HOMECOMING: REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

AN INVESTIGATION OF NEW ZEALAND TRAINED GRADUATES RETURNING HOME TO SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to discover and describe how International Graduates experience and adjust to their home country upon re-entry.

Sixty seven graduates of New Zealand Universities were interviewed. Twenty eight in Singapore, twenty five in Malaysia and fourteen in Indonesia. The interviews were conducted face to face without undue time constraints. The first phase of each interview was non-directed and simply asked the graduate to describe their experiences of leaving New Zealand and re-entering their home society. In the second phase, the graduate was directed to comment on their experience in the light of the general categories of graduate re-entry adjustment listed in the rather sparse literature on the subject. The first phase elicited information relating to graduate re-entry adjustment from the viewpoint and perceptions of the graduates themselves. Each had a unique experience of re-entry. In the second phase interviewees covered the full range of adjustments mentioned in the literature on graduate re-entry, but the categories listed proved to be indicative rather than exhaustive and some categories featured very little in the lives of interviewees.

What stood out in this study were three areas of adjustment common to all who were interviewed, and felt strongly by all. These three areas were drawn from the non directed phase and carried a strong sense of perception amongst those interviewed as being the areas of readjustment for them. Certainly the three areas were universal to all interviewed and although there was overlap with the categories used in phase two of the interviews, it was apparent that such universality made these three the major adjustments graduates face. Therefore, the three categories of: work environment; world view change; and lifestyle expectations are the three major areas focused on in this study.

Several non-universal indications were found in this study. In phase II of the interviews a check was made of a category list of indications of potential re-entry problems compiled from a literature search. This enabled some comparison with other studies. Additionally several other non-universal indications were found that are significant in preparing graduates for re-entry and in helping them in the process of re-entry.

The findings of this study differ from the findings of other studies due to method used. The prime method used in this study was non-directed face to face interviews in contrast to the few, but major studies, which used surveys and sought answers to directed questions. The method of this study allowed the findings to be described as the perceptions of the graduates involved and the universality of the three major areas across the interviews allowed for the conclusion that these are the areas of adjustment, that graduates returning from New Zealand to their home countries, will encounter.

This study describes in detail the three universal areas of work environment, world view change and lifestyle expectations as detailed by the graduates in their interviews. In the discussion of these, some understanding is sought as to why these three stand out. Culture distancing occurring during the sojourn experience is postulated as one possible reason. This study highlights areas for further research: The world view change that occurs in students while studying overseas; The effect on re-entry of the country chosen to study in; and what assists graduates in the re-entry process.

PREFACE

In 1966 I entered Victoria University to study chemistry. Moving to the city after growing up in the country brought many changes and new experiences into my life. Meeting and getting to know some international students were amongst those experiences. My life journey took me on to a career in high school teaching and, as a result of interests begun when I was a student, I moved on into Christian work and chaplaincy amongst students. My interest in international students continued to develop as a result.

One thing that fascinated me was the effect of coming to a new country and culture had on internationals. I became conscious of the influence university teaching and varieties of lifestyles had on internationals and through letters and some short visits I became conscious of re-entry as an issue of adjustment for many who returned home.

My role in Christian work amongst students changed to one of coordinating and facilitating work amongst internationals nationally. As part of my job I was advising and encouraging others from the New Zealand church community in providing for international students who were in their parishes and communities. One of the areas I was frequently asked about concerned the welfare of graduates going through re-entry. It became obvious to me from stories, personal experience and looking for information that there was very little information available in New Zealand to help any one prepare a student for re-entry. My job allowed opportunity for me to research and develop material to assist with any major issues encountered in ministry. As a result I began to look into re-entry The more I found out about it the more I realised very little was known. I perceived there was an opportunity to do some worthwhile research that could be of benefit to other practitioners in the area of international student welfare.

Coincident with this growing interest in re-entry was the opportunity for a short sabbatical in South east Asia. I resolved to make a major part of the research component of this sabbatical the issue of re-entry. The decision to present the research in an academic medium came out of the idea that it would have a good opportunity to be received and used by university and polytechnic staff. There would hopefully be a flow on into programmes for returning graduates. It is my hope that information contained in this thesis will be used to benefit future generations of returning graduates.

Terry McGrath February 1998

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Many people helped me and my family during the fieldwork phase. I would like to thank them and make special mention of three couples who did so much for us both in terms of assisting with arrangements for interviews and in providing highlight experiences for us as a family. Jason & Suzanne Tan in Singapore, Teng Yang & Jenny Tan in Malaysia and Soedjono & Naniek Christyanto in Indonesia by their help and actions have contributed much to this study, however, there were many others that made two months of fieldwork a lifetime highlight for us as a family and if nothing was achieved from the research the whole experience would have been made worthwhile by the mere fact of meeting them.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

During the 1990s full fee paying international students have increased steadily in numbers in New Zealand universities (see appendix 1). Provision for their needs whilst studying is reflected in the growth of services provided by International Student Offices and Student Associations throughout the country. The increase in the number of students coming to New Zealand and a corresponding increase in graduates returning home highlights awareness of issues and adjustments related to re-entry.

Those concerned with the welfare of International Students in New Zealand universities have become increasingly aware that many graduates find the transition from New Zealand to their country of origin can involve quite major adjustments (Sanders 1995: 6). Most welfare provisions are made in students' transition to New Zealand Universities, but very little formal assistance is given in aiding their re-entry when returning home.

1.1 THE NEED FOR RESEARCH

The literature regarding graduate re-entry is quite sparse (Polita 1990). Most research into re-entry has focused on return migration and the re-entry of business and missionary personnel. The unique experience of students studying abroad and returning has received only minor attention.

Research into the reverse culture shock faced by graduates returning from New Zealand will assist in more fully understanding the phenomenon. Information gained from such research could be used to assist the design of pre-departure programmes. Further, alumni associations, graduate fellowships, government agencies and professional associations

could potentially use information gained from such research to assist returning graduates during their re-entry transition.

The nature of reverse culture shock is that it is unexpected (Martin 1984). Articles and information derived from this research project could serve to inform returning graduates and diminish the unexpected, thus contributing to the well-being of graduates going through re-entry.

1.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

This research project into the re-entry of graduates from New Zealand attempts to answer the following question:

> **"What are the re-entry adjustments graduates face?"**

Stemming from the answer(s) to the above question, this study seeks to answer two further questions:

> **"What can be done to better prepare the graduate to return home?"**, and

> **"What helps the graduate through the re-entry transition?"**

1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The researcher's opportunity to visit Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia provided a unique opportunity to gain information on re-entry adjustment from New Zealand trained graduates. Prior to this opportunity a survey of literature relating to graduate re-entry was undertaken. This survey highlighted the fact that very few investigations into graduate re-entry transitions have been undertaken, and none for New Zealand-trained graduates. The literature revealed a growing awareness of returning graduates experiencing reverse culture shock. This awareness, for those concerned with the welfare

of international students, implies that provision needs to be made to prepare graduates for re-entry and some assistance be given to them in adjusting upon their return home. The literature revealed, however, that very little work had been done to investigate the types of adjustment returning graduates must make. Most of the information concerning reverse culture shock comes from the experience of business professionals, missionaries and aid workers returning home after a period of service. Their experience of their host nation differed from that of a student coming to study. So the design of programmes to assist graduate re-entry must be affected by the experiences of this particular set of people. To be more certain in designing any programme for returning graduates it would be useful to have information on the actual experiences of graduates. Also, when considering future programmes for New Zealand trained graduates, it would be ideal to have input from past graduates, as there may be some specific characteristics of New Zealand that affect the nature of adjustment graduates encounter.

1.4 INTERVIEWS WITH 67 NEW ZEALAND TRAINED GRADUATES

In the course of this study 67 graduates from New Zealand universities were interviewed. Finding subjects for interviews proved to be straightforward. A number of graduates were written to in advance asking if they would be available for an interview. They were informed that the focus of the interview would be to talk of their re-entry experiences. Almost all graduates written to responded positively to the opportunity to meet and talk. Several of the graduates written to also recruited other New Zealand trained graduates to be available for interviews. All graduates were willing participants and an often expressed desire was that learning from their experience may prove to be of benefit for future returning graduates.

The first phase of each interview was a non-directed time in which the graduate was encouraged to speak about the adjustments they encountered on re-entry. In the second phase they were asked to comment on other categories (see appendix 2), listed by Canadian and American writers (Lawrence & Westwood 1988), (Espinelli Chinn 1987). Comments were only sought in relation to items not covered by their responses in the non-directed phase. To provide background information to the study, demographic information was also obtained from the graduates.

1.5 INTERVIEWS RATHER THAN A SURVEY

It was decided to start with interviews rather than a survey. This was because before a survey could be designed the opportunity to conduct face to face interviews with New Zealand trained graduates in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia arose. It was also, in part, due to a personal disquiet related to the literature on graduate re-entry. This disquiet related to two factors. The first was that there were only a few studies available. These were based on surveys, the findings of which centred around survey questions which in themselves appeared to assume answers or restrict the range of possible answers. The second related to the fact that survey questions drew from understanding graduate re-entry within the literature. The literature, however, revealed that most information relating to graduate re-entry comes from understanding re-entry and entry of migrants, business personnel, aid workers and missionaries, all of whom encountered different experiences of sojourn from students (Austin 1983, Austin & Beyer 1984). Also there is a body of literature that draws parallels between entry and re-entry adjustment, assuming that re-entry is a parallel experience in terms of adjustment to entry (Furnham & Bochner 1986). Some further studies in the area of entry adjustment had called into question commonly held views about entry adjustment and these same views were

amongst those being assumed to occur, in parallel, in re-entry adjustment (Klineberg & Hull 1979, Church 1982). The conclusion from this personal disquiet was that it would be better to interview graduates face to face and gain insight from their life experiences of re-entry. These experiences were likely to be indicative of the adjustments faced by graduates in re-entry. Interviews would be a more reliable method of being sure of what graduates had encountered. If interviews indicated a survey was needed then one could be crafted based on the interviews. It was decided that interviews would be the method used in this study. It had been hoped to exceed 20 interviews, but, eventually 67 interviews in total was an unexpected bonus. A review of the volume and quality of material, provided by these interviews, indicated that sufficient good information had been obtained to allow the research to be written up. The response to the publication of a working paper (McGrath 1997), focussing on the universal findings in this study, further indicated the value in writing up the full set of findings from the interviews. The choice of interviews as the research method has resulted in a good quality and volume of information that provides answers to the research question..

