Test.

The details of satisfaction ratings with four aspects of social experiences across graduates and current students are presented in Table 4-9 (see p. 61). The Pearson Two-sided Chi-Square Test shows that the difference in satisfaction with accommodation between current students and graduates was also found to be significant at 0.041 (N=86).

Table 4-8: Ratings of Satisfaction with Three Aspects of Social Experiences: Males and Females

<i>Aspects of learning contexts</i>	<i>Mean</i>		<i>Asymp.Sig. (2-sided) (N=86)</i>
	<i>Males (N=48)</i>	<i>Females (N=38)</i>	
Local information services	3.21	3.18	0.268
Local medical health services	3.29	2.89	0.710
Accommodation	2.94	2.74	0.030

Note: The table reports mean ratings where 1=strongly dissatisfied; 5=strongly satisfied.

Table 4-9: Ratings of Satisfaction with Three Aspects of Social Experiences: Current Students and Graduates

<i>Aspects of learning contexts</i>	<i>Mean</i>		<i>Asymp.Sig. (2-sided) (N=86)</i>
	<i>Current Students (N=64)</i>	<i>Graduates (N=22)</i>	
Local information services	3.19	3.22	0.599
Local medical health services	3.16	3.00	0.696
Accommodation	2.70	3.26	0.041

The table reports mean ratings where 1=strongly dissatisfied; 5=strongly satisfied

4.1.5 Sources of Social Support

Table 4-10 (see p. 63) presents participants' sources of support for dealing with seven aspects of emotional and practical areas arising from life in New Zealand (see Chapter 3.3.1).

The data from this study show that other international students are the most important source of social support both for the Chinese students' emotional and practical needs. They are people to talk to when they have difficulties with studies (59.3%), relationship issues (60.5%), experience loneliness or homesickness (53.5%), language or communication problems (37.2%), sexual health issues (46.5%), problems with living arrangements (43.0%), and they provide help when they are sick (51.2 %).

Apart from other international students in New Zealand, two other sources of social support for emotional needs are the participants' parents and people in the participants' home country, with whom they can discuss relationship issues (27.9% and 25.6% respectively), and from whom they can seek comfort when they are lonely (43.0% and 27.9% respectively).

Staff at tertiary institutions were perceived as being available to assist with practical issues such as language and communication problems (24.4%), living arrangements (16.3%), and as being someone to talk to when they had difficulties with their studies (12.8%). However, staff at tertiary institutions were not sought as sources of social support for emotional needs.

Kiwi friends were a major available source of support for language and communication problems (36.0 %), but were of little support in other areas. Also, the participants perceived there to be very little social support from people in clubs or community groups in New Zealand.

Table 4-10: Sources of Social Support for Chinese Students (N=86)

	<i>Staff at your institution</i> %	<i>Kiwi friends</i> %	<i>International students</i> %	<i>People from clubs or the community</i> %	<i>Parents</i> %	<i>Other people in China</i> %	<i>Others</i> %
Talk with you if you have difficulties in study	12.8	11.6	59.3	0	30.2	23.3	2.3
Discuss relationship issues or concerns with you	0	8.1	60.5	1.2	27.9	25.6	5.8
Comfort you when you are lonely or homesick	0	4.7	53.5	1.2	43.0	27.9	8.1
Help you with language or communication problems	24.4	36.0	37.2	4.7	1.2	3.5	23.3
Provide information and counselling about sexual health issues	5.8	5.8	46.5	0	12.8	2.3	30.2
Help you with your living arrangements	16.3	7.0	43.0	0	10.5	5.8	19.8
Help you if you are sick	11.6	4.7	51.2	0	16.3	1.2	18.6

4.1.6 Plans and Evaluations

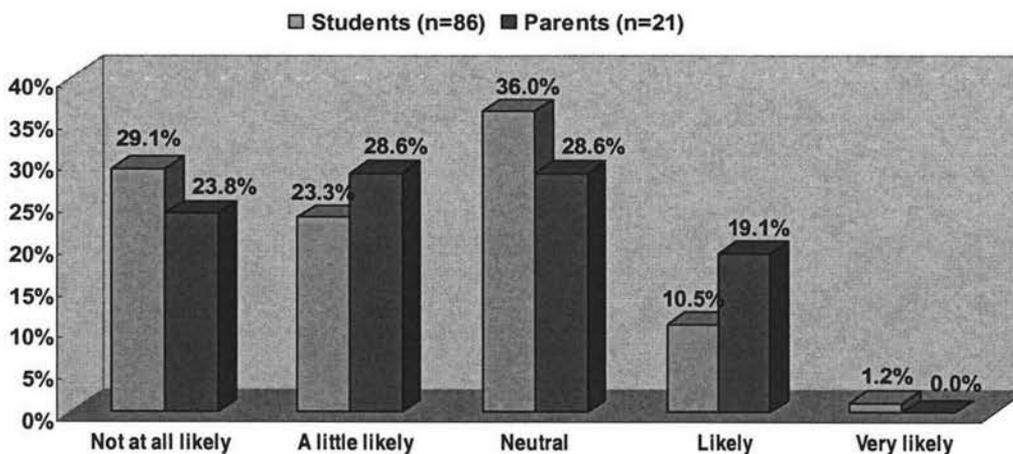
Over one third (38.4%) of participants expected to become New Zealand permanent residents; 40.7% were not sure whether they would apply for New Zealand permanent residency, and 20.9% did not plan to apply for this.

Thirty-six per cent of student participants considered their education in New Zealand was good value for money, whereas twenty-seven percent considered it was not, and thirty-seven per cent were unsure as to whether their New Zealand education was worth for the money they had paid.

Furthermore, more than half the students thought there was little possibility of their recommending New Zealand to others. By comparison, only 11.7% were likely or very likely to recommend family or friends that they to study in New Zealand.

Similar questions were also put to the parent participants in this study (see Chapter 3.3.2). The possibility of both the student and parent participants recommending New Zealand to others was low, although the possibility of the parent participants doing this was slightly higher than the student participants (see Figure 4-5).

Figure 4-5: The Possibility of the Students VS the Parents Recommending Others Study in NZ



In addition, the results of the parent survey show that the parent participants had a much stronger desire for their children to apply for New Zealand permanent residency than the student participants. The parents rated New Zealand education more positively than the student participants did. The implication of these findings will be discussed in chapter 5. The details of these findings are presented (see Chapter 4.2.5) in the following section as part of the “findings from the parent survey”.

4.2 Findings from the Parent Survey

As described in the literature review of chapter 2, in many Chinese families, parents’ decisions or expectations are an important factor in influencing their children’s viewpoints. In order to better assess the perceptions of Chinese international students regarding their experiences in New Zealand, this study explored the perceptions of 21 of their parents concerning their children’s overseas study. Fifteen hard copies and six electronic parent questionnaires were received between July and September 2007.

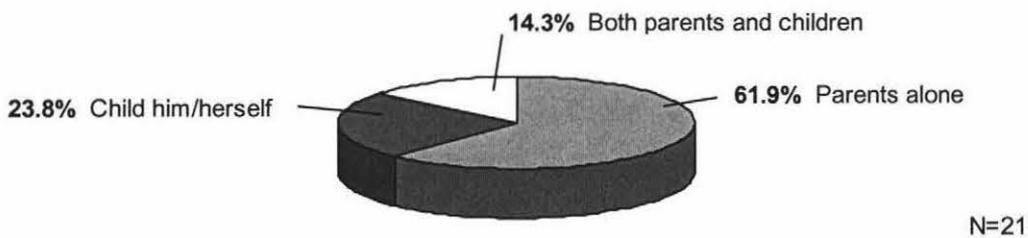
The questionnaire for parent participants (see Appendix 7) was described in chapter 3.3.2. In line with the layout of the parent questionnaire, this section presents a summary of the responses by parent participants under five themes:

- Decision to study in New Zealand;
- Motivators for supporting children to study in New Zealand;
- Source of social support;
- Attitudes of and changes in parent participants’ children;
- Expectations and evaluations.

4.2.1 Decision to Study in New Zealand

As shown in Figure 4-6, the decision to study in New Zealand was mainly made by the parent participants. Well over half the parents (61.9%) reported that they made the decision for their children to study in New Zealand, 23.8% of children made decisions by themselves, while 14.3% of the time the decision was made by both parents and their children. There was no data to show that the decision to study in New Zealand had been made by other relatives or friends.

Figure 4-6: Who Made the Decision to Study in NZ?



4.2.2 Motivators for Supporting Children to Study in New Zealand

The parents were asked to indicate their motivators for supporting their children to study in New Zealand, ranking from the most important motivator to less important one (see Chapter 3.3.2). The results show the motivators for the Chinese parents to send their children to study in New Zealand were widely distributed. Most parents (61.9%) ranked cultivating independence as their prime motivator for supporting their children to study in New Zealand. More parents (38.1%) ranked living environment as the second most important motivator than any other factors. The third important motivator were equally (28.6%) the cost and the living environment. The fourth was quality of education. The details of motivators for parents supporting their children studying in New Zealand are presented in Table 4-11 (see p. 67).

Table 4-11: Motivators for the Parents Supporting Children Studying in NZ (N=21)

<i>Motivators</i>	<i>1st motivator %</i>	<i>2nd motivator %</i>	<i>3rd motivator %</i>	<i>4th motivator %</i>
The quality of education	14.3	9.5	14.3	52.4
The living environment	—	38.1	28.6	14.3
Independence	61.9	9.5	—	—
The cost	—	9.5	28.6	14.3
Lack of IELTS requirements	19.0	14.3	19.0	4.8
Safety	4.8	9.5	9.5	14.3
Relatives/ family members	—	9.5	—	—
<i>Total</i>	100	100	100	100

4.2.3 Sources of Social Support

As shown in findings from the student survey in this study, the student participants were asked about their sources of support in seven aspects of emotional and practical problems of life in New Zealand (see Chapter 4.1.5). Parents were regarded by the students as an important source of social support for their emotional needs. The parent participants were asked about the frequency with which their children talked to them about the same seven aspects of emotional and practical problems relating to life in New Zealand.

The details of the frequency of children turning to their parents for help or support is presented in Table 4-12 (see p. 69). On the whole, communication between parents and their children regarding both emotional and practical problems was not frequent. Most parent participants described their children as having never turned to them for help or support with language or communication problems, and sexual health or reproduction issues (95.2% respectively).

Over half the parents reported that their children did not turn to them for help or support with their living arrangements, relationship issues, difficulties with study, and loneliness or homesickness. These children did look to their parents for help or support when they were sick and lonely or homesick more frequently than for other aspects of emotional and

practical problems. One parent described the frequency of support sought for sickness as “often”, 19.0% “sometimes”, and 47.6% “a little”, 28.6% indicated “sometimes” and 19.0% “a little” in relation to loneliness or homesickness. The parents rated comparatively highly in terms of the frequency with which their children sought help or support from them for loneliness or homesickness, which is consistent with the findings from the student survey that parents were recognised by the students as an important source of social support for emotional needs.

Table 4-12: Frequency of Children Turning to Parents for Help or Support (N=21)

<i>Items</i>	<i>Not at all</i> %	<i>A little</i> %	<i>Sometimes</i> %	<i>Often</i> %	<i>Very Often</i> %
How often did your child talk with you about him/her having difficulties in his/her study?	57.1	33.3	9.5	—	—
How often did your child turn to you for help or support regarding their relationship issues or concerns when in NZ?	61.9	23.8	14.3	—	—
How often did your child turn to you for help or support or comfort when they are/were lonely or homesick when in NZ?	52.4	19.0	28.6	—	—
How often did your child turn to you for help or support with language or communication problems when in NZ?	95.2	—	4.8	—	—
How often did your child turn to you for help or support about sexual health or reproduction issues when in NZ?	95.2	—	4.8	—	—
How often did your child turn to you for help or support with their living arrangements when in NZ?	76.2	4.8	19.0	—	—
How often did your child turn to you for help or support when they were sick when in NZ?	28.6	47.6	19.0	4.8	—

4.2.4 Attitudes of and Changes in the Parent Participants' Children

The parents were asked to rate five statements (see Table 4-13) from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree (see Chapter 3.3.2).

Table 4-13: The Parent Participants' Perception with Five Statements (N=21)

	<i>Strongly disagree</i> %	<i>Disagree</i> %	<i>Neutral</i> %	<i>Agree</i> %	<i>Strongly agree</i> %	<i>Total</i> %
Your child often speaks positively about their learning experience in NZ.	-	-	19.0	57.1	23.8	100
Your child often speaks positively about their social experience in NZ.	-	4.8	28.6	42.9	23.8	100
Your child has made/ made a big progress in their study in NZ, in comparison to their study in CN.	-	9.5	28.6	42.9	19.0	100
Your child has become/became more independent in their life when in NZ.	-	-	-	38.1	61.9	100
You allow your child to make decisions on their education by themselves when in NZ.	-	19.0	9.5	38.1	33.3	100

Most parents (80.9%) reported that their children spoke positively about their learning experience in New Zealand, whereas 66.7% agreed that their children talked positively about their social experience in New Zealand.

Over half (61.9%) of the parents thought that their children made much more progress in their studies in New Zealand than they did in China. Only 9.5% considered their children were not making or had not made any progress, and 28.6% thought their children's progress was "neutral", meaning neither good nor bad. All the parents in this survey agreed that their children became more independent in their lives, with 38.1% describing themselves as agreeing and 61.9% as strongly agreeing. Nearly three

quarters (71.4%) of the parents allowed their children to make decisions about their education by themselves when in New Zealand, whereas 19.0% did not allow this, and 9.5% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

4.2.5 Expectations and Evaluations

Parents' expectations of their children's academic outcome in terms of qualifications ranged from a bachelor's degree to a PhD, and no parent participants expected their children to qualify with anything lower than a bachelor's degree. More than half (61.9%) of the parents expected their children to get a bachelor's degree in New Zealand, six (28.6%) expected a master's degree, one (4.7%) a PhD. One did not answer as to what his expectations were.

Parent participants' desire that their children look for jobs in New Zealand and apply for New Zealand permanent residency after graduating is presented in Table 4-14. Most parents wanted to their children to work in New Zealand and apply for New Zealand permanent residency, with 71.4% saying they had either a "strong desire" or "very strong desire" for their children to look for jobs in New Zealand, while 76.1% viewed their children applying for New Zealand permanent residency as a "strong desire" to "very strong desire". By contrast, the percentages of parents who had either "little" or "very little" desire to see their children apply for jobs and residency in New Zealand was very small, 9.6% respectively.

Table 4-14: Parents' Desire for Their Children to Look for A Job in NZ and Apply for New Zealand Permanent Residency after Graduating (N=21)

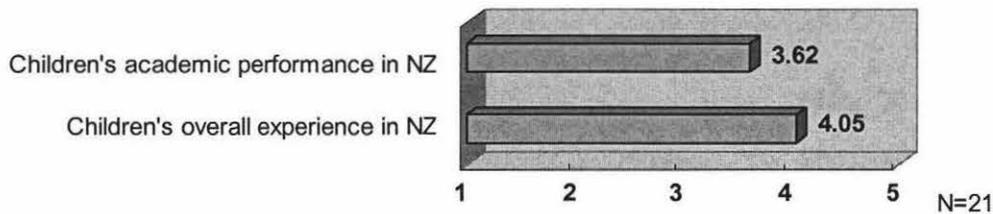
	<i>Very little desire</i>	<i>Little desire</i>	<i>Moderate desire</i>	<i>Strong desire</i>	<i>Very strong desire</i>
Work in NZ	4.8%	4.8%	19.0%	33.3%	38.1%
Apply for PR*	4.8%	4.8%	14.3%	42.8%	33.3%

* PR: New Zealand Permanent Residency

In general, the parents were satisfied with their children's overall experience in New

Zealand. Over half of the parents indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their children's overall experience, in comparison with 19.0% who were moderately satisfied and 19.0% who felt little to very little satisfaction. Although most parents thought their children talked about their learning experience positively, the parents tended to be more satisfied with their children's overall experience than specifically their academic performance in New Zealand. Figure 4-7 presents the mean of parental evaluations on a scale of 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied) with a midpoint of 3 (moderately satisfied).