1.6 OTHER BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Comment was made about the researcher's personal disquiet relating to the context of understanding of graduate re-entry in the literature. To fully understand this disquiet a brief historical background of student entry adjustment and the parallel of re-entry adjustment of graduates is given. Some of the questions raised in this have bearing on the later discussion of results. They lend weight to some of the doubts raised by Klineberg and Hull (1979) concerning the U-curve hypothesis of adjustment. This was first put forward by Lysgaard (1955) and is often assumed in student entry adjustment. It is foundational to the W-curve of re-entry of Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963) which has

formed the basis of much of our understanding of re-entry adjustment. The U-curve and W-curve models are more fully explored later in Chapter three. This historical background of understanding entry and re-entry is not unlike an additional wider literature survey and has been necessary as the findings of this research project contradict some of the assumptions about graduate re-entry in the literature. This wider historical background of literature helps us to understand where this research project fits in and how it contributes to building the understanding of graduate re-entry.

Placing this study into a context of entry and re-entry in the literature is important but it is also important to know the historical setting into which the study fits. Students have been coming to New Zealand from Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia since the 1950s. An overview of the history of students coming from these countries to New Zealand and returning is included to help place this study into its historical context. We know from the literature that there are some parallels in entry and re-entry adjustment (Furnham & Bochner 1986). Understanding the adjustment students face on entry to New Zealand may shed some light on understanding the adjustment they face on re-entry to their home countries. Graduates returning to Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia are suitable as indicators of graduate re-entry adjustment for graduates returning to those countries. These graduates formed a significant proportion of assisted and private international students studying in New Zealand and are likely to form a significantly similar proportion in the future.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Students returning home from study abroad face re-entry adjustment issues (reverse culture shock). This chapter reviews available published literature relating to the reverse culture shock and re-entry adjustment issues facing students returning from study abroad. Some supplementary personal communications from students adjusting to re-entry is also included in part to illustrate, and in part to inform, on re-entry adjustment issues. Students share with all returning graduates to their particular country common adjustment issues. There are some issues, however, that seem particularly attached to the individual returning student. This review of the literature seeks to find out what the main issues are students face on re-entry.

2.1 DEFINITION OF RE-ENTRY ADJUSTMENT

For the purposes of this study the following definition of re-entry adjustment is used: "Re-entry has been conceptualised as the re-adjustment of the sojourner into the home culture; that period of time when a person needs to re-integrate into the social, psychological and occupational networks of her/his home country" (Polita, 1990 p85).

2.2 LACK OF ATTENTION GIVEN TO RE-ENTRY

Kinnell (1990) in the introduction to "*The Learning Experiences of Overseas Students*" highlights the fact that the focus of research is on the recruitment, orientation and provision of services to the student whilst in the host country with very little attention focussed on student re-entry. Polita (1990) citing evidence from a study by Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963) backs up the assertion of only scant attention being paid to re-entry issues. She further expresses the view that it is only in recent times that the importance of

re-entry programmes to a smoother return to the student's home culture has been realised. The assertion that very little assistance is provided for returning overseas students before leaving is reinforced by a study of graduates leaving Australia. Gardiner & Hirst (1990 p24) in a survey of Graduates returning to Malaysia, Indonesia and Hong Kong found, in contrast to the level of help received from family and friends at home, "only a minority of respondents had been helped by other sources." This finding indicated either a lack of awareness of other sources of help or a lack of availability of such help or both, which overall indicates that little emphasis was being placed on re-entry by all those involved in educating overseas students and those involved in employing overseas trained graduates.

2.3 EMOTIONAL ISSUES IN RE-ENTRY

Two studies by Martin (1984 & 1986) explored re-entry adjustment issues. These studies and that of Lank (1983), Uehara (1986), Lawrence & Westwood (1988) and books by Mirza (1993), Lau (1988) and Espineli-Chinn (1987) all raise the issue of family and emotional support for the returning student. Most anecdotal comments suggest returning students are likely to encounter relational difficulties with families. These studies identified a dichotomy. Relational difficulties were encountered by all students returning, however, it was found in general that relationships between parents (especially mothers) and students improved in the view of the student during the time away. In contrast romantic relationships (including marriages where one partner remains at home) and friendships, suffered. Friendships with those who had had a similar overseas experience seemed to improve. Relationships with older brothers and sisters improved; seemingly the overseas experience raised the returning graduate to a peer level with these family members.

Two studies, Abrams-Reis (1980) and Churchill (1958), indicated the lack of emotional support during the re-entry period may lead to significantly affecting the perception and integration of the experience overseas into the student's future life. These two studies may in themselves be flawed. The possible flaw is they neglect evidence suggesting that emotional support for the International student while a student directly impacts the individual's perceptions of the experience. They do not mention the impact of this on their sample of students. They may in fact be observing a finding that is due to other factors or has other factors contributing to it. What is certain is that returning graduates often find the home environment much less familiar than expected and thus experience a sense of strangeness or disorientation in their own country. Studies by Adler (1976) and Marsh (1976) suggest this. Brislin & Van Buren (1974) also commented on this and drew attention to the concept that exposure of the student to a different way of living subconsciously influenced the student to have different expectations upon re-entry. Boakari (1982) and Martin (1986) commented on the need for the returning graduate to adjust and change attitudes towards family, peers and work colleagues. An illustration of this is found in a re-entry case study supplied by Lisa Espineli-Chinn and taken from notes provided in seminars she conducted in Europe on preparing students for re-entry.

RE-ENTRY CASE STUDY - LEE FONG'S STORY*

I was born and raised in _____. For the past six years I've been living in the U.S. A few months ago, I went home. The city was not the same. Things had changed so much. My elementary school was gone. The houses where my friends had lived were torn down and replaced by office buildings.

My family greeted me warmly when I arrived. But after a few days I began to feel that something was wrong. My family, especially my mother, would glance at me in a strange way when I was speaking. They gradually became less warm and friendly, and I became uncomfortable, for I did not know why they were behaving that way.

So I talked with my mother. She asked me "Have you forgotten your Chinese customs? You talk when you should remain silent. You speak about matters that are of concern only to the men. You speak openly of your inner feelings and

desires. That is not the way of a Chinese woman. We keep our thoughts and feelings to ourselves."

As she spoke, I realised what had happened to me. Americans are much freer in expressing their thoughts. I had gradually adopted some of their ways. So in the next few days I tried to be a Chinese woman. But it didn't work. I had changed in other ways that I simply was not aware of. My family remained distant from me. They made me feel I was an outsider, a stranger in my own country.

So I came back to the U.S. But I feel homeless. I'm caught between the old world where I no longer belong, and the new world which has not yet accepted me. Espineli-Chinn (1992)

At the same time as the returning graduates are expected to be changed they are expected to be the same persons who went abroad. This creates emotional turmoil for many during the re-entry phase. Commenting on such turmoils identified amongst members of a support group for Tongan graduates, Taufa (1993) observed that this was a normative process for students returning to Tonga. Their "famili" (whanau) were reclaiming them from "Palangi" (pakeha) ways and thoughts. The process expected them to be fully Tongan in their attitudes, values, speech and actions. This expectation was that now that they had an education, they would be wiser and more able to appreciate their heritage as well as contribute to the overall well being of the village community. This reclamation tended to destroy relationships forged amongst fellow overseas students from Tonga who did not belong to the village and "famili". The returning student needed the emotional support of other returning graduates as well-meaning "famili" members lacked understanding of the changes the overseas experience wrought.

2.4 THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION

Lau (1984) commented on a range of re-entry styles along a continuum whose ends are reversion to, and alienation from, the re-entrant culture. Each extreme of style often leads to a period of dysfunction. Lau observed that the best coping strategies were found

amongst those who prepared themselves for re-entry by being kept informed about home, becoming conversant with the concept of culture shock and its parameters and having a positive attitude towards the transition process. He along with Kauffmann et al (1992) also observed that the degree of stress in the re-entry process was often commensurate with the degree to which students had immersed themselves in the host culture. Those who made a major cross-cultural transition often encountered the greatest degree of difficulty on re-entry and those who insulated themselves from the host culture or who did not need to make a major cross cultural change on entering a host culture had the least amount of stress on re-entry. Brislin & Pedersen in their (1976) study observed a range of quite complex re adjustment problems. They identified alienation as a major issue to overcome as well as a frequent feeling of disorientation amongst most respondents in their study. Family relations were a major emotional issue and as well they were able to identify several factors relating to the degree of immersion in the host culture, namely: duration; location; degree of contact with home culture; and the particular set of circumstances controlling the degree of immersion (such as age, marital status, finance and language ability).

2.5 CULTURE SHOCK AND RE-ENTRANT ADJUSTMENT PARALLELS

The term culture shock has come to mean the set of adjustments people face when they first move from one culture to another. It was first used by Oberg (1960) and has been used in many contexts in reference to moving from one culture to another. In the context of culture change where re-entry is involved a similar term is used, reverse culture shock. This term refers to the adjustments someone returning to their own culture will face. Many of the problems listed in studies on re-entry are paralleled in literature relating to culture shock. For example Kohls (1984) list of the symptoms of culture shock are

paralleled in re-entry culture shock; Furnham and Bochner (1982 & 1986) explore the magnitude of problems encountered when first crossing from one culture to another. Problems of alienation occur much in the same way as they do for reverse culture shock. Re-entry adjustments are aided by sympathetic persons and good prior preparation. Similar feelings of disorientation are often related to similar situations. Kauffmann et al (1992) in their section on Developing an International Perspective identify very similar issues for students making the cross cultural adjustments in their first cultural transition as they would in their re-entrant cultural transition which they comment upon in the section Personal Development and Re-entry. Bennet (1977) covers this ground also drawing attention to aspects of shock that come from the unexpected and failure to recognise cross cultural cues. Cues for a culture are subconscious. In reverse culture shock the person is often relearning the cultural cues effectively blocked in the first cross cultural transition. It takes time and adjustment to unblock those cues without a distinct feeling of tension and unease. Stress is a product of both the cross cultural learning process and the relearning process. A further section of discussion related to parallels in understanding re-entry by understanding entry is developed in chapter three.

2.6 FOLLOW UP STUDIES

A significant amount of information in the literature has been drawn from knowledge of students going through the transition process. Tracer studies aim to understand re-entry and to provide the returning graduate with information about re-entry. Information from such studies can impact the design of programmes preparing students for re-entry. In addition to the previously mentioned studies other types of tracer studies and follow up communications were examined. Gardiner & Hirst (1990) found in a survey of graduates returning from the University of New South Wales to Malaysia, Hong Kong and

Indonesia, three main problems were encountered: the political and economic situation in their own countries; local living conditions; and Government regulation and bureaucracy. An earlier study by Westwood (1986) tracing Hong Kong Graduates from Canadian University discovered a similar trend. Unfortunately each of these studies did not explore in any significant way the emotional and psychological dimensions to re-entry adjustment. Their focus was more on the quality perceptions of the education received and the rate they gave the host country as a place for investment, trade links and immigration. Pearse et al (1986), on the other hand, in surveying Indonesian graduates, were concerned primarily with the effects of the training received and how useful it was for the graduates. They did, however, along the way, look at the support for the trainees in the re-entry process and noted that overseas trained colleagues contributed the highest degree of support for the re-entrants.

In Harris & Jarrett (1990) reports on follow up studies of graduates from Australian institutions appear to focus on the cost-benefit to overseas students and on the relevance of Australian higher education to many overseas students. Little attention was, however, given to the issues of re-entry, and the study provided more of a macro approach to what students took back The Gardiner & Hirst (1990) study, referred to earlier, reveals a similar focus. The absence of research information, relating to what graduates face by way of adjustments on re-entry, has led to drawing information from case studies. Individual case studies of returning students has produced some information on the re-entry adjustments they have had to make. In reviewing the issues of re-entry faced by Choi (1984) in Singapore the issue of greatest significance to him was adjusting to the crowded lifestyle:

> " When you want to think and reflect on where you are going and what you are
> doing in NZ you pack a picnic and go out to some nice scenic spot and enjoy

relaxed reflection. You come back renewed and refreshed. Here in Singapore you can't do that so you book an air con room in the depths of an hotel and when you emerge you feel only a little detoxified from the rigours of life."

Children of overseas students are also affected by re-entry adjustments. Robert Early, a linguist, after having spent several years overseas commented (Early 1990) that the most significant adjustment for them in moving back from field work in Vanuatu to ANU (Australian National University), Canberra, was adjustment in lifestyle and values their children had to make. One pertinent story stands out: Their son was found one afternoon cooking up some birds he had killed on the way home from school. When told you don't do that in Australia he protested vehemently that his parents were wrong. To prove a point he telephoned the local police station. Further protests followed along the lines of enormous wastage to let so much food fly around and not be used. The Police finally agreed to his hunting and eating sparrows but he was to leave the other birds alone around the ANU campus. Children of overseas students growing up in a different culture face unique re-entrant adjustments. Much of their learning is not relearning but is new learning. Their socialisation is age and context dependent. A cross cultural transition changes the context markedly and gives to parents making re-entry an extra adjustment.

2.7 PREPARATION

Preparation for returning home is an element that Polita (1990) asserted was missing from the programmes offered to international students. While this appears to be so not all graduates went home without any prior preparation. Many graduates on the instigation of friends or from what they perceived was important made a point of preparing themselves for re-entry. One such on being interviewed had this to say:

What did you find difficult as you returned to Malaysia?

> "The mental switch from the New Zealand culture to the Asian culture. That is common to most international students, but it didn't take me too long to readjust, perhaps less than a year. But mentally I was prepared for change, to be humble, to learn, and to serve. Another decision I had to make was to love the people when I returned." Tan (1995).

The above comment is similar to individual follow up stories, as found in the literature. Common to all is a twofold thread of being prepared before returning, and having support from people of understanding during the return process. McGrath (1994) comments on the need for good preparation before returning and for the linking of the returning graduate to someone who can be of support to them, preferably a graduate who has already survived the transition, or even an expatriate from the host country. Transition survivors are uniquely placed to support those re-entering. Moore et al (1992), Mirza (1993), Espineli-Chinn- (1987) and Lau (1984), all have a series of questions designed to help the returning graduate think through on what they will face in transition. Polita (1990) includes a set of exercises and resources for use in re-entry programs designed to prepare students for their return.

2.8 CONCLUSION

The literature reviewed indicates a number of issues relating to re-entry adjustment. Returning students face varying degrees of re-entry adjustment depending on the size of personal change and the attitudes of the returning graduates, their families and their friends. The greatest difficulties in adjusting occur when there is reversion and alienation from the re-entrant culture along with a large amount of personal change having taken place in the life of the graduate during their time overseas. Re-entry adjustment is aided by prior preparation for re-entry and help during the re-entry transition. The best prior preparation seems to be educative regarding the process of re-entry and has some practical exercises that prepare the student. In addition, such preparation programmes

should help the student to give attention to the specific issues the individual student will face relating to their personal re-entry. The best help that can be given during the re-entry transition appears to come from other students who have previously survived re-entry and are able to act as mentors.

The literature indicates a lack of widespread research into international graduate re-entry adjustment. The work of Lawrence & Westwood (1988) and Gardiner & Hirst (1990) represent the best research into the adjustments graduates face on re-entry. A comparison summary of their findings is given in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1 - Comparing the Findings of Lawrence & Westwood with the Findings of Gardiner & Hirst

Lawrence & Westwood	Gardiner & Hirst
Cultural Adjustments	Family and friends most helpful
Social Adjustments	pre return information that is needed
Linguistic barriers	three problems on return
National and Political	- political and economic situation,
problems	- local living conditions
Professional Problems	- Government regulation and
Educational problems	bureaucracy

The work by Lisa Espineli-Chinn (1987) draws from a similar background to the Lawrence & Westwood study. and taken together they offer a very good outline of the potential problem areas of graduate re-entry. In addition ideas on preparing students to return home can be drawn from them. The Espineli - Chinn (1987) workbook has been specifically written for students who are or have become Christians, nevertheless it deals with the wide range of issues which all students face on return. What is lacking in the

available literature is a New Zealand perspective. No studies have been found that look at graduates' return home after study in New Zealand. Very limited material is offered by universities in New Zealand to returning graduates to assist them in re-entry and what little is offered draws heavily on the above mentioned studies. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a need for a study of graduate re-entry transition from New Zealand. Such a study could help in describing the adjustments graduates from New Zealand face on return. It could be used in determining similarities or differences from the findings of other studies that have described other re-entry transitions. From research into the re-entry adjustments of New Zealand trained graduates, programmes for preparing graduates for re-entry and aiding them during the re-entry process could be designed. This research could provide a greater degree of certainty that programmes designed were preparing and assisting re-entry.

The study undertaken for this thesis aims to describe the re-entry adjustments of graduates of New Zealand Universities returning to Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia. The results of this study will help prepare graduates for returning home and to ensure they receive help through the re-entry process. The choice of the three countries was determined by an opportunity which allowed the writer to travel and meet graduates within these countries. New Zealand's involvement dates back to the 1950s so it can be assumed that New Zealand will continue to draw students from these three countries. A study of re-entry adjustment of New Zealand trained graduates returning to these countries is well overdue.

CHAPTER THREE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY OF GRADUATE RE-ENTRY

When this study on re-entry was contemplated there were a number of background factors that guided decisions relating to choices within the study. It is important to understand some of this background as it creates a context in which this study occurred. The important areas of background that help to form a context to this study are:

The historical overview of understanding entry adjustment and its influence upon and parallels with re-entry adjustment;

The historical overview of international students in New Zealand;

The method chosen for this study.

This background is important as it affected the approach to the study and also indicated areas of direction for the study. The choices of method, sample and what to look for in the analysis have all been influenced by this background.

3.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW - ENTRY AND RE-ENTRY PARALLELS

International students have been coming to New Zealand for a long time. In the 1950s New Zealand universities began receiving students from South East Asia. During the 1950s and 1960s very little was known in New Zealand about culture shock and correspondingly nothing about the concept of reverse culture shock. In the wider literature of Europe and America some of the ideas that shape our present understanding of these concepts had only just begun to emerge. Lysgaard (1955), for example, proposed the U-curve idea of adjustment stages when entering another culture. This concept is still used today in a variety of forms and is illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1   STAGES OF TRANSITION

High

FUN
Honeymoon

FIT
Tolerance:(different but Ok)

Understanding: (different
but reasonable)

Creativity: (different but
open to interaction/
transaction)

l e v e l

o f

FLIGHT
Avoidance

s a t i s f a c t i o n

FIGHT
Anger:(different & bad)
Mockery:(different & foolish)

low

Length of Time in Host Culture ⟶
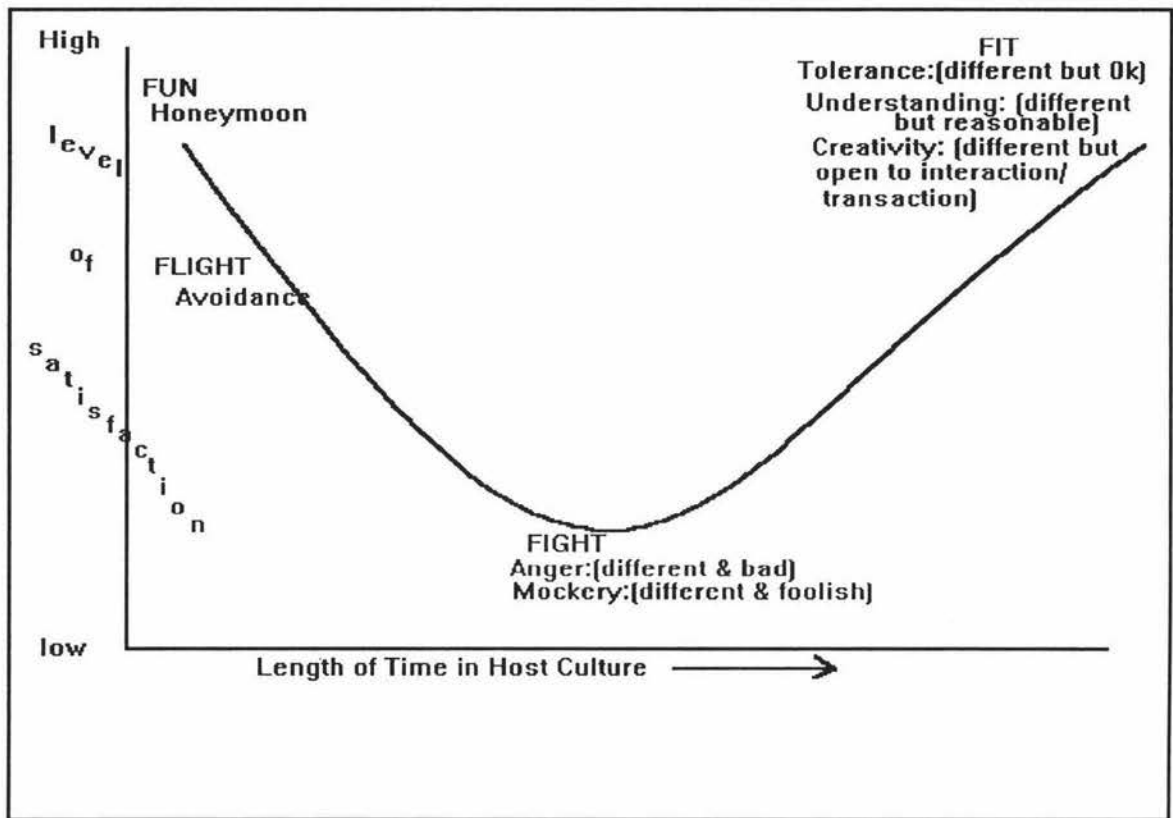
Source: adapted from Lisa Espinelli Chinn (1987)