Figure 4-7: Ratings of Satisfaction with Children's Academic Performance and Overall Experience in NZ



Note: 1=strongly dissatisfied; 5=strongly satisfied.

The majority (61.9%) of the parents viewed New Zealand education as good to very good value for money. Around a quarter of the parents (28.6%) considered New Zealand education for their children as being of neutral value, and 9.6% low to very low value. In addition, 42.9% of the parents did not regret at all having sent their children to study in New Zealand, 38.1% felt a little regret, 14.3% were neutral, and only 4.8% described having major regrets.

Furthermore, 23.8% of the parents would not at all recommend others to study in New Zealand, and 28.6% of them perceived themselves a little likely, whereas 19.1% described themselves as being likely to recommend this. Moreover, 28.6% of the parents described the possibility of their recommending others to study in New Zealand as being neutral.

4.3 Findings from Student Interviews

After the survey of Chinese international students and their parents, summarised above, a number of students volunteered to participate further in interviews which took place over a period of five weeks. In the final sample, all 20 Chinese international students included in these interviews were living in Wellington at the time when the interviews were done. All interviews were conducted in Mandarin. The transcripts were translated from Chinese into English by the researcher and checked by English language assistance teacher and one supervisor. For ethical considerations, all participants were coded with numbers. The detailed profiles of the interviewees and the interview process were described in chapter 3. In line with the objectives of this study (see Chapter 1.3), the findings from the student interviews are organised and presented under the following themes:

- *The reasons for choosing to study in New Zealand.* To understand Chinese students' learning expectations of studying in New Zealand.
- *Purposes and plans.* To explore the expectations and needs of Chinese students learning in New Zealand.
- *Benefits of learning in New Zealand.* To find out factors contributing positive perceptions of Chinese students in relation to their learning experiences.
- *Academic differences and difficulties.* To find out factors contributing the negative perceptions of Chinese students regarding their learning experiences.
- *Social activities and friendships.* To understand factors influencing the perceptions of Chinese students regarding their social experiences.
- *Prejudice and discrimination.* To identify Chinese students' perceptions of the attitudes of the host institutions and receiving society.

4.3.1 The Reasons for Choosing to Study in New Zealand

To understand the expectations Chinese international students hold in relation to their study in New Zealand, the interviews considered the reasons for participants choosing New Zealand as their overseas study destination. They sought a full understanding of what motivational factors were and why these Chinese international students chose New Zealand. Accordingly, each interviewee was asked several questions in this regard. The interview questions are presented in Appendix 8, page 170.

Only six out of 20 participants indicated New Zealand was their first choice as study destination. Their choice of New Zealand was influenced from various sources, such as agencies, their parents, relatives, or friends. For example, Participant 6 applied for a New Zealand student visa because the agency provided limited choices to him. Similarly, Participant 5's choice of New Zealand was also mainly influenced by the agency's suggestions.

The influence of parents on the decision to study in New Zealand was mentioned by some participants. Participant 14's parents had visited New Zealand and felt it was a nice study destination, so New Zealand became the first choice. Likewise, Participant 20, whose parents made the decision for him to study in New Zealand:

I did not have much idea about studying abroad at that time. ... My parents heard that New Zealand was a good place for overseas study from their friends and colleagues who had been to New Zealand or whose children were studying in New Zealand, so they applied for a New Zealand student visa for me. (Participant 20)

Another participant's (Participant 9) uncle immigrated to New Zealand in 1997. She chose New Zealand because her uncle had helped his relatives' or friends' children who would like to study overseas to apply for a student visa to come to New Zealand. In addition, Participant 2 planned to come to New Zealand with his friend whose relatives

and friends were living and studying in New Zealand and so received a lot of information about this destination.

The majority of participants (70%) who studied in New Zealand had originally planned to study in Canada, Australia, the UK, or the USA. However, they finally came to New Zealand for various reasons, such as failure to obtain a visa from these countries, the relative ease and speed of getting a visa from New Zealand, and the low or lack of IELTS requirement, and comparatively low exchange rate of New Zealand dollar before 2003.

Participants 1 and 8, for instance, failed to obtain students' visas from Canada and Australia respectively:

Canada was my first choice, because my cousin was in Canada and it's close to the USA.

Due to the '9/11' event, my visa application was rejected. It was easy to get a New Zealand student visa, so I came here. (Participant 1)

My first choice was Australia, but my visa application was rejected. It was easier to get a student visa for New Zealand, and the exchange rate for the New Zealand dollar was low at that time. (Participant 8)

Some gave up their first choices without trying because they felt they had little chance of obtaining visas from these countries. They chose to apply for the New Zealand visas because the process was easy. As Participant 15 stated:

The USA and the UK were my desired study destinations, but it was difficult to get a visa from those countries. ... After receiving advice from others, I finally decided to come to New Zealand. (Participant 15)

Some participants chose New Zealand first as their English language study destination because IELTS band score was not required, and then they planned to go to other

countries for tertiary education:

The UK and Australia were my first choices. Because there was no IELTS requirement to come to New Zealand, I wanted to come to New Zealand to study English language first, and then go to the UK or Australia. ...but then I felt that there was beautiful scenery. Kiwis were friendly, and New Zealand was clean and safe, so I stayed here for further study. (Participant 4)

Some participants just did not want to wait for the time required by some countries for visa applications to be processed. The speed of visa application processing suited Participant 12's purposes:

I planned on going to Australia, UK, or USA. ... But applying for a New Zealand visa was faster. I did not want to waste time. I wanted to study overseas as soon as possible.

4.3.2 Purposes and Plans

To help fulfil the current research objectives, it was important to explore the participants' purposes, and their plans of coming to New Zealand. Participants were asked what their purposes and expectations of studying in New Zealand were, whether they followed their plans, what changes they had to make to their plans, what the reasons for those changes were for them in studying in New Zealand.

The majority of participants (90%) stated that their main purpose of coming to New Zealand was to complete a degree, while seven participants (35%) indicated that improving their English language skills was also a major reason for coming to New Zealand. For example, Participant 1 indicated that he had intended to improve his English skills and get a higher overseas qualification in New Zealand, which would provide a competitive advantage when he returned to China.

Moreover, to “experience different cultures” (Participants 3, 15, 19) and “lifestyles” (Participant 10), to “be more independent” (Participants 6, 13, 18), to “improve knowledge” (Participants 1, 6, 10, 15), to “make some friends with people from other countries” (Participant 3) and to “get some overseas work experience” (Participant 11) were considered additional purposes by some participants.

In addition to the purposes mentioned above, two out of 20 participants considered immigration opportunities were their main purpose in studying in New Zealand. Although they had not achieved their initial main purpose, they considered they had gained benefits during the period of study:

The purpose of coming to study was immigration. I heard that it was easy to get permanent residency [in New Zealand] at that time [in 2003]. If you complete your study, you can immigrate. In fact, it is not true... But I learnt a lot during the period of study... (Participant 8)

Initially, I planned to immigrate here, but once I started to my study, I thought learning something was more important. As far as immigration was concerned, it depended on luck... whether you could find a good job, had relational skills ... and whether [New Zealand] was a good place for your future development. (Participant 2)

Furthermore, the participants were asked whether they had achieved their initial study purpose. Eleven (55%) responded that they were on their way to achieving their goals. All of these were current students and believed they would complete their studies as they had planned.

Two participants (10%) did not achieve their initial goals. Participant 1 expected to get a Master’s degree in New Zealand but only finished his postgraduate diploma, now he decided to go back home instead. Participant 5 expected to obtain a scholarship in New Zealand, but her performance was below the required standard.

Seven participants (35%) had achieved their initial study purpose which was to attain a bachelor's degree or a diploma, and four of these had over-achieved in terms of their initial purpose, going on to gain higher qualifications than they had originally intended. A main reason for participants engaging in further studies was that they could not find satisfactory employment in New Zealand when having completed their diplomas or degrees. They expected to gain competitive advantages in finding a good job through having a higher qualification. However, the reality contradicted their expectations.

Participant 8, whose initial purpose was to get a bachelor's degree but had gone on to complete her master's degree, said that she had wanted to find a job in New Zealand relating to her undergraduate degree but she was unsuccessful. She found that many Chinese international students with a bachelor degree in Business Studies could not find jobs. She thought that gaining a higher qualification would provide more advantage in the New Zealand job market. However, after obtaining her higher qualification, she found herself over-qualified when looking for a job. Three other participants who had not yet completed their studies realised that pursuing higher qualifications would not ensure good jobs.

On the whole, most of the participants altered to some degree their plans of studying in New Zealand. Twelve out of 20 participants stated their original plans had been to obtain an overseas qualification and then return to China, but then they had decided they wanted to gain some work experience in New Zealand or apply for New Zealand permanent residency. This change was mainly influenced by increasing competition in the Chinese job market. New Zealand qualifications no longer offered the competitive advantage as they used to. These participants found the prospect of returning to China with a qualification but without work experience unappealing. In addition, the agreeable living environment, in particular the beautiful natural scenery, and the attractive state social welfare system also influenced their decision to stay. Participant 10, who had been in New Zealand more than three years, had a clear purpose:

I didn't initially consider working here [New Zealand]. I just wanted to complete my degree as soon as possible and then go back to China. But later, I knew the competition for jobs in China was becoming more and more stiff. Returned Chinese students had few advantages...so I think I should get some suitable work experience in New Zealand before I can go back home.

Like Participant 10, other participants, who initially had little or no willingness to work in New Zealand, eventually changed their minds. They felt that relevant work experience in New Zealand would provide important competitive advantages for their future career, regardless of whether they stayed in New Zealand permanently or went back home. Participant 15 said that after she had studied in New Zealand several years and taken many papers in relation to the New Zealand context, she wanted to apply the academic knowledge she had learnt through working here. Wherever she would like to be in the future, she felt that getting some suitable work experience in New Zealand would be valuable. Participant 11 also stated:

If I have a New Zealand qualification and suitable work experiences [in New Zealand], it is obviously better than having a qualification only.

In addition, some participants indicated their plans were changeable and that they were uncertain about their future. Whether they stayed in New Zealand or went back home depended on where there were better job opportunities for them. On the one hand, they felt that international students did not have fair opportunities competing with local graduates for employment in New Zealand. It was difficult for an international student to find a suitable job, especially for new graduates without any local work experience and for those whose studies were not highly specialised, such as business majors. Given this situation, they wanted to go back to China to look for jobs. Nevertheless, they were also worried that they might not be able to find a good job once back in China, because they had been away from home for a number of years and needed to re-adapt, and were uncertain whether they would have competitive advantages in the Chinese job market.

Participants 7 and 12 gave their views:

I'm not doing what I planned. I'm working in a small shop as a sales person, and this is not what I wanted. I expected to find an office job relevant to my studies but it's hard...If I go back home, a bachelor's degree will not be competitive. I don't think I can find a good job in China either...I'm not sure about my next step. (Participant 7)

If I cannot find a good job in New Zealand, I will go back [to China]. However, I'm a little afraid of returning because it may be worse than staying [in New Zealand]. I'm confused... (Participant 12)

Furthermore, nearly half the participants (9 out of 20) expressed their willingness to work in New Zealand or their desire to apply for New Zealand permanent residency was largely influenced by or in relation to their parents. Some of these participants pointed out their parents expected them to work in New Zealand and apply to become permanent residents. Participant 19 stated that her parents told her that if she had relevant work experience or New Zealand permanent residency, she would have more choices in her future life. Similarly, Participant 14 indicated that although his parents let him make the final decision to either stay in New Zealand or go back home, they wanted him stay in New Zealand because they thought New Zealand was a good place to live, and they hoped their son would have a better life.

Some also mentioned that they would gain face for their parents through having suitable work experience or New Zealand permanent residency because these would be seen as clear proof of their abilities. Participant 13 stated:

If I can get a good job here [in New Zealand] or PR (Permanent Residency) which would prove my personal abilities...My parents would be proud of me.

Like Participant 13, other participants felt they could honour their parents or give

something in return for the money their parents had spent on their education through finding a suitable job in New Zealand or gaining New Zealand permanent residency. Participant 6 said his education cost his parents much money, so he needed to make their investment worthwhile by fully exploiting the opportunity to live in a country he and his parents considered to be a better place than China. Participant 4 also showed that her parents spent a great deal of money on her studies in New Zealand and she wanted to repay her parents. She thought if she could get New Zealand permanent residency, her parents could travel to New Zealand any time when they wanted to. The implication of Chinese students' purposes, plans and expectations will be considered in chapter 5.

4.3.3 Benefits of Learning in New Zealand

Participants' evaluation of the benefits of studying in New Zealand differed widely. However, several benefits were mentioned relatively commonly. Half the participants perceived that becoming much more independent as a major benefit.

I was protected and shielded by my parents... but now whatever problems I meet, I have to face them and solve them by myself... my ability to solve problems has improved, my ability to be independent and to think is also improved... overall, for me [the benefit of studying in New Zealand] was to be more independent. (Participant 6)

Slightly less than half of (45%) participants felt that changing their way of thinking and developing critical thinking were the benefits they had gained, while 40% considered they had improved their English language skills in New Zealand. Two other significant benefits from time spent in New Zealand were improved knowledge and being more open-minded (30%), as well as the friends they participants had made there, especially those from other countries (25%). Other benefits included improving interpersonal communication and problem solving skills, and becoming more confident.

I made some friends, in particular friends from different countries. I have significantly

improved my interpersonal communication skills. (Participant 17)

The main benefits are...my English has improved a lot...knowledge has improved a lot, and my view has become more open. (Participant 11)

In addition, completing a degree was perceived as the main purpose for most participants studying in New Zealand. All graduates who participated in the interviews considered gaining their New Zealand degrees as one of the main benefits.

4.3.4 Academic Differences and Difficulties

Nine participants (45%) had attained tertiary qualifications in mainland China before coming to New Zealand, three (15%) with bachelor's degrees, and six (30%) diplomas. Eight participants did not complete tertiary qualifications in mainland China, but had studied at Chinese tertiary institutions for at least one year. One participant had studied in a Chinese university less than three months and two had never enrolled at any tertiary institutions in China.

Apart from the three participants who had little experience of learning in Chinese tertiary institutions, interviewees were asked about their views concerning the differences between higher education in New Zealand and China. In general, participants viewed New Zealand higher education more positively than that of China. Over half (9 out of 17) mentioned that students were encouraged to be independent and critical thinkers, and were encouraged to develop and use analytical and problem solving skills in New Zealand tertiary institutions, whereas Chinese higher education was less encouraging of these skills. For Participant 12, who had got his bachelor's degree in China and just completed his masters' degree in New Zealand when the interview was done, his description was illuminating:

In China, lecturers indicated clearly what books you needed, what the textbook was,

lecture notes, and provided everything [in relation to the lectures], which was not cultivating your ability to think independently...The only thing you needed to do was passive learning...But teaching here [in New Zealand] is more enlightening...you need to search for books by yourself and think independently, and there is no exact standard answer...

Other differences were that New Zealand tertiary institutions had more assignments, a more flexible learning environment, and a requirement of students focus on the whole learning process rather than just the final exams. Participant 3, for example, stated:

When I was studying in China, I passed the final exams which means I passed [the paper]...in New Zealand universities, a final result of [a paper] included a general assessment of assignments and final exams, or some small text...If I only focused on final exams, I would fail... (Participant 3)

Furthermore, differences in learning and teaching styles were also noted. Eight participants show their learning in New Zealand depended very much on themselves rather than others. Some of them had positive perceptions of studying independently. Participant 15, who had studied at a Chinese university for one year, indicated that study at a New Zealand university mainly depended on individuals. Her lecturers only provided a general direction and encouraged her to think critically. She thought she had far more space to express her opinions in her assignments in New Zealand than in China. Participant 12 likewise stated that through studying independently, he learnt to have more initiative in learning and think more freely. He could express his views in his assignments without restrictions. Also, participant 4 claimed that her independent learning encouraged her to find something she was really interested in.

Compared with the participants above who perceived independent study positively, some participants found it was a challenge to study independently in a system where the lack of

*guan*¹ from their teachers was apparent. Participant 7 and 17 felt:

The most important thing about studying here is that it depends on self control...self-motivation. In China, lecturers are motivators. Here [in New Zealand], nobody will *guan* you. If you did very badly in your assignment, it is your own problem... (Participant 7)

If you have questions and don't take the initiative to ask lecturers, lecturers will not initiate this communication with you. Except during in-class communication, lecturers will not *guan* you... Learning in New Zealand requires a high level of self control. (Participant 17)

In review of literature in chapter 2, cultural differences contribute to mismatched expectations between teachers and students, and difficulties for students in adaptation in new learning environment. Questions about the learning difficulties associated with studying in New Zealand tertiary institutions were put to participants. It was not surprising that most of them (16 out of 20) noted insufficient English language skills were a major barrier to their study and consequently caused a series of problems:

Language was the main barrier. It determined whether you understood lecturers clearly in the class, whether you understood the requirements of assignments clearly, and whether you could express yourself clearly. (Participant 2)

Furthermore, aspects of language problems in relation to written assignments were commonly mentioned by many participants. Participant 18 said it was difficult to complete an assignment with several thousand words when he had only recently passed his IELTS test and was just started university. Similarly, Participant 3 recalled emotionally his experience of his first written assignment, saying "how could I write

¹ *Guan* (Chinese): The concept of *guan* means "to govern" as well as "to care for" (Chao, 1994).

2000 words in English?” Although Participant 9 had been in New Zealand nearly six years, she saw her inability to “completely break away from a Chinese way of expression” in her English writing as a major difficulty. Participant 4 expressed her feelings about her language problems as apparent in the task of writing. She explained that she thought she had expressed her ideas clearly in her assignments, but her lecturers did not think so.

In addition, a majority of participants (14 out of 20) mentioned they had difficulties in understanding the requirements for assignments, especially in their initial period of studying at their tertiary institutions. They thought the requirements of assignments in New Zealand were quite different from those in China. In particular, the requirements concerning references were perceived as a major problem leading to loss of marks in their assignments. Participant 1, who got his first degree in China and a postgraduate diploma in New Zealand, stated that there was no requirement to reference for most assignments when he studied at a university in China, but it was an important marking criterion at New Zealand universities. Similarly, Participant 4, who completed a diploma in China and was doing her postgraduate studies at a New Zealand university, maintained:

Giving clear indication of reference in assignments is required [in New Zealand], but it was not necessary to do this in China. Although you might need to give indication of reference in some assignments in China, the requirements were not as strict as in New Zealand. This is the main difficulty for me in assignments.

The writing requirements in New Zealand and those in China differed, which caused a major barrier to many participants being unable to complete written assignments. They simply did not know how to write their assignments when starting their university studies in New Zealand. Participant 8 described the most difficult thing in her learning experience:

I didn't know how to do assignments...the writing styles for assignments in China are

different from those in New Zealand. I had no idea even how to start assignments at the beginning of my university studies.

Some participants also mentioned that in the initial period of their New Zealand tertiary studies, they were frustrated by their assignments which required them to investigate some business-related issues in local companies or organisations. They felt “totally lost” and “had no idea about where and how to find” information in the New Zealand context. In order to finish her first assignment, Participant 10 had taken more than two weeks to find an organisation:

I remember my first assignment required me to investigate an issue in an organisation and then write a 2000 word report on the issue ... I had no idea about where and how to find an organisation. Nobody could help me ... I asked many organisations. Some of them were not relevant to my topic; some were not interested in my investigation, and some of them just refused without any explanation ... It was very frustrating.

Moreover, a greater requirement for student oral presentations in New Zealand tertiary classes than in China was perceived by some participants as a significant difficulty. Participant 19, who had been in New Zealand for nearly two years, said:

I am nervous even if I do presentations in Chinese. There were few presentations in Chinese classes, but you have to do them often in New Zealand.

However, participants showed a varied degree of ability and success in overcoming their learning difficulties at New Zealand tertiary institutions. Most participants thought their learning difficulties had diminished with the passage of time, but one participant indicated his problems had persisted and had not been resolved. This person (Participant 1), a graduate who had been studying in New Zealand for nearly four years and planned to return to China, thought problems with language and translating his way of thinking into English were the main difficulties in his learning:

I have not overcome [my learning difficulties] yet, and I think if I keep studying, I still won't overcome them. It is hard to change my way of thinking... maybe because when I came to New Zealand, I was older.

In order to overcome learning difficulties, most participants sought help from academic staff and discussed problems with their classmates and friends, especially Chinese peers. Nearly half the participants indicated they were helped to overcome their learning difficulties by their lecturers and some academic staff who could help international students understand the requirements of their assignments and check their English writing. These staff provided one-to-one tutoring, which was helpful for their studies. Participant 10 noted,

I would ask lecturers if I didn't understand... Later on, I heard from a Chinese friend, there were some tutors who could help us check assignments, and then I went to them often. It was helpful.

Although they thought one-to-one tutoring was helpful, some participants mentioned they did not know that such help was available in the initial period of their studies of university at New Zealand, such as Participant 12 described:

When I started at the university, I didn't know about the student learning centre or [other learning support services]. Nobody told me about these sources and lecturers also did not mention them, maybe because I started with 200 level papers and didn't study any 100 level papers. There was no continuity... I failed two papers, but then I got on right track...

In addition, fourteen per cent of participants sought help from their classmates, and they benefited from discussions with their classmates, in particular Chinese peers. Participant 4, who was still studying, indicated that when she had questions about her assignments she would discuss them with her classmates, especially Chinese. She got

ideas through these discussions. Participant 7 also used this approach:

It was difficult for me in the first year...but in the second year, I tried to initiate communication with classmates, have discussions with them about assignments and exam topics, so I made much better progress in the second year.

Three out of 20 participants reported they did not seek help, working through and solving their problems mainly by themselves. Participant 16, for example, said that the experience of failing a paper taught her how to write assignments. She believed “practice makes perfect” and she had to find the way by herself. The implications of these findings will be considered in chapter 5.

4.3.5 Social Activities and Friendships

A number of questions were used in the interviews to explore aspects of participants’ social experiences. These questions concerned what social activities the participants did in their spare time, and how easy or difficult it was for them to make friends in New Zealand. Responses to these questions could provide a general picture of participants’ social life in New Zealand.

This study shows that most of the participants (75%) had limited social activities, because they spent a lot of time on their studies and engaged in part-time work. Their entertainment mostly centred around their PC: surfing the internet, online chatting, watching DVDs, or playing PC games. The words “monotonous”, “boring”, “plain” or “lonely” were used to describe to their spare time. Participant 12 described the final semester of his postgraduate studies:

I didn’t have any social activities at that time. Everyday, I was reading, writing, then reading and writing again.

Participant 18, who took a part-time job in a supermarket, indicated he had hardly any social life because he had a lot of study pressure, having to spend a great deal of time studying outside the class. Apart from studying, the only other main activity in his life was going to work, because he had to partially financially support himself.

Most of Participant 6's time was spent at his flat, except for when he went to his institution to study. He said he was interested in travelling in the initial period after arriving in New Zealand, but after one year he lost interest in doing this. Now most of his spare time was spent at home watching DVDs and playing PC games.

Compared with the majority of participants who had limited social activities, 35% of participants reported having relatively rich social lives in New Zealand. Some social activities (i.e. those done usually in the company of friends) commonly mentioned were: having dinners, watching movies, going shopping, and taking short trips. Other social activities included joining clubs, churches, or volunteering.

Furthermore, this study also shows 14 out of 20 participants did not join in any community, club, church or voluntary activities in New Zealand. Most of them had a willingness to take part in these, except Participant 5 who did not:

Will it be fun? I don't think so...I'm not interested in it and never think about taking part in [these activities].

A number of participants had a desire or willingness to participate in community, club or church activities or undertake volunteer work in New Zealand. However several factors were perceived as barriers to hinder this. Firstly, there was a lack of information about the activities of communities, clubs, or volunteer organisations. For Participant 17, she had a strong willingness to participate in these activities, but she did not have any information about them. Two other participants were likewise clear in their perceptions:

I don't know about these activities. Nobody told me...I would like to try if there were opportunities...but I don't have any information about them... (Participant 12)

I am very interested in [these activities], but have no idea how to participate...For example, what activities are there at churches or in the communities? Nobody told me. I have no information... (Participant 3)

Secondly, limited time and budget were seen by some participants as constraints on their ability to take part in social activities. Participant 18, for example, stated he was busy with his assignments and part-time job and did not have time to participate in these activities. Thirdly, differences in culture and interests were also barriers, such as for Participant 6, who said that he enjoyed playing and watching football in China, but in New Zealand everybody talked about rugby. He claimed he did not know of any football clubs in Wellington.

Only six out of 20 participants joined in activities in clubs or churches, and community activities, or participated in volunteer work. Participants who did so indicated joining in these activities was significant to them as this helped them to better understand New Zealand culture and adapt to daily life here. They made many new friends, understood the local culture, gained some valuable social and work experiences, and improved their personal abilities through such participation. Participant 14, who joined a club, thought he had more opportunities to communicate with local people in the club and he made many friends through these activities. Participant 8, who joined several clubs and did volunteer work, confirmed:

I got a lot of fun and benefits... met lots of local people and made many new friends...knew what the differences were in daily life between New Zealanders and Chinese...Being a volunteer...people were friendly...I gained some work experiences as well. If there was something you haven't tried before, you have more chances to do this as a volunteer...

Participant 9, who went weekly to a church, said that she met lots of friendly and kind people from different countries through church events and activities. When she needed help, they would give her advice. She felt she had learnt much through this contact that could not be learnt in university classes.

In general, participants did not make many new friends in New Zealand, because of their relatively limited social activities. Some found it relatively easy to make friends in New Zealand, while for others it was very difficult. Three quarters of participants reported they made new friends but not many, and those were mainly originally from China. This group only had a few New Zealand friends or friends from other countries, and those friends were just passing acquaintances. Participant 6, who had been in New Zealand nearly four years, stated he had made some new friends in New Zealand, but 99% of these were Chinese. Likewise, Participant 13 revealed that

I made some new friends [in New Zealand], most of them were Chinese. A few were Kiwis, but the relationships with them were superficial...Maybe because I had limited social activities and I didn't have a lot of opportunities to meet them...

Factors that influenced this group to make friends with other ethnic groups were various. Cultural differences, the lack of shared topics, language difficulties, the lack of opportunity to know local people and people from other countries as well as their own closed personalities were perceived by some participants as the main reasons for the difficulty they experienced in making friends with people from other ethnic or cultural groups.

By contrast, a quarter of participants mentioned they made many friends and that these friends were from various ethnic or cultural groups. They thought making friends in New Zealand was not difficult at all because of their own outgoing nature and willingness to make friends.

4.3.6 Prejudice and Discrimination

All participants agreed that they experienced a varied degree of prejudice and discrimination in New Zealand. The implication of Chinese students' experience of prejudice and discrimination will be further considered in chapter 5. Many participants mentioned they experienced prejudice or discrimination in their work contexts. Participant 7, who worked at a fast food shop, stated:

One day, when I was working, a white man came to the shop. He seemed to be drunk, and shouted at me: "you are just a visitor, you should go back to your place"... Another time, a middle-aged woman ran into the shop, beat the table angrily, and said to me: "Hurry up and make your burgers! You have very bad skin!"

This participant felt distressed at being in such a situation. She thought New Zealand was a very friendly country and had very low level of prejudice and discrimination. She wondered how such things had happened and felt that criticising her skin was a personal attack.

Like Participant 7, other participants received unfair treatment in their work context, but they described prejudice or discrimination from their local supervisors and workmates rather than from customers. They felt their supervisors criticised them more frequently than their local peers, even if they performed at a similar or better level than their local workmates. Participant 5, for example, who worked on the checkout at a supermarket, stated:

When I was working in the supermarket, I had much more work pressure and a higher load than my local workmates...because my supervisor criticised me frequently. In fact, I think my local workmates did not do better than me, but [the supervisor] criticised me only... There were five or six Chinese working there. We all resigned within three months, because all of us felt discriminated against. I was the last one to leave.

Participant 5 also told of an incident which happened in the supermarket. There was a break time, and many staff were in the staffroom. A Chinese supervisor called for someone to come to customer services over the public address system. All local staff in the staffroom laughed at his strong accent and spoke abusively. A Chinese girl, who was in the staffroom, became angry at this and argued with them.

Moreover, some participants felt they did not have fair opportunities when applying for jobs, and their name and ethnicity were barriers to employment. Participants 8 and 20 (both graduates) expressed a strong belief in existence of discrimination in terms of job opportunities:

Many employers would first ask you if you have PR. If you don't have it, basically you will lose chances. (Participant 20)

When you sent your CV to employers, they always asked you whether you were a New Zealander. If you said "No", you would not have any chances...not only would you not have a chance to get the job, you would not even get an interview. (Participant 7)

Participant 12, who had a master's degree, tested the levels of discrimination himself by sending two CVs to the same employer. The content of the two CVs were almost the same, but with different names, one Chinese, and the other English. He received completely different feedback from the two applications. The CV with the English name got offered an interview, whereas the CV with the Chinese name was rejected. He thought this was obvious discrimination. Therefore, he planned to return to China to find a job because he thought there was no opportunity for fair competition for jobs in New Zealand for Chinese international students.

Apart from prejudice and discrimination in the work context, there were some participants who also experienced these in their learning context. They felt that some of

their lecturers disbelieved the ability of Chinese students, or just personally disliked Asian or Chinese students. These lecturers were not friendly and answered their questions perfunctorily. Participant 11 mentioned that when a lecturer put a question to students she wanted to answer the question, but the lecturer would not pick her to answer the question. If this had happened only once or twice, that would have been all right in her view, but when it happened many times, she lost her desire to answer lecturers' questions. Participant 4 also complained:

When New Zealand students asked questions, the lecturers talked a lot about their questions. They were kind and answered them with a smile. However, when Chinese or Asian students asked questions, even if they expressed themselves clearly, the lecturers would answer only briefly without smiles.

Participant 13 shared similar views, stating that some staff at their university spoke with local students in a kind and friendly way, but when faced with Chinese students, they became standoffish.

A quarter of the participants mentioned they suffered from insults, either verbally or through physical gestures, from strangers in New Zealand. Abuse such as "You fucking Chinese!" and "Hey Chinese, go back to your own country!" made the participants feel angry and unsafe in this place.

Furthermore, the New Zealand media, which were perceived as having orchestrated prejudice and discrimination against Chinese, especially Chinese international students, were strongly criticised by six participants. They felt the New Zealand media often exaggerated issues facing Chinese students, such as car accidents and murders. Participant 6 queried why only Chinese students driving without licences and having car accidents were big news, and whether it meant there were no other people driving without licences or having car accidents in New Zealand. If this was not the case, why were the media always focusing on Chinese students. Participant 14's description made a point:

Car accidents or murders could happen anywhere. Why does the New Zealand media focus only on Chinese car accidents or Chinese murders...The “suitcase murder” [which happened in April, 2006] was reported a lot, and some newspapers even used several pages to report it...

These participants believed there were both good people and bad people and that it was not possible to generalise. It was felt that media over-reporting of isolated cases aroused negative attitudes in New Zealanders towards Chinese international students. They believed it was irresponsible to make generalisations to twist the views of the New Zealand general public regarding Chinese students. They wanted the media to report these issues fairly and accurately.

Furthermore, two open questions about suggestions to improve the satisfaction levels of Chinese international students and help them have better experiences in New Zealand were put to participants at the end of the student and parent survey, and the student individual interviews. These suggestions will be discussed in chapter 5 and concluded in chapter 6.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

A summary of perspectives of the Chinese international students about their learning and social experiences in New Zealand and the views of their parents was presented in chapter 4. The findings of this study have revealed that Chinese students' perceptions with their learning and social experiences are complicated and influenced by multiple factors, including the choice of the study destination, aspects of learning and teaching, learning purposes and expectations, socio-cultural adaptation issues, employment prospect, the attitudes of the host institutions and receiving society, and parental expectations.