The U-curve concept is based on the idea that when a person first enters another culture they will go from a situation of initially liking it to rapidly feeling dislike, even active hostility, simply because many of the cues, norms and mores they are used to in their cultural setting are not present. As time goes by they begin to learn what the cultural cues etc, are and as they learn them they become more comfortable with their existence in the culture. In the illustration the U-curve has been adapted to show that the sojourner moves from feelings of fun, through a phase of avoidance, then, anger, but eventually ends up with making a fit or accommodation with the host culture. The concept of Lysgaard has been widely applied to a variety of cross cultural experiences. This general

idea often fits observations made about cross cultural transitions and within its simplicity lies its appeal

Lysgaard's idea was followed soon after by Oberg (1960) with the term 'culture shock' which referred to the distress experienced by a sojourner as a result of losing all the familiar signs and symbols of social interaction. During the 1960s and 1970s focus and attention on the concept of culture shock increased. Much of the focus was due to the need of international business and international organisations and promoters of political ideologies to begin functioning in cross cultural contexts. Understanding cultures became important as decolonisation meant businesses had to take into account the cultures in which they operated. Similarly, missionaries and aid workers also had to consider culture more in their work. With this realisation, the phenomena we now call culture shock became increasingly widespread.

Oberg (1960) mentioned at least six aspects of culture shock:
1. Strain due to the effort required to make necessary psychological adaptations;
2. A sense of loss and feelings of deprivation in regard to friends, status, profession and possessions;
3. Being rejected by and/or rejecting members of the new culture;
4. Confusion in role, role expectations, values, feelings and self-identity;
5. Surprise, anxiety, even disgust and indignation after becoming aware of cultural differences;
6. Feelings of impotence due to not being able to cope with the new environment.

Furnham and Bochner (1982 p168-172), in a review, cite many examples of writers and researchers during the 1960s developing the understanding of culture shock. Lysgaard's (1955) concept of the U-curve of adjustment became an integral part of most contributions to understanding adjusting to a new culture. Most research into cultural entry focussed on business and missionary personnel and the experience of international students hardly appears in the literature. There are a few early studies such as Carey (1956) in Britain and Hodkins (1972) in Australia, but these treated international

students as a homogeneous group with very little or no distinction made relating to origins, culture, ethnicity, language or natural background. Further to this Furnham and Bochner (1982 p170) comment that the literature relating to international student adjustment is preoccupied with the impact of western culture on students from less developed parts of the world.

Most early literature on international student adjustment was impressionistic and non-empirical. Such subjects as the relationship between mental health and academic performance, descriptions of excessively optimistic expectations from 'colonials', and the effect on their lives of subsequent disillusionment, were chronicled as were details of international students having to handle stereotypes related to their ethnicity and race. Carey (1956) identified the themes of expectation, stereotyping, and isolation from local community in his study. Singh (1963), in a study of Indian students in Britain, identified their isolation from the local community, homesickness and worry about home that was exacerbated by academic problems due to language and living difficulties.

Tischler and McBride (1988) have identified the importance of culturally sensitive health services as students often experienced health difficulties as a symptom of other stresses in their lives. Many of the earlier studies into international student adjustment came from information gathered by health services. Still (1961) at Leeds university demonstrated a higher level of psychological problems amongst foreign students. Ward (1967), Gunn (1979), Willmuth et al (1975) and Furnham and Triese (1981), in various comparative studies, showed higher levels of psychological disturbance for international students than for local students. In all of this time, focus was on entry adjustment, with very little attention paid to re-entry issues of international students. The understanding of re-entry,

in many respects, began to be assumed as having similar aspects to entry in terms of the adjustments encountered. The work of Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963) formalised those assumptions by putting forward the idea that Lysgaard's U-curve concept is simply repeated again as the person returns. The double U or W-curve concept, as illustrated in Figure 3.2, began to be used when looking at re-entry. The idea contained in this is that re-entry is simply a repeat of entry experience. It had become apparent that people, when they returned home after a period of sojourn in another culture, often had difficulties settling in. The term reverse culture shock was sometimes applied to their experience on return. The idea in the W-curve is that the first half of the W describes the experience of the person as they cross cultures. At some point they become adjusted, then, when they return home their own culture feels foreign because they are subconsciously looking for the learned cues of the last culture they lived in and they have temporarily forgotten the cues of their own culture because of disuse.

Figure 3.2 Adjustment Profile for Sojourn and Re-entry.
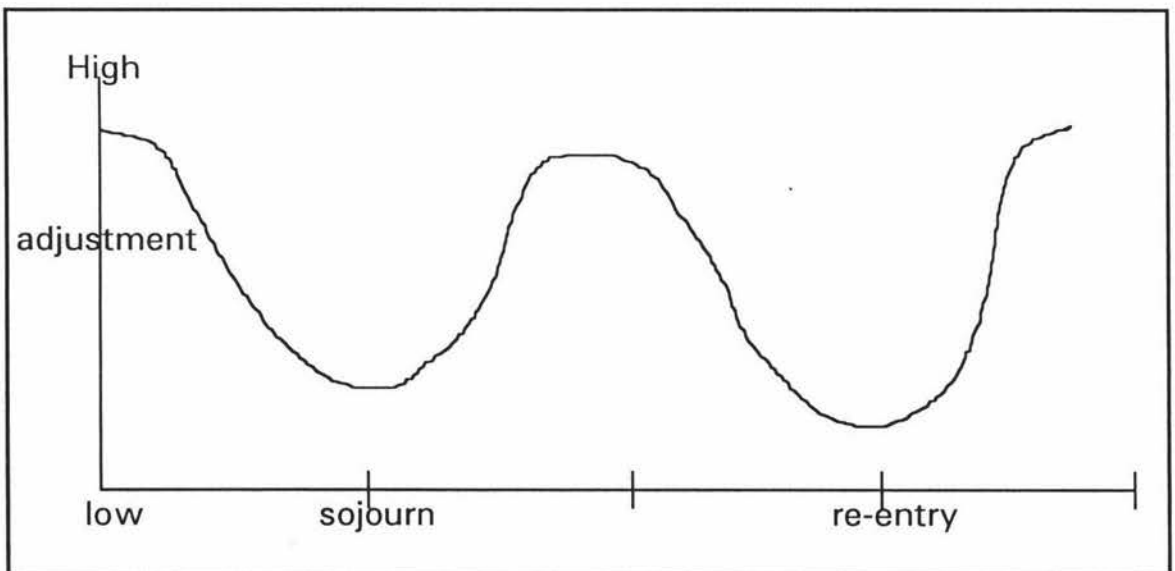
Source: adapted from Furnham and Bochner (1986 p 135)

So when they return home they go through the U-curve experience again this second time. This is often unexpected, as one expects to be adjusted to one's own culture and experiencing feelings of not belonging contribute enormously to the reverse culture shock. This idea of the W-curve, like the U-curve, in its simplicity has enormous appeal for those observing re-entry. It, at first glance, seems to fit most of what is known and as a simple idea can be very useful in explaining what happens in re-entry and how reverse culture shock can impact upon a person. It is currently used for that purpose to explain what happens to graduates on re-entry.

Throughout the period of the 1970s there is one large study that stands out. This is the work of Klineberg and Hull (1979) which sampled over two thousand five hundred students from one hundred and thirty nine countries studying in eleven nations. This substantive study has resulted in many and sometimes complex findings. Some findings, however, stand out as having major implications for those assisting international students: The most important of these findings were as follows:

- Previous experience of travel or sojourn correlated with broader and more general satisfaction with academic and non academic experiences.
- A majority of respondents failed to establish intimate relations with local people and associated with fellow nationals or other foreign students.
- No support was found for the U curve hypothesis of adjustment.
- Listed amongst major problems encountered by the sample were: discrimination 33%; depression 25%; and wishing to remain in sojourn country 15%.
- The study concluded the two most significant coping factors for students at a foreign university were social contact with local people and previous overseas experience.

<div align="right">Klineberg & Hull (1979)</div>

The non-support for the U-curve hypothesis of adjustment is very significant because up to this point the literature on culture shock assumes it to be supported and some of the influential writing such as Oberg (1960), Smalley (1963), Singh (1963), Adler (1975) and Taft (1977) were all influenced by U-curve thinking. Could it be, that Klineberg and

Hull had, by their extensive study of international students, raised the question that their sojourn experience and adjustment differs from that of non-student sojourners or that the U-curve idea is just that, an idea and has little or no evidence to equate it with the reality of experience of large groups of sojourners? To date this question has not been satisfactorily answered. Furnham and Bochner (1986), in their discussion of the Klineberg & Hull (1979) study, mention the continuing debate. Church (1982) concluded there was a balance of support for and against the U-curve hypothesis of adjustment. More recently, opinions accept that the U-curve can help people to understand the sojourn experience. Furthermore, many providers of support services use it as an explanatory device that gives hope to the sojourner, so they can see that the adjustment difficulties will pass. The evidence, however, for the U-curve is questionable and the Klineberg and Hull (1979) study calls into question studies that assume its existence. An implication of this for understanding re-entry is that with the W-curve, which is the parallel idea for re-entry and is based on the U-curve, must be questionable also.

Some of the earliest understanding of re-entry draws very heavily off the work of Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) in which they proposed to extend the U-curve hypothesis into a W-curve or a repeat U-curve. This idea, like that of the original U-curve, is simple and clear and easy to understand and very appealing as an explanation of the whole of the process.

The doubts raised by Klineberg and Hull (1979) relating to the U-curve hypothesis carries over with even greater weight to the W-curve despite its simplicity of explanation and its neat apparent fit with the circumstances many sojourners find themselves in at the time of re-entry. Again like the U-curve it can give hope during the low points of

adjustment and can be of immense value in preparing sojourners psychologically for re-entry. To erase the doubts associated with it research is needed. However, this simple idea is very hard to research as a dependent variable is hard to choose. The U and W-curve ideas are clear and simple, yet, are also extremely vague when applied to people who constitutionally reflect a large complex set of single and multiple outcome variables in their life's journey. Quantifying and describing the experiences of many people in one simple diagram has often proved too much for researchers. Some, such as Bochner, Lin and McLeod (1980) and Torbion (1982) have sought to delineate some variables and describe them. The results have been somewhat pedantic and certainly do not communicate well. An obvious implication of this impasse, is that further research, especially in the re-entry area, is needed.