This chapter will discuss these issues raised in chapter 4 that appear to have influenced significantly of the perceptions of Chinese students regarding their learning and social experiences in New Zealand. This chapter is organised under nine themes:

- Choosing New Zealand as a study destination;
- Paradoxes in teaching and learning styles;
- Insufficient out-of-class support;
- Differing expectations around “guan”;
- Language barriers;
- Lack of social contact;
- Prejudices and discrimination;
- Unappealing employment prospect;
- Parental expectations and concerns.

5.1 Choosing New Zealand as A Study Destination

In understanding Chinese students' learning experiences in New Zealand, it is important to consider how their decision to study overseas was made (Ho et al., 2007). The findings from this study revealed that the decision to study in New Zealand was mainly made by the parents (see Chapter 4.2.1), and most often New Zealand was not the first choice of study destination for the Chinese students (see Chapter 4.3.1). For Chinese students who come to New Zealand due to their parents' decision or for whom New Zealand is not their first choice of study destination, they may not well prepared for reality and be confused about how to learn and live in the New Zealand context, or even feel disappointed and depressed to varying degrees. Participant 20, for example, whose study in New Zealand was arranged by his parents without much of his own view:

I did not have much idea about studying abroad at that time. ... My parents heard that New Zealand was a good place for overseas study from their friends and colleagues who had been to New Zealand or whose children were studying in New Zealand, so they applied for a New Zealand student visa for me. (Participant 20)¹

When these students find the reality of studying in New Zealand is different from their expectation, it would contribute negative perceptions to their experiences and these would tend to affect their low level of satisfaction.

5.2 Paradoxes in Teaching and Learning Styles

Differences in learning and teaching contribute to conflicting expectations between teachers and students from different cultural backgrounds (Li, Baker & Marshall, 2002;

¹ The interview was conducted in Mandarin. The transcripts were translated from Chinese into English. For ethical reasons, all participants were coded with numbers.

Cortazzi & Jin, 1997). The analysis of the Chinese students' perceptions of learning and teaching in New Zealand tertiary institutions show that whilst the Chinese student participants viewed the New Zealand higher education system more positively than that of China, their views on teaching and learning styles in New Zealand tertiary institutions are filled with paradoxes. In Campbell and Li's (in press) view, for Chinese students in New Zealand who span two quite different cultures, the 'reasonable' drawing of comparisons between educational systems will likely lead to paradoxical perspectives. Some paradoxes in the present study, for instance, include that Chinese students thought interactive in-class communication was good, but they did not throw themselves into the interactions, still preferring to seek more out-of-class communication with lecturers (see further discussion in Chapter 5.3). They found that independent learning encouraged them to develop their analysis and problem solving skills and critical thinking, but at the same time they felt a lack of "guan" or care as well as governing on the part of their teachers (see further discussion in Chapter 5.4). They enjoyed flexible learning environments, but they lacked self management skills.

In Campbell and Li's (in press) view, "the negative sides of the paradoxes lowered their level of satisfaction with their learning experiences in New Zealand" (p. 15). Although the contradictions, the inconsistencies, and the puzzles in the paradoxes cannot be eliminated or solved completely, they can, however, be reduced, minimized, understood and managed (Handy, 1994). Hence, Chinese students need to understand that these paradoxes are inevitable, and it would be important to learn to "use the paradoxes to balance contradictions and inconsistencies as an invitation to find a better way" (Handy, 1994, p. 13). For example, a lack of self management skill could be mitigated through seeking help from learning support services or other experienced people to organise an effective study schedule. New Zealand tertiary institutions could play a critical role in assisting Chinese international students to manage these paradoxes in their academic and cultural adaptations, which could improve Chinese students' satisfaction levels of their learning experiences.

5.3 Lack of Out-of-Class Support

As noted in the previous section (Chapter 5.2), in this study, Chinese student participants felt that there was insufficient out-of-class communication with teaching staff. As the data shows, the Chinese students gave mean score of satisfaction with lecturer's availability to help their study outside the class was 2.85 (1=strongly dissatisfied, 5=strongly satisfied), and 36.1% of them (N=86) rated they were dissatisfied or strongly dissatisfied of this. In addition, staff at tertiary institutions were perceived as being largely unavailable to assist with practical issues, e.g. the students perceived staff as available to help with language and communication problems (24.4%, N=86), living arrangements (16.3%, N=86), study difficulties (12.8, N=86). In the same time, staff at tertiary institutions were not seen as sources of social support for emotional needs. From this study, Chinese student participants expected more opportunities to communicate with their teachers beyond the class in order to receive more help with course work and more support from teaching staff at their host educational institutions for personal or general advice. Their need for out-of-class support from their educational institutions derives from cultural differences in pedagogical implementations. Three possible explanations are presented below.

One possible explanation for the perceived lack of out-of-class communication, based on research evidence in this study, is the differences in communication styles in the classroom. Interpersonal communication in New Zealand classrooms is low context (Hall, 1976), where communication styles are direct, and students are encouraged to participate in class discussions and express their ideas verbally (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998), whereas the Chinese classroom is typically high context (Hall, 1976), that is, verbal communication skills are not emphasised. The uneasiness Chinese students often experience in speaking in the class is somewhat a result of heightened concern for relational outcomes (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998). For example, asking 'stupid' questions would result in loss of face, asking questions which other students already know the answers to would waste other students' time, and in particular, speaking in a

second language may not allow the speaker to express themselves clearly. Hence, Chinese students prefer to ask lecturers questions outside the classroom through one-to-one communication rather than exposing themselves in front of their peers.

In addition, teacher-student interpersonal relationship is hierarchical in traditional Chinese culture, where teachers are perceived as givers and students as receivers who are not expected to contradict the teacher (Ching, 1992). The Chinese classroom is described as teacher-dominated with passive students passively receiving knowledge (Mok, Chik, Ko, Kwan, Lo, Marton, Ng, Pang, Runesson & Szeto, 2001). Although some researchers have argued that this is the stereotype of Chinese or Asian classrooms (e.g. Kennedy, 2002; Littlewood, 2000), disturbing the teacher's presentation or arguing with them in the classroom is still perceived as more or less impolite. Thus if Chinese students have questions, they may prefer asking after the class rather than interrupting the teacher's presentation.

The perceived lack of support for Chinese international students' personal or general needs by their host educational institutions may be related to Chinese students' perceptions of the teacher's role. New Zealand teachers are expected to give academic instruction but not necessarily take responsibility for students' moral well-being. Students' personal and family problems are not regarded as their responsibility (Biggs & Watkins, 2001). New Zealand teachers focus on inside rather than outside classroom interactions (Biggs & Watkins, 2001). They are usually not available after working hours, because they tend to see their professional responsibility as ending after working hours (Ho, 2001). However, the role of Chinese teachers is perceived very differently. The primary role of a teacher is to transmit knowledge and educate students in morals (Zhang, 2006), which means, Chinese teachers not only have responsibility for students' academic performance, but also have the moral responsibility to instil and discipline the right behaviours in students in the classroom and guide them in daily life (Ho, 2001). Chinese teachers focus on both formal interactions in the classroom and informal interactions outside the classroom. A Chinese teacher sees inside and outside the

classroom contexts as “requiring a different responsibility, with a different style of interaction” (Biggs & Watkins, 2001, p. 282). Therefore, in Chinese students’ mind, communicating with teachers outside the classroom for advice on personal or general issues is reasonable and desirable.

5.4 Differing Expectations Around “Guan”

Generally, the findings in this study show that the Chinese students positively viewed the independent learning fostered in New Zealand higher education. In particular, independent learning developed their critical thinking and problem solving skills. At the same time, however, they felt a lack of *guan* or care for or supervision on the part their lecturers, such as Participant 7, who indicated her perception of independent learning in New Zealand:

The most important thing about studying here is that it depends on self control...self-motivation... In China, lecturers are motivators. Here [in New Zealand], nobody will *guan* you. If you did very badly in your assignment, it is your own problem...²

In Chinese tertiary institutions, if a student fails an assignment or an exam, teachers usually talk with the student and find out reasons of the failure. But this does not usually happen in New Zealand tertiary institutions. As mentioned in chapter 5.3, this difference may arise from the different perceptions of the teachers’ role in New Zealand and China. Chinese teachers usually take responsibility for students academic performance as well as their moral well-being (Biggs & Watkins, 2001), but New Zealand teachers are usually only responsible for giving students academic instruction. Therefore, compared with

² * The interview was conducted in Mandarin. The transcripts were translated from Chinese into English. For ethical reasons, all participants were coded with numbers.

Chinese teachers, New Zealand teachers seem to lack *guan* with respect to their students.

In many Chinese students' minds, the teacher is someone who can be trusted and is a person they can depend on. This is especially important for most Chinese international students who leave their family members and close friends to study in a new country. In this case, staff members at host educational institutions would be an important source of learning and social support for them. For instance, some participants mentioned they not only needed academic instruction, but also general or personal advice from staff at their tertiary institutions, for example, with regard to tenancy contracts, issues concerning law, or 'after-hour' support.

Furthermore, the findings from the parent survey show that the parents also expected New Zealand tertiary institutions to *guan* with respect to Chinese international students in varied aspects. For example, Parent 8 commented on accommodation management for Chinese international students:

New Zealand tertiary institutions should consider providing accommodation in hostels with safe, high-quality services and reasonable rates to international students to avoid their renting outside the institution. This would facilitate institutions to *guan* international students. (Parent 8)³

In China, tertiary institutions usually provide accommodation for all students within or near the campuses. Most students live together in institution hostels. Institutions usually employ administrators to manage institution hostels, maintain standards and keep all students living safely. However, the situation concerning student accommodation is different in New Zealand. According to the New Zealand Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (New Zealand Ministry of

³ The questionnaire was presented and answered in Chinese. The transcripts were translated from Chinese into English. For ethical reasons, all participants were coded with numbers.

Education, 2003), the code focuses on students under the age of 18, and it may well be that the parents' expectations go somewhat beyond the provisions of the Code.

Compared with the New Zealand Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2003), it seems that some Chinese international students and their parents require more given the importance placed on *guan* than New Zealand teachers and educational institutions are probably providing.

5.5 Language Barriers

Early cross-cultural research findings have shown that English language difficulties are a major challenge for Asian international students who study in New Zealand (Lin & Yi, 1997; Mills, 1997; Campbell & Li, 2006; Merwood, 2007). In addition, Asian students from non-English speaking backgrounds (e.g. the P.R. of China) are generally less fluent English speakers than Asian students from English-speaking backgrounds, such as Singapore and the Philippines (Brebner, 2005). This study confirms these findings with Chinese international students perceiving language barriers as one of the main factors impacting on their adaptation to tertiary studies in New Zealand.

This study reveals that although international students must pass the IELTS test, before they can begin tertiary study, in the case of Chinese students, passing the IELTS test does not necessarily mean they have met the language requirements for New Zealand tertiary studies. The Chinese students found that language barriers were a major problem affecting their tertiary study performance, preventing them from actively participating in class discussions actively, effectively communicating with teaching staff and other non-Chinese students effectively, expressing ideas, completing written assignments, doing oral presentations, using logical arguments, and socialising with local students. The IELTS test requires compositions consisting of a few hundred words, whereas written assignments at university require thousands of words, which is a significant leap

for them. Therefore, for many Chinese students first embarking on tertiary study, English language skills, in particular writing skills, become a huge obstacle, thus ongoing English language studies are perceived as necessary.

5.6 Lack of Social Contact

The findings of this study demonstrated the Chinese international students generally interacted with Chinese peers and other international students significantly more than with local students and residents. This confirms the previous research that “international students typically interact significantly more with overseas than local people” (Mak & Neil, 2006, p. 125). Although many of them have a higher level of willingness to interact with locals, various factors (e.g. cultural differences, personal or social disposition) impact on these interactions. Social contact between international students and locals are positively related to academic, social and psychological outcomes for international students (Ward, 2001; Mak & Neil, 2006). The results show that the participants who had a relatively rich social life tended to more actively join in community, club, or volunteer work, and made more new friends, especially friends from other ethnic or cultural groups. A lack of interaction with locals by Chinese international students could result in their “missing out on opportunity to learn vital sociocultural skills and practise their foreign language skills” (Furnham & Bochner, 1982, p. 163).

It is apparent from this study that many Chinese international students have very limited social activities in New Zealand, which is consistent with the findings of Ho et al.’s (2007) study. “Monotonous”, “boring”, “plain” or “lonely” were used by Chinese students to describe their spare time in the current study. Several possible reasons, as the data suggests, caused this limitation. Firstly, many Chinese students have a lot of study pressure (both self-imposed and from their parents). They have to spend a great deal of time outside the classroom maintaining their academic performance, which results in less time being available to join in social activities. Participant 12 as an example, who

described his final semester of his postgraduate studies that: “I didn’t have any social activities at that time. Everyday, I was either reading for or writing my research report”.

In addition, engaging in part-time work takes most Chinese students’ spare time and energy. Most of the Chinese international students’ part-time jobs were physical in nature. After hours of study plus nearly 20 hours of physical part-time jobs, they did not have extra energy to take part in other social activities, even if they wanted to.

Lack of information is another contributing factor. A number of Chinese students had a strong willingness to join in social activities but felt they lacked information about these. Some participants stated that they simply did not know when, where, and how to join in the activities of communities, clubs, or volunteer organisations. A bad cycle occurred to the Chinese students, the less social activities they joined, the less information they would receive, and vice versa.

Last but not least, research evidence suggests that language and cultural differences are another intrinsic factor leading Chinese students to prefer to stay home or to socialise exclusively with peers from their own culture rather than with local people. Chinese students and host students did not have shared interests that could have brought them together.

5.7 Prejudice and Discrimination

Chinese student participants experienced a varied degree of prejudice and discrimination in New Zealand. Two possible reasons could explain this phenomenon. One is that certain ethnic groups are more discriminated against than others (Wilson, Gahlout, Liu & Mouly, 2005; Campbell & Li, 2007). The other is that Chinese students leave their home country and live in a completely new environment, causing them to feel everything around them more closely and become more sensitised.

This study has revealed that prejudice and discrimination are much more strongly reflected in the work context than in the learning context. This finding is in line with Ward & Masgoret's finding that

More than half of the international students reported that they had never experienced discrimination from teachers, administrative or support staff at their institutions or from other international students. This proportion dropped, however, when reference was made to New Zealand students and people in the wider community (2004, p. 58).

Generally, the student participants who had part-time jobs said they were not satisfied with their working environments and felt that they experienced unfair treatment at work. Some respondents found they did not have fair opportunities when applying for jobs in New Zealand, especially new graduates applying for full-time jobs. This is consistent with previous findings that ethnicity influences selection decisions, and that Asian applicants, especially Chinese, are disadvantaged in New Zealand work settings (Wilson, Gahlout, Liu & Mouly, 2005). Chinese international students spend a number of years in New Zealand to gain their qualifications, often studying courses in a New Zealand context. It can be assumed that a proportion of these Chinese graduates will want to gain experience and apply their knowledge in this context.

Furthermore, the New Zealand mass media exhibit more negative than positive attitudes to Chinese international students which have promoted a negative public image of Chinese students in New Zealand (Li, 2007a). Current research data supports the view that New Zealand mass media often exaggerates negative issues in relation to Chinese international students such as bad driving, gambling or crime. Negative media reports have tarnished the image of the majority of hardworking Chinese students. In fact, there are statistically about 40,000 Chinese students in New Zealand, and most of them are hardworking and responsible students, but there is little media representation of them (Li, 2007a). According to Li (2007a), "the news reports cover only isolated events or cases that often fail to accurately reflect the reality of the large body of the student population"

(p. 24). The finding from the current study suggests that New Zealand mass media play an important role in shaping the general public perceptions of Chinese international students. Many Chinese international students are aware of and indeed somewhat sensitised to the media biases.

5.8 Unappealing Employment Prospect

The current study shows that the changing environments in both New Zealand and China have impacted on many Chinese international students' decision making. Many participants' original plan was to gain a New Zealand qualification and then return to China to find a job. However, they had to change their original plans during the course of their studies. Not only did they want to gain New Zealand qualification, they also wanted to gain practical work experience in New Zealand and, if possible, permanent residency.

Although many participants changed their plans during their studies, they still felt confused about their future life because they struggled with a dilemma. On the one hand, Chinese students will face great competition amongst domestic and returned Chinese students in Chinese job markets when they complete their studies and return home. In recent years, more and more Chinese international students are returning to China to seek job opportunities after completing their overseas studies. These returned students with tertiary qualifications from the United States and the United Kingdom are perceived as having more competitive advantages than students with New Zealand qualifications. In the minds of many Chinese, New Zealand has a reputation as a low cost education provider and it is easier to obtain a student visa there. Compared to the United States and the United Kingdom, its universities are perceived as lower quality (Li, 2004, cited in Ma & Abbott, 2006). Thus, the fact that New Zealand qualifications no longer offer the competitive advantages they were once thought to, has left many graduates feeling that the prospect of returning to China with a qualification but without suitable work

experience is not an attractive one. Also, they have been away from home for a number of years, so their life style and their way of thinking have changed to a great extent, which has caused them to feel uncertain about their ability to re-adapt to the life in China.

On the other hand, even through many of them changed their plans to include working in New Zealand, the fact is that finding a good job is extremely difficult for new international graduates who speak English as a second language and lack New Zealand work experience. Given that employment discrimination against particular ethnic groups exists in New Zealand, Chinese applicants are particularly disadvantaged in the work context (Wilson, Gahlout, Liu & Mouly, 2005). In addition, based on participants' views, it could be argued that adaptation by Chinese international graduates to mainstream New Zealand society is a major issue, even if they have already been studied and lived in New Zealand for several years. This dilemma might also offer a possible explanation as to why a majority of Chinese student participants questioned the value of their education in New Zealand in terms of the money they had spent on it.

5.9 Parental Expectations and Concerns

Ward and Masgoret's (2004) study shows that Asian international students in New Zealand are more influenced by parents than other international students because of their traditional values. More recently, Ho et al.'s (2007) interviews of Chinese international students in New Zealand indicated that many Chinese students' idea to study abroad originated from their parents. Through surveying Chinese students' parents, this study confirms that a big proportion of the students' overseas education is mainly influenced by their parents. Whether the students would stay in New Zealand or return to China after completing their studies is also influenced by their parents.

In the Chinese social system, the family is the centre of political, educational, financial, and recreational functions (Hsu, 1985). Individuals are under the continuous influence

of the family from their birth (Hsu, 1985). Thus one of the common characteristics of traditional Chinese culture is the emphasis on the parent-child bond (Tseng & Wu, 1985), and obviously Chinese parents play an important role in their children's lives. Children are encouraged to be close to their parents through sharing common and social activities (Wu, 1985). In this study, most Chinese international students have financial support from their parents along with strong parental expectations. Most parents in this study expected their children to work in New Zealand or apply for New Zealand permanent residency. This desire was more evident in the parents than in students themselves. As the data show in the student interviews, many students' expectations to have a job in New Zealand or apply for New Zealand permanent residency were influenced by their parents' expectations or regards for their parents' perceptions.

Having suitable New Zealand work experience and permanent residency is related to gain or loss of face for Chinese students themselves and their parents. In the Chinese culture, gaining or losing face is not only related to the individual, but is also strongly connected with the status of the family (King & Bond, 1985). The Chinese public has many negative views about Chinese international students (Li, 2007a). If they go back to China without suitable work experience in the host country, it somehow means you are not able to stay in that country and have to return home, and that your knowledge and abilities are discredited. Bringing an overseas qualification back home without work experience overseas could also be considered a loss of face. In contrast, gaining suitable work experience in the host country or gaining permanent residency would be perceived as clear proof of students' success, which would make it much easier for them to find a decent job on their return to China and gain face for Chinese students and their parents.

Chinese students' expectations to have a job in New Zealand or apply for New Zealand permanent residency are related to 'xiao'. The meaning of 'xiao' (hsiao or filial piety) in Chinese society is generally threefold: "to have gratitude for the care given by one's parents, to respect and love parents, and to be considerate and attentive to parents' desires" (Li, 1985, p. 85). In this study, some students mentioned that they wanted to

give something in return for the money their parents had spent on their education through finding a good job in New Zealand or gaining New Zealand permanent residency. A majority of Chinese international students are from ordinary families. Their parents spend most of their savings to support their studies overseas. If they find a good job in New Zealand or gain New Zealand permanent residency, it means they can provide a better life for their parents and their parents can travel to New Zealand more freely if they want to. In addition, some students are influenced by their parents' view that study overseas means having opportunities to change their lives. New Zealand is widely perceived as a good, safe place with beautiful scenery and more freedom to live as one wants. Thus many parents expect their children to stay in New Zealand to have a better life.



CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to investigate the perceptions of Chinese international students in relation to their learning and social experiences during their time studying at New Zealand tertiary institutions. The results of this study show that Chinese international tertiary students perceived their learning and social experiences both positively and negatively. Chinese students' low level of satisfaction was related to their relatively negative perceptions of their experiences inside and outside of university. Multiple factors were identified, such as differences in cultural values, learning and teaching styles, and prejudice and discrimination which influenced their views on their experiences. In particular, this study demonstrated that that many Chinese students' decisions to study in New Zealand were strongly influenced by their parents and that the parents' perceptions and expectations had a significant influence upon Chinese students' views and perceptions of their learning and social experiences and future plans in New Zealand.

This chapter summarises the key findings from this study. It also presents suggestions by both student and parent participants to help Chinese international students have a better learning and social experiences in New Zealand. Then it offers recommendations to New Zealand tertiary intuitions, Chinese international students and those of their parents, and the Chinese embassy in New Zealand separately. Finally, a discussion of the limitations of this study and the implications for future research are considered.

6.1 Key Findings

This study revealed that most often New Zealand was not the first choice of study destination for Chinese students. There were many factors contributing to Chinese students' choice of a study destination, such as agencies, parents, entry requirements, IELTS requirement, the visa policy, and opportunities to immigrate. Parents play a critical role in decision-making for their children to study in New Zealand.

Obtaining a university degree was the main purpose of study in New Zealand for a large majority of the Chinese students. Associated with this main purpose were other purposes, including improving English skills, experiencing different cultures and lifestyles, becoming more independent, making friends with local students and people from other cultures, getting some overseas work experience, and so forth. Apart from gaining a New Zealand qualification as the main benefit, both the parents and Chinese students perceived Chinese students becoming much more independent as one of the important achievements of those coming to study in New Zealand. From the parent survey, over half the parents considered the prospect of their children gaining their independence as the primary motivator for them to send their children to New Zealand.

Chinese international students were satisfied with their programmes and lecturers' teaching competence but, in their view, New Zealand academic staff lacked cross-cultural knowledge and sensitivity to understand international students' academic needs and assumed seemingly little responsibility to take care of international students. Another important issue that emerged from this study was Chinese student dissatisfaction with out-of-class support from their teachers and host institutions.

They gave high ratings to library, computing and learning support services in their tertiary institutions, whereas they gave low ratings to the services of student associations, catering, accommodation and career guidance. Some services (e.g. financial advice and

student orientation) were virtually unknown to Chinese student participants, while some services were thought by some to be inapplicable to them (e.g. sport facilities, accommodation, medical health, and career guidance).

In addition, differences in learning and teaching styles and difficulties in adapting to New Zealand tertiary studies were also noted in this study. In general, Chinese students perceived New Zealand higher education more positively than that of China, but difficulties in adapting to different learning and teaching styles resulted in paradoxical views. Moreover, English barriers were perceived as one of the main difficulties for Chinese students in tertiary studies, which indicate that although international students must pass the IELTS test, before they can begin tertiary study, in the case of Chinese students, passing the IELTS test does not necessarily mean they are actually ready to face the challenges of studying in a foreign, English language tertiary environment. Another especial difficulty regarding learning and teaching is that some Chinese students were frustrated by their assignments which required them to approach local companies or organisation in their initial period of their New Zealand tertiary studies.

This study also reflected Chinese students' lack of social contacts and experienced difficulties in making friends in New Zealand, and in particular they had more difficulty making friends with local students than with other international students. Also, other international students were the most important source of social support in New Zealand both for the Chinese students' emotional and practical needs. Apart from other international students in New Zealand, Chinese students' parents were an important source of social support for emotional needs. In contrast, staff at tertiary institutions were not seen as an available source of social support for Chinese students' emotional needs. Be that as it may, Chinese students seemed to expect more support from staff at tertiary institutions in both respects.

Most Chinese students strongly expected to gain suitable work experiences in New Zealand, even through this was often not part of their original plan. Because of

increasing competition in the Chinese job market and the diminished desirability and competitiveness of New Zealand qualifications, a majority of Chinese international students did not relish the prospect of returning to China with a qualification but without work experience. They expected to be able to apply the academic knowledge they had learnt in the local (New Zealand) context. In addition, the findings showed that parents had a stronger desire for their children to gain work experience and permanent residency than Chinese students themselves. This desire indeed influenced the perceptions of Chinese international students for their future plans in New Zealand.

Chinese students experienced prejudice and discrimination in both university and workplaces contexts to varying degrees. Prejudice and discrimination in the workplace were perceived to be more evident than in the learning context, and were thought to be prevalent in the whole of New Zealand society. In addition, the New Zealand media, which were perceived as having orchestrated prejudice and discrimination, especially against Chinese international students, were strongly criticised by some participants. It was this apparent prejudice and discrimination both inside and outside of university that made Chinese students feel that staying in New Zealand was unsafe and unappealing, and this was also considered to be an important contributing factor to Chinese students' low levels of satisfaction with their experiences.

Furthermore, the results of this research revealed that male students generally perceived their learning and social experiences more positively than female students. Graduates had a minor tendency to be more satisfied than current students with their learning and social experiences. This study, however, did not specifically discuss the effect of gender, and current students or graduates status on Chinese students' perceptions of their experiences in New Zealand.

6.2 Suggestions and Recommendations

6.2.1 Suggestions by Participants

Questions asking how to improve the satisfaction levels of Chinese international students and help them have better experiences in New Zealand were put to both student and parent participants.

Five factors were commonly mentioned by student participants:

- English language courses or more activities to improve English language skills for non-English speaking students in tertiary institutions.
- More international student support in tertiary institutions, especially outside the class or after hours support. Some participants stated that very limited class hours could not meet their needs for communication with their lecturers. In addition to learning support they need more personal and social support from their tertiary institutions.
- More communication opportunities between local students and international students at tertiary institutions.
- Better and wider knowledge or information about different cultures and countries shown by teaching staff at tertiary institutions, especially those who teach international students. For example, Participant 4 related her personal experience of this:

In some teachers' minds, China is still a very poor country...Once a lecturer asked in the class: "Are there any McDonald's in China?"...Another time, a Chinese classmate did a presentation showing some pictures of Chinese luxury hotels. The lecturer was surprised: "Is this in China?"...I felt they knew nothing about China.

- It is not reasonable to increase tuition fees during a programme of study.

The school fees stated on the institution offer letter should be the same as when the student finishes their studies. Many international students have limited education budgets, so an increase in fees midway causes students financial problems, and some even have to break off their study. (Interview 1)

Increases in school fees were irresponsible with regard to international students and would damage the relationship between institutions and students. (Survey 3)

Six factors were commonly mentioned by parent participants:

- Better care and supervision by the Chinese Embassy in New Zealand.

I hope the Chinese Embassy will set up an international student administration section to help and supervise Chinese international students. They should provide better guidance and services for Chinese students, and provide opportunities for interaction and communication among Chinese international students. (Parent 13)

The Chinese Embassy should help Chinese students in practical terms, instead of just creating senseless formalities and empty slogans. The Chinese Embassy should provide information on policy changes in China to Chinese international students in time so that when they graduate and return home they can adapt quickly. (Parent 7)

- More organised involvement of international students by host educational institutions in academic activities, visits, or exchanges between different New Zealand universities within and outside New Zealand.
- More provision of job opportunities (internship) by host educational institutions for Chinese students so that they can apply learning to practices in New Zealand.

- Provision by host educational institutions of safe accommodation near to the institution, offering high-quality services, reasonable rates, and giving priority to female student applications.
- Consistency and stability in New Zealand government policy decisions with respect to international students
- Considerable benefits New Zealand receives from such large numbers of Chinese international students should be reciprocated in as great a sense of responsibility to protect, and take care of them.

6.2.2 Recommendations to Tertiary Educational Institutions

1. New Zealand tertiary institutions need to consider providing cross-cultural communication training to their staff to develop cultural awareness and sensitivity towards international students. It would help to understand international students' needs and adopt appropriate approaches to teaching, management and servicing, and provide international students with adequate support and pastoral care.
2. New Zealand tertiary institutions need to consider developing more language learning support for Chinese international students, and extend this to all non-English speaking international students, to give them opportunities to continue studying and improving their English language competence under professional guidance.
3. The design of programmes and courses needs to consider international students' situations. It is not realistic to expect undergraduate students, especially first year students to go into New Zealand companies or organisation in order to conduct investigations.
4. Some tertiary institutions central agency such as the International Student Office

should take a leading role in organising social activities to help international students in adaptation to New Zealand society and provide opportunities to help international students mingle with both local students and other international students.

5. Academic staff at tertiary institutions need to be aware that teaching international students requires professional knowledge not only in terms of their academic discipline, but also possession of wider knowledge or information about different cultures and countries. If academics lack knowledge or information about their students' countries and cultures, they may not understand the learning needs of their students, and thus may not be able to properly facilitate their studies.

6.2.3 Recommendations to Chinese International Students

6. Chinese international students need to prepare themselves better for reality when they are learning in the New Zealand context.

7. Chinese international students should understand that the purpose of study in New Zealand is to experience New Zealand cultures, the educational system, including teaching and learning styles. Consequently, Chinese students need to adapt to the New Zealand tertiary education system rather than waiting for host educational institutions the system to adapt to them.

8. Although passing IELTS is an entry requirement of host tertiary institutions, Chinese students need to be aware that getting good marks in IELTS does not mean having the capability to perform well in tertiary studies in the host environment. Thus, when studying the English language, Chinese students need to focus on language skills rather than merely exam techniques for passing IELTS.

6.2.4 Recommendations to Chinese Parents

9. Chinese parents should realise there are significant differences between New Zealand and China in relation to learning and social contexts. Some parents' expectations of New Zealand tertiary institutions are not realistic for the New Zealand context. As an important source of social support for Chinese international students, the better Chinese parents understand their children's learning and social situations, the more likely it is that Chinese students will have better learning experiences in New Zealand.

6.2.5 Recommendations to the Chinese Embassy in New Zealand

10. The Chinese Embassy in New Zealand needs to consider organising social activities to help Chinese students in adapting to the New Zealand cultures, providing opportunities for interaction and communication between Chinese international students and host communities as well as other international students in New Zealand.

11. The Chinese Embassy in New Zealand also needs to consider providing up-to-date information regarding policy changes in China and guidance to Chinese graduates who want to return to China for employment.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

As described in chapter 3.6, the constraints of the research design include the non-random sampling, the way of administering questionnaires to collect the data, the researcher effect, and the problems associated with translating participants' responses from Chinese to English.

Non-random sampling was applied in this study. For reasons of time constraint and budget, all interviews in this study were conducted in Wellington. Most student participants in the survey section were also from Wellington, so the results may not be

representative of Chinese tertiary students across New Zealand.

Due to the challenges involved in gathering data, the sample size of this study was relatively small: student survey (N=86), student interviews (N=20), and parent survey (N=21). If a larger number were involved in this study, the data would be more convincing. However, the sampling size is less important than representativeness (Burns, 2000).