The implication for those researching international student re-entry adjustment is that it would be wise to avoid constructing a study based on the assumption that the W-curve accurately describes re-entry. It would be helpful to use methods that would provide evidence for or against the W-curve and such methods need to be devoid of W-curve influence in their construction. This is the disquiet, referred to in chapter one, that led to choosing a subject first, non-directed interview approach as the main method of observation, rather than a questionnaire survey approach. **It was felt that going to the graduates and finding out directly what they had faced would be a better approach than constructing a questionnaire based around a limited and compromised literature.** A simple survey, however, was added to the second phase of the interviews to gain insight into how the sample of graduates compared with respect to potential re-entry problems that had been surveyed in other studies. This also served as a back up in case those interviewed had little to say in the first phase.

3.2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN NEW ZEALAND

For a long time international students have been coming to New Zealand. New Zealand has had historical responsibilities and interests in the South Pacific. As a member of the British Empire (latterly the Commonwealth), the League of Nations and the United Nations, it has had a commitment to provide aid to the territories within its sphere of responsibility. As well, membership of the Commonwealth and the United Nations meant providing aid for the development of other countries. New Zealand has used educational aid, in part, to meet its responsibilities and of historical strategic interests.

Initially this aid was reflected in New Zealand's responsibilities to its territories in the South Pacific: Niue; The Cook Islands; Tokolau; and its mandate over Western Samoa. New Zealand government scholarships (Davis 1969 p 280, p285) brought students from these places to study in New Zealand and returned them after their course of study to work at home for the benefit of the administration and development of their home territories. As early as 1919 the existence of such scholarships has been noted (Davis 1969 p276-277). Prior to this date educational arrangements in the South Pacific appear to have been informal. From 1946, a series of scholarships and educational schemes brought many South Pacific students to New Zealand for training and education.

In 1950, under the Colombo Plan, New Zealand, small numbers of international students, from South East Asia, began arriving for tertiary education. The Colombo plan was changed later to New Zealand Official Development Assistance (NZODA) programme and was managed by the Development Corporation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). Alongside of the official effort private Overseas students began

coming to New Zealand for tertiary education, so that by 1959, when records were first kept, 590 international students were present in New Zealand tertiary institutions.

The numbers of International students increased through the 1950s and into the 1960s. Little attention was paid to any coherent policy concerning the processing of private international students during this period and policy relating to sponsored international students was motivated by development assistance and foreign policy objectives. During the 1960s dramatic increases of private international students indicated a need for a coordinated policy. This led to the beginnings of government policies to regulate the origins, numbers and placements of private international students in New Zealand. Up to the late 1960s ad hoc policies and regulations had managed the international student numbers within the universities.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s increases in numbers of private overseas students was the prime cause of rising concern amongst the policy makers. Figure 3.3 graphs the total international student numbers and the private fee paying numbers from 1965 to the present day. The number of assisted students has remained constant as evidenced by the size of the gap between the two lines. This gap only increased for a period in the early 1990s when the changes to full fee recovery put a number of current students in the transitional category and the partially assisted category.

Figure 3.3 - Overseas Students in New Zealand Universities 1965-1996
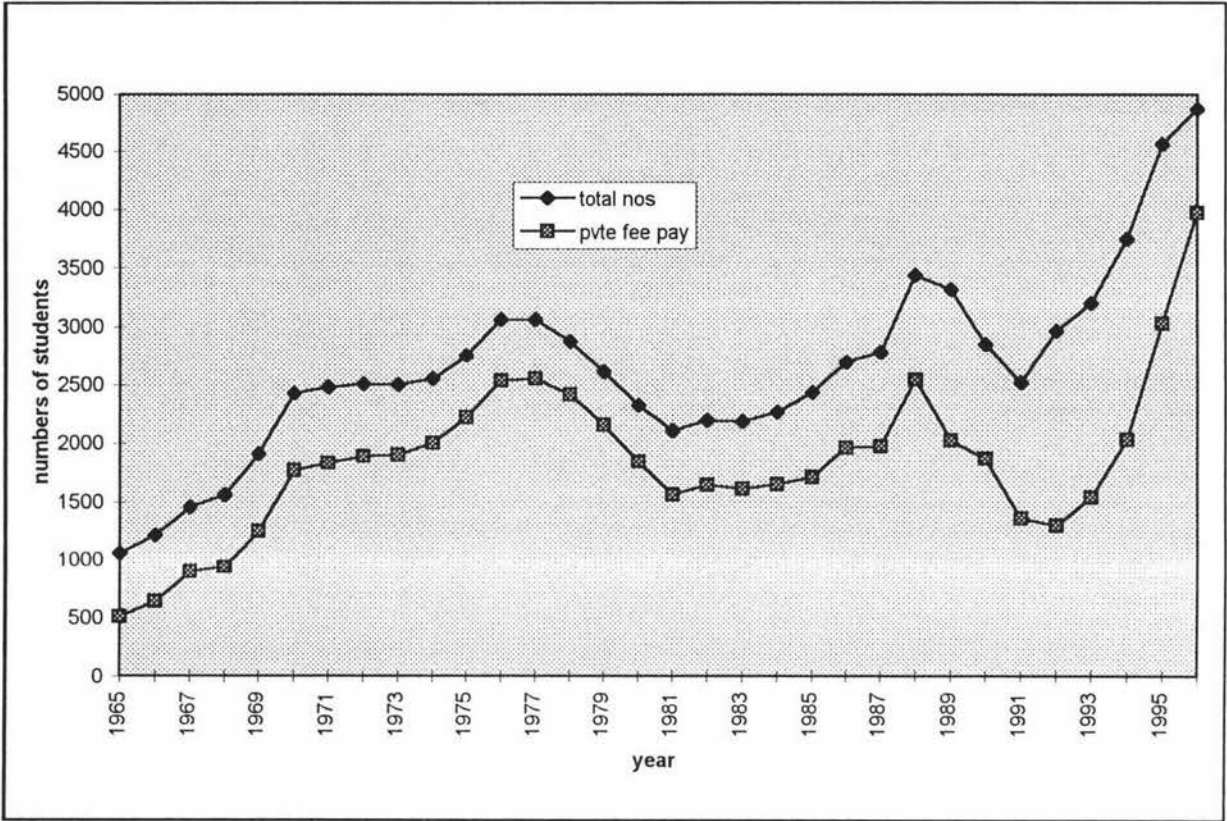
Source: Ministry of Education Tertiary Education Statistics

Looking across figure 3.3 the changes international student numbers can be traced over time. It is important to note that the numbers from the late 1960s until the 1990s were controlled by regulation and government policy until the 1989 Education Amendment Act (no 156) allowed New Zealand state owned institutions to enrol full fee paying international students. Prior to that time private international student numbers were controlled by regulation. This act allowed market forces to take over and the rise, following an initial drop, in numbers throughout the 1990s could be attributed to successful marketing.

During the period of controlled numbers it is noteworthy that government policy makers were only concerned with controlling numbers of international students. There is no evidence within the various government policy papers to suggest any welfare intentions towards private international students. There is evidence to suggest that New Zealand government interest in international students was as an adjunct to foreign policy. Cook (1995 p15-16) commenting on the period of the 1970s had this to say:

> "The development of overseas student policy during the 1970s had, therefore, consisted of layer upon layer of diverse measures designed to regulate access. At the same time, the outcome of the various reviews that recognised the benefits to New Zealand from the presence of overseas students, suggested that the long-term aim was to increase access rather than restrict it. This seemed to be the basis of the Cabinet's direction to the IDC to examine the feasibility of expanding access to overseas students between 1980 and 1983. The three considerations behind the cabinet's direction were:
>
> - contributing to the development of the South Pacific and South East Asian regions;
> - strengthening New Zealand relations with countries of traditional and new interest to us by providing educational links with present or future business, professional and political leaders;
> - earning foreign exchange through using our education system as a commercial asset."

The above quote is typical of government policy statements relating to international students. Such statements have largely focussed on control, influence on foreign policy objectives and in the later era on earning foreign exchange hence the move to marketing of education.

Government left welfare of international students to the universities themselves. No special provision for the needs of international students was envisaged or for that matter even thought of. They could share in what limited provision was made for New Zealand students. Very few within government and the universities thought that international students might have difficulty adjusting to New Zealand.

Focus of policy discussions was on limiting student numbers. International students who gained places in New Zealand universities were expected to assimilate into their places of study and on completion of their courses quietly return home and reintegrate within their home societies. It was assumed they would have little difficulty in adjusting to New Zealand and would return home grateful in attitude toward New Zealand with plenty of pleasant memories of their time studying here. No formal attempt was made to assist them on either entry or re-entry during this period. This was very much left to the assumed goodwill of New Zealanders, fellow students, university staff and the universities themselves. Many New Zealand students of this era are able to relate stories concerning international students they met in class and hostels and it is obvious from the nature of these stories that both the international student and their New Zealand counterpart were on a voyage of discovery in terms of the cross cultural elements within their friendships. There is little actual evidence to suggest that the international students of this era were disadvantaged by the lack of formal assistance as many made good friends amongst local students and received significant attention, help and consideration from university staff. Later research, Klineberg & Hull (1979), has identified the value of mentors and friendships from the local people as being significant in assisting international students in terms of both their personal well being and academic satisfaction.

The services for international students increased in response to the increase in numbers, and the obligations of fees, such as the $1500 concessionary fee levied on private students from 1980 on, and the full fee recovery of the 1990s era of marketing of education. Some university staff began specialising and international centres and offices

eventuated. Programmes to assist international students resulted and in recent times some offices have started giving attention to re-entry.

To ensure that programmes are designed to a good standard good information is needed. Research is important to ensure the information is of good quality. Most research into the welfare of international students has been done in countries other than New Zealand (exceptions of note include Lewthwaite (1995), Sodjakusumah (1996) and Trinh (1968)). As previously noted on the international scale only limited research has been done into graduate re-entry and certainly New Zealand's contribution, to date, to understanding graduate re-entry is minuscule. A study of graduates returning home from New Zealand would be timely as those providing for international students in New Zealand's tertiary institutions are beginning to address the issue of preparing graduates for re-entry.

New Zealand has stated foreign policy interests in South East Asia. The numbers coming, as figure 3.4 shows, from South East Asia form a major proportion of all current international students as well as those who came in the past.

Figure 3.4 Numbers of Students from Singapore, Malaysia & Indonesia
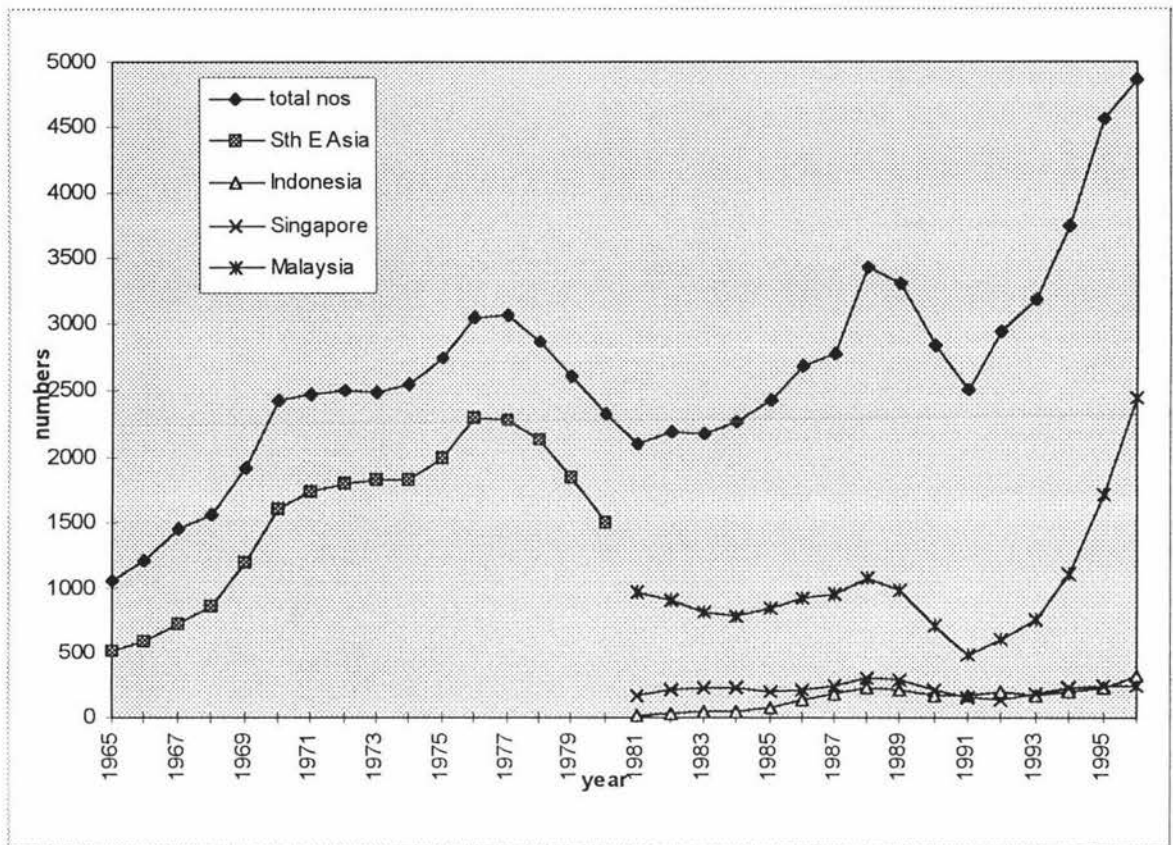
Source: Ministry of Education Tertiary Education Statistics

Up until 1980 the educational statistics reported the figures regionally. Beyond 1980 they are reported by country. In figure 3.4 the South East Asian regional figures are shown up to 1980 then beyond figures representing Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. are graphed It should be realised that the South East Asia figure includes other countries than the three but the three combined make up the major part of that figure. The figures for international students, in the present era despite diversification of countries of origin, show over half the total still come from these countries. This long history combined with the large proportion of total numbers make them a very suitable focus of this study on re-entry. New Zealand's foreign policy objectives could be enhanced in respect to these

countries if findings from this study could be applied to improving what we are currently doing by way development, relations, and trade. The level of good will enjoyed within these countries could be enhanced by acting on the findings of this study to improve the quality of re-entry.

Indonesian, Malaysian and Singaporean students have been coming to New Zealand for tertiary education since the 1950s. Graduates have been returning to these countries for almost as long. Re-entry adjustment has been experienced by tens of thousands of graduates. It is appropriate that a study on re-entry adjustment should feature graduates returning to these countries.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

Interviews were the primary method used. In chapter One it was mentioned that 67 New Zealand trained graduates were interviewed during the course of a visit to Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia. Information obtained from the interviews was analysed to find patterns of common experience within the sample or a sub sample. This analysis forms the basis of the description of re-entry adjustments contained in chapters four and five. In the next several sections a more detailed description is given of the study's methodology.

3.3.1 Choosing subjects for interviews. When considering the possibility of conducting research with returned graduates one of the first questions relating to an interview technique was how to gain access to sufficient numbers of graduates to make interviewing worthwhile. The answer to this came, partly, with the design of a sabbatical time that required the researcher to meet a number of graduates. Some were written to in advance and were assured that any information provided by them would be treated

confidentially and would only be used for the purpose of research with their personal details remaining anonymous. On meeting each of these graduates they were asked of others they knew whom they thought would be willing to be interviewed. These were then contacted by phone or, as it happened in many cases, organised for an interview by the friend referring them. Some graduates for interviews were provided by referrals through the New Zealand University Alumni network.

Each interviewee was very keen and willing to talk about their re-entry experience. They were also very complimentary about such a research project being undertaken and many expressed the opinion that they believed such research would be valuable in assisting future graduates.

3.3.2 How each interview was conducted. Each interview was divided into four parts. The first and fourth parts had little to do with the interview content. The first part was simply used to set the interviewee at ease and to encourage them to talk. This was particularly important as phase I and phase II of the interview process depended a great deal on the interviewer gaining rapport with the interviewee. This first part generally consisted of introductions, reminiscences and some form of food or drink. Often this part involved sharing a meal together and many of the interviews were conducted in restaurants and hawker centres. All locations of interviews were in places the interviewee felt at home in and could relax. After rapport was established, the first part of phase I of the interview process was entered. Often this began by simply getting out the notebook and, if the context were suitable, a small tape recorder and asking if it was okay to proceed to the interview and did the interviewee mind notes being taken. Phase I was started by mentioning the purpose of the interview was to have the interviewee recount

their experience of adjusting on re-entry. At that point any items would be reviewed if they had been mentioned in the earlier part.

During phase I the aim was to encourage the interviewee to talk about their experience and the interviewer to refrain from interjections. To do this, a reflective conversational technique was used. To encourage a person to talk once rapport is established all they really need to know is they are being listened to. To do this one reflects back to the talker the fact of being listened to. This can be done by means of body language, but is generally done using body language in conjunction with conversation. The conversation part was usually to repeat what is said by the interviewee but paraphrased to show that it had been heard and was being understood. The reflection back with the same meaning in different words indicates understanding. To get a person to elaborate on a point one simply needs only to reflect back the meaning with a slight change of meaning or a bit missed out. This generally encourages elaboration. Another way is by body language and comment to show one is really interested in knowing the full detail. This reflection technique is simple and only needed to be used early on in each interview and occasionally at points when the interviewee flagged or strayed from the topic.

At a certain point in phase I it became apparent that most of the major items that the interviewee recalled had already been covered. At that point the headings of Appendix II were mentioned one by one (unless already covered) and the interviewee asked to comment. This part of phase II generally took only a small amount of time unless a heading triggered a significant memory. In the final part of phase II, two questions were asked. Often they had already been answered but this was used to begin bringing closure to the interview. The questions were: "In conclusion, what would you say helped you

most in your re-entry experience?" and "Lastly, what would you recommend as the most important thing a near graduate should do to prepare themselves for re-entry?"

When the answers to these two questions had been given the person giving the interview was thanked and often a key point learned from them identified. Then the notebook was closed and the researcher paused in the flow of conversation. On several occasions the interviewee began to share on a more personal aspect often relating to family situation or began to ask advice. Where this did not happen the conversation simply moved onto talking about some aspect of their present life, husband or wife, children, job, leisure activity, or New Zealand. The interview time with the person always ended very amicably.

3.3.3 Effectiveness of this technique. The interview technique was an unhurried one and it generally took considerable amount of time. Some interviews lasted only 20 - 30 minutes but many went beyond an hour and several over one and a half hours. This technique provided the majority of information with a minimum of direction. It was chosen as the purpose was to find out first hand what the re-entry adjustments were that graduates faced. Those that were uppermost in their memories would be those that would come out in this open ended interview technique. However, this created a difficulty. People did not fit their ideas and thoughts into a nice neat sequence. Some kept moving from one item to another and then back. Some, however, were very logical in the way they presented. As previously mentioned, interviews took place largely in restaurants and hawker centres and there was considerable noise in many of these places. At times in the interview hearing was difficult. The hand written notes of each interview

became important for analysing the interview content. As close as practicably possible to the interview these notes were reviewed and made as accurate as possible.

As previously mentioned some interviews turned into counselling sessions especially after the interview part had been closed. This could, in part, be due to the technique of reflective listening which is used in counselling, for the very reason that it encourages people to speak. No issue raised in this part was used for the study as it was assumed by the fact that the interview had been closed that the interviewee was speaking in confidence. Some of the items shared in this time related to re-entry and although they have not formally been part of the study for ethical reasons it has to be recognised that the may have some influence on the way the open parts of the interviews are interpreted.

Reviewing the volume and quality of material obtained form the interviews by this non directed, subject first, approach, it can be concluded that this method was effective in obtaining information from returned graduates relating to their re-entry.

In the next Chapter the major findings from this study are described. It was extraordinary and exciting to find that after a number of interviews three common themes began to become apparent. The interviews started sounding similar because in the interviewees descriptions of re-entry, common recurring themes kept coming out. In some cases almost exactly the same words occurred. The methodology was effective for bringing to light the major findings. It was perhaps less effective in drawing out the indicative findings as the prompting regarding appendix 2 was used at least in part for practically all interviews.