Another limitation concerned the translation of participant responses from Chinese to English. All questionnaires were presented and responded to in Chinese and all interviews were conducted in Mandarin. Although it is possible that the researcher misrepresented some interviewees' opinions when translating, the researcher translated the notes within a short period after an interview in order to maintain as far as possible consistency in terms of the content and tone of the conversation, since the researcher's memory of this was fresh. In addition, the researcher listened to each recorded conversation several times and the translation was double-checked to ensure consistency with the original conversations. The final translations were also examined by an English language teacher as well as one of the researcher's supervisors who is a native Chinese speaker and familiar with English.

Social desirability bias is the tendency for participant to answer questions in socially desirable ways (Furnham, 1986). In this study, some social desirability biases were possibly present in the responses of both the Chinese students and their parents. This may affect the representation of the results.

Furthermore, due to the researcher's insufficient research experience, some questions put to participants may have been unclear in some respects. The researcher was aware of these limitations of the research design and learnt a great deal regarding the research process of doing this study.

6.4 Future Research

As indicated in chapter 3.3, data collection for student participants was based on two instruments: questionnaires and semi-structured individual interviews, whilst data collection for parent participants was only based on the survey questionnaire. Future research may investigate the perceptions of Chinese international students and their parents in relation to learning and social experiences in New Zealand by using more in-depth, probing methods for data collection. For example, parent individual interviews, separate student and parent group discussions, and mixed student and parent group discussion would provide richer data than that used in the present study.

The present study found that female students generally felt less satisfied with their experiences in New Zealand tertiary institutions and seemed to experience more difficulties than male students. It is suggested that future research explore the special factors contributing to female students' lower levels of satisfaction and seek to understand more about the needs of female Chinese international students.

In addition, Chinese graduates had a minor tendency to be more satisfied than current students in aspects of learning and teaching. Future research might focus on understanding the reasons of this difference between Chinese graduates and current students.

Given the finding that Chinese parents had a stronger desire for their children to gain New Zealand work experiences and permanent residency than do Chinese international students themselves, it is advisable that a further study be undertaken to find out the reasons for this desire and the effect it has on Chinese international students.

This study explored Chinese international students' experiences of prejudice and discrimination both inside and outside their tertiary institutions in New Zealand. However, prejudice and discrimination in the workplace context were perceived to be

more evident than in the learning context. Further research should consider investigating the experiences of Chinese international students in the New Zealand workplace to discover the reasons why many Chinese students feel that they are subject to considerable prejudice and discrimination in their work situations.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The Advertisement

English Version

CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR LEARNING AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCES IN NEW ZEALAND

ADVERTISEMENT

I am a Chinese international student doing a Masters' degree at Massey University, Wellington. I am currently undertaking a research project into how Chinese international students perceive their learning and social experience in New Zealand. The purpose of my project is to conduct an in-depth study of the perceptions of Chinese international students in relation to their learning and social experiences. My research includes two approaches: a survey and an interview. According to participants' preferences, they can participate in either the survey or both.

If you are a Chinese international student who is studying or has studied at any New Zealand tertiary institution for more than three months, you are most welcome to participate in my project. Also, I would like to invite your parents to participate in this research project. It is my belief that we all have some stories to share. It is my intention to draw on the experiences of Chinese international students in New Zealand and to identify the challenges they face. All information you provide in my study will be treated with strict confidentiality. I would appreciate it if you could share your stories with me. Please contact me if you are interested in my study.

Looking forward to your participation!

Name: Yi YANG
Phone: + 64 021-161-9099
Email: endofoct@gmail.com

Chinese Version

中国留学生对他们在新西兰的学习和社会经历的看法

招募广告

我是一名中国留学生，现于梅西大学惠灵顿校区读研究生。目前我正在做一篇关于中国留学生怎样感受他们在新西兰的学习和生活经历的论文。该论文的目的是对中国留学生对他们在新西兰的学习和生活经历的看法进行一个深入的调查和研究。我的调查通过两种方式进行：问卷和采访。根据参与者的喜好，他们可以只参与问卷调查部分或者两部分都参加。

如果你是一名现就读或曾就读于新西兰任何一所高校三个月以上的中国留学生，你就是我最期待的参与者。另外，我也真诚地邀请你的家长来参与这项调查。我相信同为留学生的我们都有很多故事可以分享。这篇论文是为了呈显中国国际留学生在新西兰的经历和他们所面临的挑战。你在这次调查中提供的所有信息将被严格地保密。如果你愿意和我分享你的故事，我将不胜感激。如果你对调查感兴趣请与我联系。

期待您的参与！

姓名： 杨己
电话： + 64 021-161-9099
电邮： endofoct@gmail.com

Appendix 2: Information Sheet for Student Survey

English Version

INFORMATION SHEET FOR STUDENT SURVEY

Dear Participants

I am a postgraduate student doing a research project for my Master's thesis, supervised by Dr Mingsheng Li and Associate Professor Frank Sligo from the Department of Communication and Journalism of Massey University, Wellington. I would like to invite you to participate in this research. This project consists of two stages: a survey and an interview. This information sheet is only for the students' survey section of this study.

Researcher's Introduction

Details of the researcher:

Name: Yi YANG
 Phone: + 64 021-161-9099
 Email: endofoct@gmail.com
 Current Studies: Master of Management

Details of supervisors:

Dr Mingsheng Li	A/Prof F. X. Sligo
PO Box 756, Wellington, New Zealand	PO Box 756, Wellington, New Zealand
Phone: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6433	Phone: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6395
Email: M.S.Li@massey.ac.nz	Email: F.Sligo@massey.ac.nz

Purposes of the Project

The purpose of the project is to explore the perceptions of Chinese international tertiary students in relation to their learning and social experiences in New Zealand as well as the views of their parents for understanding Chinese students' learning and social needs, and to improve their level of satisfaction with their experiences in New Zealand.

Participant Recruitment

A minimum number of 60 Chinese international students and 20 parents of these students comprising approximately equal numbers of males and females will be invited to

participate in this research. All participants will be surveyed and 20 of the Chinese international student participants will be interviewed.

There are two criteria for the selection of student participants: (1) you are from mainland China and you will have spent most of your life to date living in China; (2) you are currently studying or have studied at any New Zealand tertiary institution for more than three months. If you meet these two criteria, you are most welcome to participate in this research study.

In addition, I would like to invite your parents to participate in this research project. If you would like your parents to participate in this study, please provide me with their contact details and I will send them the Information Sheet for this research and a hard copy of the questionnaire with self-addressed prepaid envelopes so they will be able to complete and return the questionnaire.

If you would like to participate in the interview, you are welcome to email or telephone to me. Please refer to my email address and the phone numbers provided at the top of this information sheet. I also would like to invite you to visit the webpage <http://kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/> to get more detailed information about the interview.

Project Procedures

The data for the survey will be collected and analysed by the researcher. The results and findings of analysing form part of a thesis which may be published in an academic publication and also might be used for future research.

Your identity and your answers will be treated in strictest confidence and the data you provided will be stored in a secure place. Any identifying characteristics of you or your institution will not be disclosed in any of the written reports produced in the course of the research.

Participant Involvement

If you would like to participate in this survey, it will take you around 10-15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Depending on your preference, both the electronic and hard copies of the questionnaire are available. If you prefer a hard copy of the questionnaire, please refer to my email address and the phone numbers provided at the top of this information sheet. I will send the hard copy questionnaire with self-addressed prepaid envelopes so you can return the questionnaire without your name being identified by the researcher. If you prefer an electronic questionnaire, please visit <http://kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/> to download it. You can send the questionnaire as an attachment though this webpage without your name or email address being identified by the researcher.

Participant's Rights

Completion and return of the questionnaire implies your consent. You have the right to decline to answer any particular question. A summary of results will be mailed to you after the data is analysed, if you request it.

Project Contact

If you have any queries about the project, please feel free to contact me or the supervisors. The contact details are listed on the first page of this information sheet.

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 07/06. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x 6929, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz.

Chinese Version

学生问卷调查说明书

我是一名研究生，为了完成硕士论文正在做一项研究调查。该论文是由新西兰梅西大学沟通管理与新闻学院的黎明生博士和 Frank Sligo 副教授指导的。我诚挚地邀请您参与这项调查。这个项目包括两个阶段：问卷调查和采访调查。您看到的这份说明只是为学生问卷调查提供的。

研究人员介绍

研究者详情：

姓名：杨己
电话：+ 64 021-161-9099
电邮：endofoct@gmail.com
目前就读：管理学硕士

导师详情：

黎明生博士	F. X. Sligo 副教授
PO Box 756, 惠灵顿, 新西兰	PO Box 756, 惠灵顿, 新西兰
电话: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6433	电话: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6395
电邮: M.S.Li@massey.ac.nz	电邮: F.Sligo@massey.ac.nz

研究目的

研究该课题的目的是：通过探究中国留学生对他们在新西兰学习和生活经历的看法，以及他们父母的看法，了解中国留学生的学习和生活需要，从而提高他们在新西兰留学的满意度。

参与者的招募

至少 60 名男女各半的学生和 20 名父母会被邀请参与到这个调查中来。所有的参与者都将进行问卷调查，并且会对 20 名中国留学生进行采访。

此项调查的参与者须满足两个条件：第一、您是中国公民并且大多数时间都在中国生活；第二、您现在在新西兰的任何一所高校学习或您曾在新西兰任何一所高校学习过，且时间超过三个月。如果您满足以前两个条件，欢迎您参与这项调查。

此外，我也想邀请您的父母参与。如果您愿意您的父母也参与此项调查，请把他们的联系方式提供给我，我将把介绍说明书、问卷以及预付费和添好收件人地址的信封寄给他们，以便他们填写后寄回。

如果您愿意参加现场采访部分的调查，您可以通过电子邮件或电话联系我。关于我的邮件地址和电话号码，您可以参考本文的开头部分。此外，请您关注网页 <http://kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/> 了解关于现场采访的更多信息。

调查的步骤

参与课题研究者会搜集和分析调查数据，研究结果和发现将会成为公开发表的学术论文的组成部分，或作为以后研究的基础。

您的身份和隐私会严格的保密，该项课题不会泄露您的姓名，您的资料也会被存放在安全的地方。任何可能会透露您和您所在学校的信息将不会出现在该研究的任何报告中。

参与者的注意事项

如果您愿意参加到调查中来，您大约会花费 10-15 分钟的时间来完成这个调查问卷。根据您的需要，我会提供书面的问卷和电子格式的问卷。如果您需要书面的问卷，请在本文开头部分查阅我的地址和电话号码。我会给您邮寄问卷和预付的邮资以便您寄回的时候避免泄露您的身份和姓名。如果您需要电子格式的问卷，请访问网页 <http://kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/> 并下载。您可以以不含邮件地址和您的身份的附件，把完成的问卷发回。

参与者的权利

完成和发回问卷将视为对我的该项调查的认可。您可以拒绝回答任何您不愿意回答的问题。调查结果分析出来以后，如果你希望知道，我将寄给你。

课题的联系方式

如果您对我的研究课题有任何疑问，欢迎您联系我或我的导师。联系方式可以在本文第一页查询。

委员会的正式批准声明

这个课题已经被梅西大学人类道德委员会：Southern B，申请 07/06 审核和认可。如果您有任何关于这项研究的顾虑，请与梅西大学人类道德委员会：Southern B 主席，Karl Pajo 博士联系。电话：04 801 5799 x 6929，电邮：humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz。

Appendix 3: Information Sheet for Parent Survey

English Version

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENT SURVEY

Dear Participants

I am a postgraduate student doing a research project for my Master's thesis, supervised by Dr Mingsheng Li and Associate Professor Frank Sligo from the Department of Communication and Journalism of Massey University, Wellington. Your child has participated in the students' survey section of this research and he/she has provided your postal address as a potential participant of this research. I would like to invite you to participate in this research.

Researcher's Introduction

Details of the researcher:

Name: Yi YANG
 Phone: + 64 021-161-9099
 Email: endofoct@gmail.com
 Current Studies: Master of Management

Details of supervisors:

Dr Mingsheng Li	A/Prof F. X. Sligo
PO Box 756, Wellington, New Zealand	PO Box 756, Wellington, New Zealand
Phone: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6433	Phone: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6395
Email: M.S.Li@massey.ac.nz	Email: F.Sligo@massey.ac.nz

Purposes of the Project

The purpose of the project is to explore the perceptions of Chinese international tertiary students in relation to their learning and social experiences in New Zealand as well as the views of their parents for understanding Chinese students' learning and social needs, and to improve their level of satisfaction with their experiences in New Zealand.

Participant Recruitment

A minimum number of 20 parents will be recruited to participate in this study, all on their child's recommendation.

Participant Involvement

If you would like to participate in this survey, it will take you around 10 minutes to complete this questionnaire. When you complete the questionnaire, please put it in the self-addressed prepaid envelope provided and return it through the post. It will be returned directly to the researcher and your identity will be kept as strictly confidential.

Project Procedures

The data for the survey will be collected and analysed by the researcher. The results and findings form part of a thesis which may be published in an academic publication and also might be used for future research.

Your identity and your answers will be treated in strictest confidence and the data you provided will be stored in a secure place. Any identifying characteristics of you and your children's institutions will not be disclosed in any of the written reports produced in the course of the research.

Participant's Rights

Completion and return of the questionnaire implies your consent. You have the right to decline to answer any particular question. A summary of results will be mailed to you after the data is analysed, if you request it.

Project Contact

If you have any queries about the project, please feel free to contact me or the supervisors. The contact details are listed on the first page of this information sheet. Also, the electronic copy of this information sheet is available on the webpage <http://kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/>.

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 07/06. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x 6929, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz.

Chinese Version

家长问卷调查说明书

我是一名研究生，为了完成硕士论文正在做一项研究调查。该论文是由新西兰梅西大学沟通管理与新闻学院的黎明生博士和 Frank Sligo 副教授指导的。您的孩子已经参与了该项调查的学生部分，他/她给我提供了您的邮政地址，您已作为该项调查的潜在参与者。

研究人员介绍

研究者详情：

姓名：杨己
 电话：+ 64 021-161-9099
 电邮：endofoct@gmail.com
 目前学习：管理学硕士

导师详情：

黎明生博士
 PO Box 756, 惠灵顿, 新西兰
 电话: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6433
 电邮: M.S.Li@massey.ac.nz

F. X. Sligo 副教授
 PO Box 756, 惠灵顿, 新西兰
 电话: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6395
 电邮: F.Sligo@massey.ac.nz

研究目的

研究该课题的目的是：通过探究中国留学生对他们在新西兰学习和生活经历的看法，以及他们父母的看法，了解中国留学生的学习和生活需要，从而提高他们在新西兰留学的满意度。

参与者的招募

至少二十名家长将被招募参与该调查，所有的家长都将是他们的孩子推荐参与的。

调查的步骤

参与课题研究者会搜集和分析调查数据，研究结果和发现将会成为公开发表的学术论文的组成部分，或作为以后研究的基础。

您的身份和隐私会严格的保密，该项课题不会泄露您的姓名，您的资料也会被存放在安全的地方。任何可能会透露您和您孩子所在学校的信息将不会出现在该研究的任何报告中。

参与者的注意事项

如果您愿意参加到调查中来，您大约会花费 10 分钟的时间来完成这个调查问卷。根据您的需要，我会提供书面的问卷和电子格式的问卷。如果您需要书面的问卷，请在本文开头部分查阅我的地址和电话号码。我会给您邮寄问卷和预付的邮资以便您寄回的时候避免泄露您的身份和姓名。如果您需要电子格式的问卷，请访问站点 <http://kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/> 并下载。您可以以不含邮件地址和您的身份的附件将完成的问卷发回。

参与者的权利

完成和发回问卷将视为对我的该项调查的认可。您可以拒绝回答任何您不愿意回答的问题。调查结果分析出来以后，如果你希望知道，我将寄给您。

课题的联系方式

如果您对我的研究课题有任何疑问，欢迎您联系我或我的导师。联系方式可以在本文第一页查询。同时，本文电子格式的文件也可以在网页 <http://kiwiviki.co.nz:8080/>上找到。

委员会的正式批准声明

这个课题已经被梅西大学人类道德委员会：Southern B，申请 07/06 审核和认可。如果您有任何关于这项研究的顾虑，请与梅西大学人类道德委员会：Southern B 主席，Karl Pajo 博士联系。电话：04 801 5799 x 6929，电邮：humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz。

Appendix 4: Information Sheet for Interviews

English Version

INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEWS

Dear Participants

I am a postgraduate student doing a research project for my Master's thesis, supervised by Dr Mingsheng Li and Associate Professor Frank Sligo from the Department of Communication and Journalism of Massey University, Wellington. This study consists of two parts: a survey and an interview. This information sheet is only for the interview part of this study.