The choice of method was affected by the need to start with a non-directed approach due to the doubt relating to the foundation of information obtained in the literature. The focus of the study, to fit the New Zealand experience of international students, rightly resulted in choosing to draw the sample for interviews from amongst the countries that had long term histories of sending students to New Zealand and receiving graduates back. The three countries represented in the sample have featured prominently in New Zealand's foreign policy objectives and the eduction of students from those countries has been a plank in the policy to achieve those objectives. The choice of method for obtaining primary data was a non-directed, subject first interview approach supplemented by a simple survey (appendix 2 headings in phase II of the interviews) based on the literature perception of potential re-entry problems. The combined historical background to the sample and the literature relating to concepts of re-entry adjustment experiences served to influence the choice of method for this study and the choice of sample.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNIVERSAL FINDINGS - THE MAJOR ISSUES FACED ON RE-ENTRY

The graduates interviewed were encouraged in the interview to talk freely about their experiences of returning home. Notes were made and most interviews were recorded on cassette tape. Without exception, the sixty seven subjects clearly identified three major areas of adjustment they had encountered. These were:

(a) The work environment

(b) Changes in world view

(c) Lifestyle expectations

This clear universal identification of three general areas of adjustment in the perceptions of the graduates became clear during the seventh interview. During this interview, the person being interviewed seemed to be saying exactly what had been said in a previous interview, and in almost exactly the same words. After completing ten interviews there was an opportunity to pause and review the content of what was being heard and to compare it with the literature review previously conducted. The literature (Polita 1990), that had framed researcher expectations, had drawn on the research surveys conducted by Lawrence and Westwood (1988) and Gardiner and Hirst (1990). These had given indications that graduates encounter a range of adjustments, and it was expected to find indications within the interviews of this range as indicated by Lawrence and Westwood (1988) and Espinelli Chinn (1987) theories (see appendix 2). These seemed to indicate a consensus of understanding relating to graduate re-entry adjustment for a transition from study in Canada or the United States to Asia. On completing the interviews and finding a trend of three universally felt general areas, it was felt that perhaps the approach, being non-directed, general and investigating a non-North American transition, may have contributed to what was found. These three general areas overlapped and also covered

some of the things mentioned in the literature, but after ten interviews there was an indication of some new information being uncovered. From the tenth interview on, care was taken to ensure that, in the second phase of the interviews, the general headings of Lawrence and Westwood and Espinelli Chinn (see appendix 2) were mentioned and the graduates were asked to comment on these. These are described in the next chapter in section 5.2.

In reviewing all the interviews the categories of Lawrence and Westwood and Espinelli Chinn were, as Polita had said, "indicative rather than exhaustive." (Polita 1990: 87). Of particular note were the strong indications of world-view change identified by those who were interviewed and the fact that national and political problems were not seen as impacting on the re-entry adjustment of graduates. The survey by Gardiner and Hirst had identified three serious problems that graduates encountered on returning home: The political and economic situation; local living conditions; and Government regulations and bureaucracy. Yet, these did not feature highly amongst the graduates interviewed.

The differences seem to come from two very distinct areas. One area was methodology. In the interviews information was obtained in a non directed way and was volunteered. The surveys of Lawrence and Westwood and Gardiner and Hirst were exactly that, surveys, with precise questions requiring a response, whereas the non-directive approach gained more general information. This related directly to the adjustments the graduates perceived they had faced and that they felt at liberty to talk about. The other aspect of difference was the country in which the graduates had studied. This raised the question, "Does the country in which a student studies affect the nature of the graduate re-entry adjustment?" An answer could only be obtained by comparing a variety of studies

utilising similar methods, but at this point, the limited number of studies available prevents this. Investigations into graduate re-entry adjustment are very few and each one is likely to add to an aspect of understanding rather than be entirely definitive

The interviews produced new information, perhaps because of the way it was obtained or because the transition being investigated was intrinsically different. This realisation has prompted the major findings from the interviews to be presented descriptively here. The discussion in chapter six, of these universal findings, is focused on seeking to understand the information gained. A description of the three universal findings on the major areas of re-entry adjustment follows.

4.1 THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Finding a job was a major undertaking for many on first returning. 13 graduates had jobs provided for them and 54 had to go out and find a job, which they reported as an unexpected area of adjustment in their lives, since during their years of study no realistic training or help had been given to them on job hunting. All found employment, however, the graduates interviewed reported differing degrees of adjustment in the work place. Ten were still with their first employer, one was unemployed, five were caring for young children and the remaining 51 returning graduates had held three or more positions. Of the ten with their first employer two were still working off scholarship bonds, one worked in his family business, two remained teaching at the same school and five worked for multi-national companies. Of those who had changed jobs, 27 were now working for multi-national companies, five were self employed, nine were teaching at tertiary or senior secondary level, one worked for a government-owned business and the remaining, nine, worked for locally owned companies. In addition one was now unemployed and

five had ceased work to look after young children. The work environment held many adjustments for those interviewed, and the adjustments were made more stressful because they were unexpected. The following quote, from one of the Malaysian graduates, is quite typical of the responses received.

> "Yeh,....I would think.....ah,.. that,...the...the ...job ,...I think that in terms of the job adjustment that is quite big, eh between job.... in terms of ah,.... the pay..... the pay, and the expectations. I think that is caused quite a bigger difference between what paid here compared to New Zealand and ah , and ah,.... in terms of ah,.. I guess when you first come back."
>
> Interview 42MG

The failure in the work environment to meet expectations of the graduate may have contributed to the fact that 57 of those interviewed did not remain in their first job.

As mentioned earlier, on first returning finding a job was a major undertaking for many (ten Singaporeans had jobs arranged courtesy of scholarship conditions as did three Indonesians). The 54 graduates who needed to find a job reported the process to be a trial, feeling they lacked an understanding of how to go about finding a good job. Family pressures and expectations of a good well paid job, not unexpectedly, became more intense but the reported feelings of powerlessness, in the face of not knowing how to find a job or even what type of job to look for, were unexpected, and some participants suffered from depression as a result. This pressure also sometimes resulted in taking the first job on offer rather than waiting for a more suitable offer, and this was also a contributing factor to changing jobs when other alternatives became available. Apart from CV preparation **no graduate had received any training in job searching.**

What was quite unexpected was the expectation built up during their training of what constituted a good **working environment,** which included; teamwork, initiative,

cooperation, friendships with workmates and rapport with one's supervisor. University courses in New Zealand and work experience (19 worked in New Zealand before returning) built on these expectations, but these were generally not met in their first jobs, with two exceptions: those who worked for multi-nationals with a western ethos; and those entering teaching. Many graduates reported they had to look for other work simply because their first job was not suitable for them. The following are aspects of the work environment identified by graduates as an unexpected challenge:

1.   **Job advertisements**: Often the job advertised did not equate with the job they received because:

    1. Work hours were generally longer than advertised with no extra pay.

    2. Job descriptions and conditions differed from those advertised..

2.   **Attitude to work**: The general attitude of most staff, as perceived by New Zealand trained graduates, was, "It's just a job," leading to the attitude of doing only as instructed and taking very little initiative or responsibility. This was very different from what the newly arrived graduates expected.

3.   **Standard Operating Procedures**: Staff were expected to perform their tasks well within very constrained parameters doing only the job required and doing it in the prescribed way.

4.   **The Length of the Work Day**: Junior staff (including most who were new to the workplace) were expected to **remain back** in the job-place **until the boss or supervisor finished** their work even if there was no further work for them to do. The rationale for this seemed to be that it would be impolite, improper and show

a lack of loyalty to one's supervisor and company to leave prior to one's superior.

5. **Job ethics**: The ethics of the workplace are determined by the owners of the company and, in general, are conveyed to staff through their immediate boss. If these are at variance with one's training then one is expected to adjust to the workplace ethic.

6. **Technical support** for the job. Much of the training received in New Zealand included a high technical component, particularly in the use of computers and various software packages. Often the home country workplace had limited or no access to such material and employed cheap labour in the form of clerks and semi - skilled workers to perform many of the routine tasks on a manual basis.

7. **The use of many low paid and semi - skilled** workers in the work place often caused frustration for new graduates in the workplace as they were, in many cases, less skilful than these workers at routine tasks, yet their job responsibility gave them some degree of oversight and supervision of such workers without the technical support and means to check their work, although graduates were often expected to supply work to these staff, causing them to workunder pressure to produce sufficient work for the often rather large group of low paid, semi-skilled and somewhat disinterested workers under their supervision.

8. **Relationships with supervisors and colleagues**. In general overseas educated supervisors and colleagues were more appreciated than those who were locally

trained, particularly when they did not have university qualifications. Interviewees felt very comfortable and sure of their relationships amongst the others who trained overseas but reported a feeling that locally trained supervisors and colleagues seemed somewhat threatened by them. The work environment generally lacked intimacy and trust. Several of those interviewed reported colleagues who 'back stabbed' them with the supervisor often in quest of promoting themselves. Some were convinced this was a characteristic of this type of workplace, where staff were trying to get ahead and friendships were not really possible in a climate of, 'dog eats dog' competition. In contrast, those who were working for multi-nationals felt their workplace to be better in terms of working relationships with colleagues and supervisors. Several said one reason they moved to a multinational was in quest of a better working environment and employment conditions.

In summary, for the majority of those interviewed, the work place was the biggest area of adjustment. It involved many unexpected aspects that did not fit the expectation engendered from their training and, in some cases, as reinforced by job experience in New Zealand. Workplace relationships; workplace attitude and ethos; workplace ethics; the level of available technical support; expectations of how tasks were to be performed; and general working conditions all contributed to the creation of a steep adjustment curve in the first few months of their working life.

Those who reported lower levels of workplace stress were the Singaporean teachers who returned to their former jobs and those whose first job was for a multi-national company. It is noteworthy that of the 67 graduates, 32 currently worked for multi-nationals,

believing that such companies provided a more compatible working environment with the training received in New Zealand. There may be implications in these observations for overseas education as a means of development assistance that need further investigation.

4.2 CHANGES IN WORLD VIEW

"What probably hit me most society this the thing with regulations, Singapore being the fine city I find out you think that all sorts of new places and all sorts of new rules. Yeh you do some things you are not happy I remember and appreciate what I did have in a sense I did have.".............................. "Yeh, I became free ... like a bird yeh,... at uni. Now I see regulations... but yeh, ... but I now think I, ...my mind sees, ah, and soars, ah, like the bird........ but living here has rules.....yeh, and rules. My parents don't think, yeh, just obey, but I, ... I... yam free. When I studied a window opened in my mind. I see ...yeh, rules ..no, no, yeh, I see ... I am different ... rules dohon't... not rule me. Oh, I'm not rebel... its not the law its, yeh la, my mind is free ... rules can't touch it"

Interview 10FP

This quotation taken from the twelfth interview, but renumbered 10FP to fit with appendix 3, was typical of remarks that seemed to emerge out of reflection and comparison of life in New Zealand and life at home. This type of remarks grouped together as changes in perception of world view. This quotation says it well, as it identifies a change within the mind and core system of thinking within the person and at the same time perceives outward things as being secondary to the inner being. The superficiality of the rules is apparent as this quotation portrays freedom as not the absence of rules but within the mind of the individual.