Researcher's Introduction

Details of the researcher:

Name: Yi YANG
 Phone: + 64 021-161-9099
 Email: endofoct@gmail.com
 Current Studies: Master of Management

Details of supervisors:

Dr Mingsheng Li	A/Prof F. X. Sligo
PO Box 756, Wellington, New Zealand	PO Box 756, Wellington, New Zealand
Phone: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6433	Phone: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6395
Email: M.S.Li@massey.ac.nz	Email: F.Sligo@massey.ac.nz

Purposes of the Project

The purpose of the project is to explore the perceptions of Chinese international tertiary students in relation to their learning and social experiences in New Zealand as well as the views of their parents for understanding Chinese students' learning and social needs, and to improve their level of satisfaction with their experiences in New Zealand.

Participant Recruitment

Twenty Chinese international students will be recruited on the basis of "First 10 males and first 10 females".

If you have already participated in the survey for this research, you are most welcome to participate in the interview part. The selection criterion is any student who has participated in the study's survey and whose location is Wellington.

Project Procedures

All information you provide in the interview will be collected and analysed by the researcher. The results and findings will form part of a thesis which may be published in an academic journal and also may be used for future research.

Your identity and your answers will be treated in strictest confidence and the data you provided will be stored in a secure place. Any identifying characteristics of you or your institutions will not be disclosed in any written report produced in the course of the research.

Participant Involvement

If you would like to participate, the interview lasts around 30 minutes. An interview schedule will be sent to you one week before the interview, taking into account your preference. The individual interview will be carried out face-to-face and will be audio-taped if you agree.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Withdraw from the study at any stage;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you
- Give permission to the researcher;
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;
- Ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

In addition, if you wish to edit the tape transcripts, I will send it to you and you can edit it as you please. If you are interested in knowing the research findings you can leave your email or postal address and I will send you a summary of the project findings when this study is finished.

Project Contact

If you have any queries about the project, please feel free to contact me or the supervisors. The contact details are listed on the first page of this information sheet. Also, the

electronic copy of this information sheet is available on the webpage <http://kiwiwiki.co.nz:8080/>.

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 07/06. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x 6929, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz.

Chinese Version

学生采访说明书

我是一名研究生，为了完成硕士论文正在做一项研究调查。该论文是由新西兰梅西大学沟通管理与新闻学院的黎明生博士和 Frank Sligo 副教授指导的。您看到的这份文本只是为采访调查提供的。

研究人员介绍

研究者详情：

姓名：杨己
 电话：+ 64 021-161-9099
 电邮：endofoct@gmail.com
 目前学习：管理学硕士

导师详情：

黎明生博士
 PO Box 756, 惠灵顿, 新西兰
 电话: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6433
 电邮: M.S.Li@massey.ac.nz

F. X. Sligo 副教授
 PO Box 756, 惠灵顿, 新西兰
 电话: +64 4 801 5799 ext 6395
 电邮: F.Sligo@massey.ac.nz

研究目的

研究该课题的目的是：通过探究中国留学生对他们在新西兰学习和生活经历的看法，以及他们父母的看法，了解中国留学生的学习和生活需要，从而提高他们在新西兰留学的满意度。

参与者的招募

二十名中国留学生将被招募参加采访部分，基于“男女各半”的原则。

如果您已经参与了该课题的问卷调查部分，您自然地就成为受邀请的采访部分的参与者。参与采访部分需要满足的条件是：任何参与了该课题问卷调查部分的学生参与者，以及现在在惠灵顿。

调查的步骤

参与课题研究者会搜集和分析调查数据，研究结果和发现将会成为公开发表的学术论文的组成部分，或作为以后研究的基础。

您的身份和隐私会严格的保密，该项课题不会泄露您的姓名，您的资料也会被存放在安全的地方。任何可能会透露您和您所在学校的信息将不会出现在该研究的任何报告中。

参与者的注意事项

如果您愿意参与此访问，大约会花费您 30 分钟的时间。考虑到您的方便，访问的时间表会提前一周寄给您。个人访问会通过面对面进行。如果您同意，谈话内容将被录音。

参与者的权力

您没有义务接受邀请参与这个课题。如果您决定参与，您有以下权力：

- 1、拒绝回答任一特殊的问题；
- 2、退出这项研究在任何阶段；
- 3、在参与期间的任何时候提出任何关于这项研究的问题；
- 4、明白您的姓名将不被使用除非研究者得到您的许可；
- 5、在课题完成后，被准许得到课题的研究结果；
- 6、在接受采访期间，在任何时候要求关掉录音。

另外，如果您愿意编辑录音对话，我会将它寄给您让您修改。如果您对我的课题发现有兴趣您可以留下您的邮件或者邮政地址，我会在课题结束时讲课题发现的摘要寄给您。

课题的联系方式

如果您对我的研究课题有任何疑问，欢迎您联系我或我的导师。联系方式可以在本文第一页查询。同时，本文电子格式的文件也可以在和网页 <http://kiwiviki.co.nz:8080/>上找到。

委员会的正式批准声明

这个课题已经被梅西大学人类道德委员会：Southern B，申请 07/06 审核和认可。如果您有任何关于这项研究的顾虑，请与梅西大学人类道德委员会：Southern B 主席，Karl Pajo 博士联系。电话：04 801 5799 x 6929，电邮：humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz。

Appendix 5: Participant Consent Form

English Version

CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR LEARNING AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCES IN NEW ZEALAND

CONSENT FORM

(This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years)

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to interview being audio taped.

I wish/do not wish to have my tapes returned to me.

I wish/do not wish to edit the transcripts.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Full Name – printed _____

Chinese Version

中国留学生对他们在新西兰的学习和社会经历的看法

参与者同意书

(这份同意书将被保存五年)

我已经阅读了介绍说明书，并详细了解了这项研究。我的疑问都已得到了满意的答复，并且我明白我可以任何时候问任何更进一步的问题。

我同意/不同意在采访中的对话被录音。

我希望/不希望把录音磁带给我。

我希望/不希望编辑记录。

在介绍说明书中所提到的情况下，我同意参与这项研究。

签名： _____ 日期： _____
规范书写的全名： _____

Appendix 6: Questionnaire for Student Participants

English Version

A Survey of Chinese International Students' Perceptions of Their Learning and Social Experiences in New Zealand

July 2007

(Questionnaire for Student Participant)

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey. To answer most questions in the survey questionnaire below, please indicate your views by circling a number on each of the following questions or statements. In some questions, you are asked to tick (✓) the box next to your answer/s, or write your answer in the space provided. If any particular item does not apply to you, please write "Not Applicable", or if any particular item you do not know about it, please write "Don't know".

Please note that all information you provide in this questionnaire will be treated with strict confidentiality.

If you have any questions about this study or you are interested in knowing the research findings, please contact the researcher Yi Yang on + 64 021-161-9099 or by email at endofoct@gmail.com

Section I: Background Information

1. Age: _____ years

2. Gender:

₁Male

₂Female

3. In which city in China were you born?

4. Before coming to New Zealand, what was your highest level of education?

₁Certificate

₂Diploma

₃Bachelor' s degree

₄Master's degree

₅PhD degree

₆Other

5. How long have you been/ were you in New Zealand?

_____ year/s and _____ month/s

6. At present, in which city in New Zealand/China are you studying or living?

New Zealand _____ City

China _____ City

7. What qualification are you studying for/ What the highest qualification have you completed or partly completed in New Zealand?

₁Certificate

₂Diploma

₃Bachelor' s degree

₄Master's degree

₅PhD degree

₆None

₇Other (please specify): _____

8. What is/was your main field or subject of study in New Zealand?

9. Are/Were you a mainly part-time or full-time student?

₁Part-time

₂Full-time

10. Who mainly pays/paid for your education in New Zealand?

₁Parents

₂Yourself

₃Husband/Wife

₄Other family members

₅Scholarship

₆Other awards

₇Your government

₈Your employer

₉Loan

₁₀Other (please specify): _____

Section II: Learning and Social Experiences

A Teaching Related Factors

Please show your opinion by circling the number on each of the following questions (circle ONE only).

1=Strongly Dissatisfied 2=Dissatisfied 3= Moderately Satisfied 4=Satisfied 5=Strongly Satisfied

Overall, how satisfied are/were you with ...

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | ...the quality of the content of your programmes? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | ...the structure of your programmes? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | ...the international applicability of programmes? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | ...the ability of your lecturers to inspire and motivate international students? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | ...the ability of your lecturers to explain concepts? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | ...the preparation of your lecturers for each class session? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | ...your lecturers' understanding of the academic needs of Chinese international students? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | ...your lecturers' encouragement of international students' participation in discussion in class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | ...the efforts of your lecturers to help international students? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | ...your lecturers' sense of responsibility for international students? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | ...your lecturers' availability to help you in your study outside the class? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | ...the teaching styles of your lecturers? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. | ...the clarity and usefulness of the feedback from your lecturers? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | ...the assessment procedures? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | ...the fairness of the marking criteria for assessment? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

B Learning Contexts

Please show your opinion by circling the number on each of the following questions (circle ONE only).

1=Strongly Dissatisfied 2=Dissatisfied 3= Moderately Satisfied 4=Satisfied 5=Strongly Satisfied

Overall, how satisfied are/were you with ...

1...the size of the class in your courses?	1	2	3	4	5
2...the helpfulness of local students?	1	2	3	4	5
3...the helpfulness of other international students?	1	2	3	4	5
4...the online support for your studies?	1	2	3	4	5

C Services at Your Institution

Please rate the following items by circling the number on each of the following questions (circle ONE only). If any particular item does not apply to you, please write "Not Applicable". If any particular item you do not know, please write "Don't know".

1=Very poor 2=Poor 3=Average 4=Good 5=Very good

1. Learning support services	1	2	3	4	5
2. Language skills support	1	2	3	4	5
3. Computing services	1	2	3	4	5
4. Library services	1	2	3	4	5
5. The services of the International Student Office	1	2	3	4	5
6. Student associations	1	2	3	4	5
7. Student orientation services	1	2	3	4	5
8. Career guidance	1	2	3	4	5
9. Counselling services	1	2	3	4	5
10. Accommodation services	1	2	3	4	5
11. Sporting facilities	1	2	3	4	5
12. Medical health services	1	2	3	4	5
13. Financial advice services	1	2	3	4	5
14. Catering services	1	2	3	4	5
15. The overall quality of the services at your institution	1	2	3	4	5

D Social Experiences

Please show your opinion by circling the number on each of the following questions (circle ONE only).

1=Not at all difficult 2=A little difficult 3=Neutral 4= Difficult 5=Very difficult

1. How difficult has it been/was it for you to make friends with kiwis? 1 2 3 4 5

2. How difficult has it been/was it for you to make friends with other international students in NZ? 1 2 3 4 5

1=Strongly Dissatisfied 2=Dissatisfied 3= Moderately Satisfied 4=Satisfied 5=Strongly Satisfied

Overall, how satisfied are/were you with...

3...the local information services? 1 2 3 4 5

4...the local medical health services? 1 2 3 4 5

5...your accommodation during study in the tertiary institution? 1 2 3 4 5

E Sources of Social Support

Please tick as many boxes as applicable for each type of activity.

Who is/are the sources of help or support that are available to help you in New Zealand for each activity listed below?

	Staff at your institution	Kiwi friends	Inter-national students	People from clubs or the community	Parents	Other people in your home county	Others
1. Talk with you if you have difficulties in study.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
2. Discuss relationship issues or concerns with you.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
3. Comfort you when you are lonely or homesick.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
4. Help you with language or communication problems.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
5. Provide information and counselling about sexual health issues.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
6. Help you with your living arrangements.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
7. Help you if you are sick.....	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

Chinese Version

中国留学生在新西兰的学习和社会经历 学生问卷调查

感谢您同意参与这项调查。在回答如下问卷时，请在答案旁的方框内打勾(✓)，在能代表您答案的数字上画圈，或在给出的空白处填上您的答案。如果您不愿意回答其中的某些问题，请不作任何符号。如果有某些问题您未涉及到，请在空白处写上：“未涉及”。如果您不知道某些条目，请在空白处写上：“不知道”。

请注意，在该问卷中您提供的所有信息将被严格保密。此外，该问卷的参与者包括：新西兰高校的在读学生和已经毕业于新西兰高校的学生，所以个别问题用“/”分开，请根据您的具体情况回答相应的内容。

如果您对此项调查有任何疑问，或者您有兴趣知道此项调查的研究结果，请与研究人员杨已联系，电话：0064-21-161-9099；或者发送邮件至 endofoct@gmail.com。

11. 您曾申请过新西兰永久居住权吗?

- ₁ 申请过 ₂ 没申请过

如果没申请过, 您计划申请新西兰永久居住权吗?

- ₁ 计划申请 ₂ 不计划申请 ₃ 不确定

12. 您认为花钱在新西兰接受教育是物有所值吗?

- ₁ 值得 ₂ 不值得 ₃ 不确定

13. 您有多大可能性会推荐朋友或家人来新西兰学习?

- ₁ 不可能 ₂ 有一点可能 ₃ 可能 ₄ 很可能 ₅ 极其可能

如果您现在就读于新西兰高校, 请回答问题 14; 如果您已经毕业, 但仍在新西兰居留, 请回答问题 15; 如果您已毕业, 但已经回国, 请回答问题 16.

在读生:

14. (1) 您在目前就读的学校已有多长时间了?

_____ 年、 _____ 月

(2) 从现在开始, 您计划在新西兰呆多久?

- ₁ <1 年 ₂ 1-2 年 ₃ 3-4 年 ₄ >4 年 ₅ 不确定

在新西兰的毕业生:

15. (1) 从现在开始, 您计划在新西兰呆多久?

- ₁ <1 年 ₂ 1-2 年 ₃ 3-4 年 ₄ >4 年 ₅ 不确定

(2) 您已经在工作了, 还是处在找工作阶段?

- ₁ 在工作 ₂ 找工作 ₃ 都不是

已回中国的毕业生:

16. (1) 您已回国多久了?

_____ 年、 _____ 月

(2) 您已经在工作了, 还是处在找工作阶段?

- ₁ 在工作 ₂ 找工作 ₃ 都不是

第二部分： 学习和社会经历

一、教学方面

请您对以下内容发表您的看法。每项后面都有五个选择，请把您认为能代表您观点的数字圈上（只圈一个选择）。

1=很不满意 2=不满意 3=基本满意 4=满意 5=很满意

总体来讲，您对如下条目的满意程度是？

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. 课程内容的质量 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. 课程结构 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. 课程的国际实用性 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. 教师启发和鼓励学生的能力 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. 教师对理论概念解释的能力 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. 教师对每堂课的准备情况 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. 教师对中国留学生学习需要的了解程度 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. 教师鼓励国际学生参与课堂讨论的积极性 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. 教师对帮助国际学生所做出的努力 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. 教师对国际学生在教学上的责任感 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. 教师在课外可以给您提供学习上的帮助的机会 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. 教师的教学方式 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. 教师作出的作业评论清楚易懂程度 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. 评估的程序 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. 评估标准的公平性 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

二、学习环境方面

请您对以下内容发表您的看法。每项后面都有五个选择，请把您认为能代表您观点的数字圈上（只圈一个选择）。

1=很不满意 2=不满意 3=基本满意 4=满意 5=很满意

总体来讲，您对如下条目的满意程度是？

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. 您选的课程每一堂课的上课人数 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. 您所在学校的当地学生给予您的帮助 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. 您所在学校的其他国际学生给予您的帮助 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. 您所在学校提供在学习上的网络在线设施 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

三、学校服务方面

请给您所在的学校的的服务评等级，每项后面都有五个选择，请把您认为能代表您观点的数字圈上（只圈一个选择）。在下面列出的服务项目中，如果有任何服务项目您没有涉及到，请在旁边的空白处写上“未涉及”。如果您不知道您所在的学校有某项服务，请在空白处写上“不知道”。

1=非常糟糕	2=糟糕	3=一般	4=好	5=很好
1. 学习支持服务				1 2 3 4 5
2. 语言技能支持				1 2 3 4 5
3. 计算机与网络服务				1 2 3 4 5
4. 图书馆及相关服务				1 2 3 4 5
5. 留学生办公室的服务				1 2 3 4 5
6. 学生会、社团组织等				1 2 3 4 5
7. 学生定向服务				1 2 3 4 5
8. 职业指导				1 2 3 4 5
9. 咨询服务				1 2 3 4 5
10. 住宿服务				1 2 3 4 5
11. 运动健身设施				1 2 3 4 5
12. 医疗健康服务				1 2 3 4 5
13. 财务建议咨询服务				1 2 3 4 5
14. 餐饮服务				1 2 3 4 5
15. 总体服务				1 2 3 4 5

四、社会经历

请您对以下问题发表您的看法。每项后面都有五个选择，请把您认为能代表您观点的数字圈上（只圈一个选择）。

1=不困难	2=有一点困难	3=一般	4=比较困难	5=很困难
1. 和新西兰人交朋友，对您来说有多困难？				1 2 3 4 5
2. 和其他留学生交朋友，对您来说有多困难？				1 2 3 4 5

1=很不满意	2=不满意	3=基本满意	4=满意	5=很满意
1. 您对使用当地的信息服务是否满意？				1 2 3 4 5
2. 您对校外的医疗健康服务是否满意？				1 2 3 4 5
3. 您对您在新西兰高校读书期间的住宿是否满意？				1 2 3 4 5

五. 社会支持

请根据下面的问题回答，并在相关的答案下面的方框内打勾（多选）。

在下面列表的行为里，在新西兰谁能够给您提供帮助和支持？

	您所 在学 校的 职员	新西兰 朋友 (当地 人)	其他 留学 生	俱乐 部或 社团 成员	父母	在国 内的 其他 友人	其 他 人
1. 在学习上遇到麻烦事时谈心……	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
2. 讨论交友或交往方面的问题……	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
3. 缓解您的孤独感或思乡情绪……	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
4. 帮助您解决语言和交流问题……	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
5. 当您生病时给您提供帮助……	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
6. 提供有关性保健和生育知识……	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
7. 帮助您安排在新西兰的生活……	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

Appendix 7: Questionnaire for Parent Participants

English Version

A Survey of Chinese International Students' Perceptions of Their Learning and Social Experiences in New Zealand

July 2007

(Questionnaire for Parent Participants)

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey. There are three parts in this questionnaire. Please answer as many questions as you can. All information you provide in this questionnaire will be treated with strict confidentiality.

If you have any questions about this study or you are interested in knowing the research findings, please contact the researcher Yi Yang on +64 021-161-9099, or by email at endofoct@gmail.com.

Section I:

A. Please write your answer in the space provided or tick (✓) the box next to your answer/s.

1. Does your child in New Zealand or China?

- New Zealand China

2. How long has your child been in, or was in NZ?

- < 1 year 1-2 year/s 2-3 years
 5-6 years > 6 years

3. Is your child's education in NZ mainly paid by you?

- Yes No

4. Who made the decision for your child to study in NZ?

5. Please put in rank order these factors as motivators for your support of your child in study in NZ. (1=the most important motivator)

- The quality of education The living environment
 Independence The cost
 Without IELTS Relatives and/or other family members in NZ
 Safe Other (*Please specify*): _____

6. Did you visit NZ while your child was studying there?

- Yes No

If 'Yes', how many times did you visit New Zealand? _____

7. What is the academic qualification you expected your child to get in New Zealand?

- Certificate Diploma Bachelor's degree
 Master's degree PhD degree None
 Other (*Please specify*): _____

B. Please show your opinion by circling the number on each of the following questions (circle ONE only).

1. How satisfied are you with your child's academic performance in NZ?

very low satisfaction 1 2 3 4 5 very high satisfaction

2. How satisfied are you with your child's overall experience in NZ?

very low satisfaction 1 2 3 4 5 very high satisfaction

3. Do you think New Zealand education for your child is good value for money?

very low value for money 1 2 3 4 5 very good value for money

4. Do you regret having sent your child to study in New Zealand?

no regrets at all 1 2 3 4 5 very major regrets

5. Did you want your child to apply for NZ permanent residency (PR)?

very little wish for this 1 2 3 4 5 very major wish for this

6. Did you want your child to look for a job in NZ, when they finished their study?

very little wish for this 1 2 3 4 5 very major wish for this

7. How likely are you to recommend your friends' or family members' children to study in NZ?

not at all likely 1 2 3 4 5 very likely

C. Please show your opinion from 1 to 5 in response to the following questions

Not at all =1 2 3 4 5= *Very much*

1. How often did your child talk with you they have difficulties in their study? 1 2 3 4 5

2. How often did your child turn to you for help or support regarding their relationship issues or concerns when in NZ? 1 2 3 4 5

3. How often did your child turn to you for help or support or comfort when they are/were lonely or homesick when in NZ? 1 2 3 4 5

4. How often did your child turn to you for help or support with language or communication problems when in NZ? 1 2 3 4 5

5. How often did your child turn to you for help or support when they were sick when in NZ? 1 2 3 4 5

6. How often did your child turn to you for help or support about sexual health or reproduction issues when in NZ? 1 2 3 4 5

7. How often did your child turn to you for help or support with their living arrangements when in NZ? 1 2 3 4 5

D. Please show your opinion by circling the number on each of the following statements (circle ONE only).

1=Strongly
disagree

2=Disagree

3=Neutral

4=Agree

5=Strongly
agree

1. Your child often speaks positively about their learning experience in New Zealand. 1 2 3 4 5
2. Your child often speaks positively about their social experience in New Zealand. 1 2 3 4 5
3. Your child has made/ made a big progress in their study in New Zealand, in comparison to their study in China. 1 2 3 4 5
4. Your child has become/became more independent in their life when in New Zealand. 1 2 3 4 5
5. You allow your child make decisions on their education by themselves when in New Zealand. 1 2 3 4 5

Section II: Suggestions

1. What recommendations do you have for the New Zealand tertiary institution to improve its services to Chinese international students to help them have better learning and social experiences?

2. Do you have any other recommendations or comments?

Section III: Background Information

1. Age: _____ years

2. Gender:

Male

Female

3. Current country of residence:

Chinese

Other (Please specify): _____

4. What is your occupation? _____

5. What is your educational level?

Primary

Secondary

Tertiary

Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire!

Chinese Version

中国留学生在新西兰的学习和社会经历
家长问卷调查

2007年7月

感谢您参与此问卷调查活动，本问卷分为三个部分，请尽可能回答您能回答的问题。
请注意，您在此问卷中所提供的一切信息都将会受到严格的保密。

如果您对此项调查有任何疑问，或者您有兴趣知道此项调查的研究结果，请与研究人员
杨已联系，电话：0064-21-161-9099；或者发送邮件至 endofoct@gmail.com。

第一部分:

一、请在您答案前的方框内打勾或在给出的空白处填上您的答案。如果您不愿意回答其中的某些问题，请不作任何符号。

1. 您的孩子目前在新西兰还是中国?

- ₁ 新西兰 ₂ 中国

2. 您的孩子已经在或者曾经在新西兰生活了多长时间?

- < 1年 1-2年 2-3年
 5-6年 > 6年

3. 您承担了孩子在新西兰学习期间的主要费用吗?

- ₁ 是 ₂ 不是

4. 请问是谁决定将您孩子送至新西兰学习的?

- ₁ 孩子父母 ₂ 孩子本人
₃ 亲属 ₄ 其他人

5. 请把下面这些促使您支持孩子到新西兰学习的原因按重要性排列后，在方框内填上相应数字：（1为最重要，2、3……依次减弱）。

- ₁ 教育质量 ₂ 生活居住环境
₃ 独立生存能力 ₄ 留学费用
₅ 不需要雅思成绩 ₆ 有亲戚或者其他家庭成员在新西兰
₇ 安全 ₈ 其他原因（请注明）： _____

6. 请问您的孩子在新西兰求学期间，您去看过孩子吗?

- ₁ 去过 ₂ 没有去过

如果回答“去过”，请问你去过几次? _____

7. 请问您期望您的孩子在新西兰获得的最高学历是什么?

- ₁ 技能证书 ₂ 专科文凭 ₃ 学士学位
₄ 硕士学位 ₄ 博士学位
₆ 其他（请注明）： _____

二、请您对以下问题发表您的看法。每项后面都有五个选择，请把您认为能代表您观点的数字圈上（只圈一个选择）。数字 1 到 5 代表的程度，逐渐增加。

1、您对孩子在新西兰的学业成绩表现的满意程度？

很不满意 1 2 3 4 5 非常的满意

2、您对孩子在新西兰的留学经历总体的满意程度是？

很不满意 1 2 3 4 5 非常满意

3、请问您认为花钱让孩子在新西兰接受教育是否值得？

一点都不值得 1 2 3 4 5 非常值得

4、您是否对把孩子送往新西兰留学感到后悔？

一点都不后悔 1 2 3 4 5 非常后悔

5、您是否希望自己的孩子申请新西兰的永久居住权？

不希望 1 2 3 4 5 非常期望

6、您是否期望你的孩子在完成了学业之后留在新西兰工作？

不希望 1 2 3 4 5 非常希望

7、您在多大程度上会建议您的朋友或者其他家庭成员的孩子去新西兰留学？

不会建议 1 2 3 4 5 会强烈建议

三、请您对以下问题发表您的看法。每项后面都有五个选择，请把您认为能代表您观点的数字圈上（只圈一个选择）。

1=从不 2=很少 3=偶尔 4=经常 5=很频繁

您的孩子在新西兰期间：

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1、会常向你谈论学习上遇到的困难吗？ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2、会常因为人际关系问题向您寻求支持和帮助吗？ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3、会常因为孤独或者想家而向您寻求支持、帮助和安慰吗？ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4、会常因为生病而向您寻求帮助吗？ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5、会因为性健康向您寻求帮助吗？ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6、会因为个人生活居住安排方面的问题向您寻求帮助吗？ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7、会因为语言或者与他人的交流方面的问题向您寻求帮助吗？ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

四、请您对以下各句的观点发表您的看法。每项后面都有五个选择，请把您认为能代表您观点的数字圈上（只圈一个选择）。

1=完全不同意 2=不同意 3=中立 4=赞同 5=非常赞同

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1、您的孩子经常谈论在新西兰学习经历的积极面。 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2、您的孩子经常谈论在新西兰生活经理的积极面。 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3、与在中国相比，您的孩子在新西兰时学业上取得了很大的进步。 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4、您的孩子在新西兰求学期间变得比以前更加独立了。 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5、当您的孩子在新西兰求学期间，您允许他们在学业上自己做出决定。 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

第三部分:基本信息

1. 年龄 _____ 周岁

2. 性别

₁ 男

₂ 女

3. 目前居住的国家

₁ 中国

₂ 其他国家(请注明): _____

4. 您的职业是? _____

5. 您的教育水平

₁ 小学

₂ 初中

₃ 高中

₄ 大学及其以上

₅ 其他: _____

感谢您的参与!

Appendix 8: Interview Guide

English Version

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Background information

1. Are you: a current student a graduate
2. Age: _____ years
3. Gender: Male Female
4. In which city in China were you born? _____
5. How long have you been in NZ?

<input type="checkbox"/> < 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 year/s	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 years
<input type="checkbox"/> 5-6 years	<input type="checkbox"/> > 6 years	
6. Was New Zealand your first choice to study? Why? Yes No
7. Is/Was your education in NZ supported financially by your parents? Yes No

Learning experiences

- What are/were the main benefits of studying in NZ in your experience?
- In your view, what are the main differences between the NZ and the Chinese tertiary education systems? Could you give me some examples? How have these differences affected/did these differences affect your learning?
- Have you experienced difficulties in adapting to academic life at your institution? How have/did you overcome these difficulties?
- What were your learning expectations? Have your learning expectations been fulfilled/Were your learning expectation fulfilled in NZ? Why or Why not?
- Overall, how satisfied are you with your tertiary studies in NZ?

Social experiences

- Have you made many new friends in NZ? What is their ethnic composition? How easy or difficult has it been for you to make friends in NZ?
- Do/Did you belong to or attend any clubs or associations? Do/Did you do any voluntary work?
- Could you please tell me what social activities you have in your spare time?
- Have you personally experienced any sign of prejudice or discrimination in NZ? If yes, please give details of the occasion(s)?

Purpose, plans, or expectations

- What were your purposes of coming to study in NZ?
- (Current students :) Have you ever considered staying in New Zealand after graduation? Why?
- (Graduates :) You are: Working? Looking for a job? Or plan to return to China soon? What factors affect to your current states?
- If you were given a choice, would you choose to study in NZ? Why or why not?

Other

- Are you doing what you had planned before you came to NZ? If no, what has changed? Why?
- Do you have any other comments on how to improve the level of satisfaction of Chinese international students experience in NZ?

Chinese Version

采访问题

基本信息

1. 您是： 在读生 毕业生
2. 年龄： _____ 周岁
3. 性别： 男 女
4. 您出生于中国哪座城市？ _____
5. 您来新西兰多长时间了？
 < 1年 1-2年 3-4年
 5-6年 > 6年
6. 新西兰是您留学的首选地吗？为什么？
 是的 不是
7. 您在新西兰留学是不是你父母支付的？
 是的 不是

学习经历

- 您在新西兰留学的过程中，最主要的收获是什么？
- 在您看来，新西兰和中国高校的教育体系的主要差异有哪些？可以举出一些例子吗？这些差异在学习上给您带来了哪些影响？
- 在适应不同的教育体系，您遇到过困难吗？您是怎么克服这些困难的？
- 您在学习上的期望是什么？您的这些期望实现了吗？如果没有实现，为什么？
- 总的来说，您对您在新西兰高校的学习满意吗？
- 在读生：您考虑在毕业以后留在新西兰吗？为什么？
- 毕业生：您现在的状况是：
 在工作？ 找工作中？ 或者打算短期内回国？什么因数影响着你的决定？
- 如果您有机会重新选择，您还会选择到新西兰留学吗？为什么/为什么不？

社会经历

- 您在新西兰交了许多新朋友吗？他们都是哪些种族的人？对您来说，在新西兰交朋友有多容易或多困难？
- 您参加了或参加过任何俱乐部或社团吗？您做过任何义工吗？
- 您可以告诉我在您的业余时间您的主要社会活动都是些什么吗？
- 在新西兰，您经历过任何不公平的待遇（歧视）吗？如果有，请说说具体情况。

其他

- 您现在做的事是您来新西兰前计划做的吗？如果不是，有哪些变化？为什么？
- 关于中国留学生在新西兰的留学经历，您还有任何其他看法和评论吗？

Appendix 9: Human Ethics Approval



Massey University

9 July 2007

Yi Yang
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Petone
WELLINGTON

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Dear Yi

Re: HEC: Southern B Application – 07/06
How do Chinese International Students perceive their learning and social experience in New Zealand?

Thank you for your letter dated 2 July 2007.

On behalf of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are now approved. Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Dr Karl Pajo, Chair
Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B

cc Dr Mingsheng Li
Dept of Communication & Journalism
WELLINGTON

A/Prof Frank Sligo, HoD
Dept of Communication & Journalism
PN254

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council



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