All interviewees reported their sojourn in New Zealand as having impacted their world view. Concepts of world view are often used by anthropologists and commentators on various situations where different cultures come into contact. Hoebel and Frost (1976, 324) defined world view as, "the human being's inside view of the way things are

coloured, shaped, and arranged according to personal cultural preconceptions." Samovar and Porter (1995, 114) commented, "that world view thus influences all aspects of our perception and consequently affects our belief and value systems as well as how we think." In the quotation above there are two cultures coming into contact within the interviewee. One culture, is that of the society around her, and the other culture, is that of the inner person. That inner person has undergone modification as a consequence of sojourn in New Zealand. Her world view has changed, and on her return to Singapore, she sees the Singapore culture in a very different way. There is a realisation of culture contact/conflict coming together in the inner person. She shows, in the interview, that she is making an accommodation. Neither reverting to the old but in living with the old context the new is modified. She is in effect in re-entry becoming a third culture person. Figure 4.1 is a simple model to help understand world view used by Chew (1990, 5) in explaining issues relating to changing cultures:
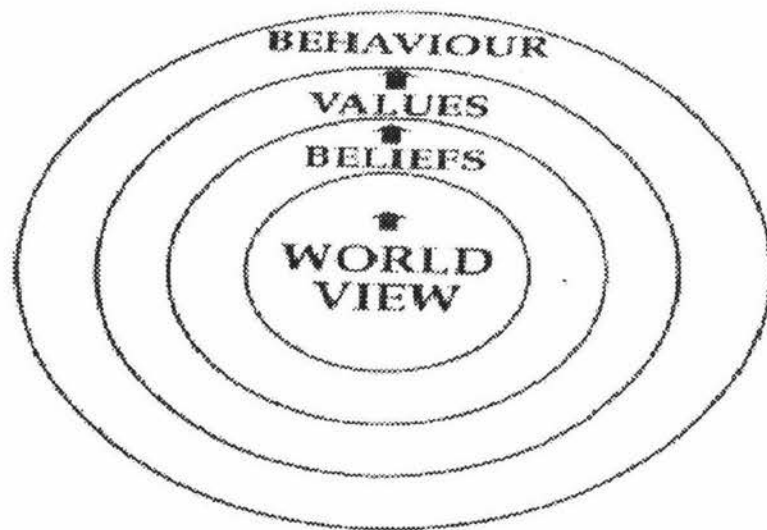
Figure 4.1: A Model of World View

One's world view affects one's beliefs, values and behaviours. In turn, experiences of life and training in life can affect our behaviour and, more fundamentally, our values and beliefs and ultimately the core of our world view. The inner person is what determines the way the world is viewed. People who go through re-entry transition become the third culture-type person. They do not fit the culture they return to because they have become a person of another culture, but that other culture is not the culture of their sojourn. In the interviews, world-view change was identified as a universal area of adjustment for returning graduates. What follows is a description of world-view change impacting in the area of re-entry adjustment. It does not seek to explain why world-view change occurs or how it occurs.

The graduates interviewed in the sample largely began study in New Zealand as adolescents and we would expect changes in their world view to occur at that stage of their lives. These changes would be, further exacerbated by changing countries and cultures. Graduates' comments reveal these expectations to be true. The process of how such changes occur in students when they study abroad, while beyond the scope of this study, is one that will need to be further investigated. What is significant in the context of this research is that no interviewees considered reverting to former patterns of behaviour, characteristic of their previous world view, as an appropriate coping mechanism on their return home. Their behaviour, stemming from a changed world view, showed consistency with that world view. The world-view change was both progressive and irreversible for the returning graduate, leading to further evolutionary change on return home, rather than a reversion to old beliefs and values and ways of behaving. Occasionally reversionary changes occurred unrelated to world view. One example of this is in the use of colloquial speech, with many graduates reporting returning to the

local accent as a natural way to get on with their peers and also to ensure communication. Such change, however, may be seen as cosmetic rather than foundational as it did not challenge their beliefs and values.

Many adjustments due to a changed world view were encountered in the workplace but were felt more keenly in the family or social contexts. Typically, issues of relationships, ethics, attitudes, initiative and working environment had elements of changed world view expectation, and were commented on by all those interviewed. Tensions, occasioned from a different world view, tended to make the first few months after arriving home very tiring and emotionally draining. To get a feel for this a **case study** follows:

Case Study:

After completing National service Kim was sent by his family to New Zealand to study. Five years later he returned to Singapore having completed a Masters degree. He was told he had an excellent CV. Coming home was a shock. Living conditions were very crowded and his family home was a very small apartment. He had to share a room for the first time in five years. After the euphoria of his homecoming it became obvious to him that his family had high expectations of his obtaining a job with a good salary and level of responsibility. The reality was, he did not know how to go about finding a job. He succeeded after considerable tutoring from his sisters.

The first let-down was the salary, which was nowhere near what his parents expected. His position did not measure up to the good job title it came with. He was uncomfortable with the amount of inspection and criticism his work was subjected to. As well he resented having to remain in the workplace until his boss completed his day's work. His

attempts at friendship with work colleagues were rejected. His fairly good English, tainted with a New Zealand accent stamped him out as different. "Singlish" and colloquial expressions were the norm in his first workplace. He was unhappy with some colleagues as they seemed to watch him all the time and surreptitiously let the boss know his failings. His parents regarded the job as one to fill in time and keep a little money coming in before he landed a more suitable position.

At home he became disrespectful partly as a result of the crowded conditions, the noise and the constant reminder of his parents' high expectations of him. Tension between him and his parents often came about when he wanted to do something and they considered he ought, as a dutiful son, consult them for advice and decision. As the only son, Kim's parents pinned their future security on him. His conversion to Christianity in New Zealand also caused problems, especially on Sundays. One of his sisters had also adopted Christianity but his parents felt their son had special responsibilities in preserving the cultural and religious traditions of the family. Kim's parents considered his abandoning of family traditions, and family religious practices as unacceptable outcomes of his time overseas.

Kim felt within those first six months that he would not survive the twin pressures of adjusting to work and the pressure at home. The sister who had helped him find a job came to the rescue and arranged for him to live with her and another sister in a small two room apartment. This caused sacrifice for the two sisters as they reverted to sharing a room and Kim had the luxury of a single room.

Almost simultaneously with this move he received an invitation to interview for a better job with a company owned by a foreigner. He secured the job but, to do so, he had to leave the other job just six weeks before the annual bonus pay out. His parents, though pleased about the new job with its better prospects, were concerned by missing the bonus payout, feeling that he had denied them their due. By way of explanation for his parent's view Kim offered these comments. "In Asian society one must try to fulfil the needs of one's parents. To do this you need to understand their expectations and hope. High in these is that you have a good job as you will be able to provide for your parents - parents will be very proud. Parents expect you to get a good job and attend to the issue of economic security first. When you have established that you may then consider issues such as marriage for yourself. Their mentality due to years and generations of conditioning is driven by economic needs. It may be hard for you as a New Zealander to understand that and it is hard for me coming back from New Zealand to cope with it at first. Now I have a good, well-paid job with excellent prospects. I have a wife, a car and almost own an apartment. My parents have mellowed their expectations, apart from a grandson, mainly I believe because I have met them. It was a struggle at first coming back but now I don't think I can leave but I do miss New Zealand with all the quiet, and space and beauty. You are so fortunate."

Kim valued his individuality and freedom to choose and resented the expectation and pressure from his parents. He found work relationships shallow and unrewarding. In New Zealand Kim had come to the view of the importance of individual freedoms. He had also acquired, through his training, views about work and the work environment. A good job was one in which job satisfaction was uppermost, with salary and position

somewhat secondary. Another very important aspect was good relationships with colleagues and supervisors.

Kim's relationship with his parents had been good before he left to come to New Zealand. On his return he saw himself as an independent adult and this view clashed with the close hierarchical family organisation. A major source of family conflict was his change of religion, though Kim believed he had a right to choose, being well-educated and informed and having been trained to make important decisions. In his parent's view acting independently in such matters dishonoured them. Kim regarded any compromise on his freedom to choose a religion a denial of the very religion he had chosen. There was no going back, and he could best honour his parents by not acceding to requests that involved him in a double standard. Kim's view of money and materialism differed from his view before going to New Zealand and also differed from that of his parents. He felt acute stresses when the expectation of his production was greater than the reality as his changed world view had relegated money and material pursuits to a lesser rank in terms of priorities.

Overall, Kim encountered in his job and family situation a clash of values and beliefs that came into sharp relief in those first few months after return. The five year period away meant the stresses from differences of outlook on life were sharper than if they had occurred progressively while he was at home.

Stories like Kim's were very common amongst returning graduates and from examining the interviews some common themes emerged in the areas of world-view change. Mostly these showed in the behaviour of the returning graduate. Changed values and beliefs

resulted in behaviours that did not fit the local context. Graduates who had undergone a

change in their world view could not revert back to behaviours that fitted easily into the

context to which they were returning. Something within them had changed during their

time away, and it was not easily reversed. In examining the interviews, the following

world view-related themes were identified:

1. Concepts of individuality/freedom had changed
2. Relationships with peers and colleagues changed in nature and importance.
3. Changed view of family
4. Changed values in areas of integrity, ethics, environment, materialism and relationships
5. Changed religious beliefs
6. Changed self image
7. Changed lifestyle beliefs

The returning graduate received conflicting messages and expectations in the area of

world view. The society they returned to expected them to have the same world view

though accepted some changes through their maturing and learning. Yet the graduates

found they had also changed inwardly and much of that change was irreversible. Some of

the change came into conflict with the context of life on return, culturally distancing the

graduate and making them feel almost like foreigners in their home environment.

A long sojourn in a different culture with one's mind and energy focused on learning

along with living without family and societal constraint provides a unique opportunity for

change - not just in outward behaviour but also deeply in the psyche of the individual.

Sonia Chia writing in the Straits Times said this about her re-entry experiences:

> Somehow when that plane lands, I must be ready to face a completely different
> world where things work in other ways and look different. It is a paradoxically
> new, yet familiar environment, into which I am expected to assimilate
> seamlessly. It would have been easier had I remained the same girl who left
> Singapore two years ago to go to America. I should have just retained all the
> customs and culture of my homeland and not permitted the admittance of any

other foreign element into my persona. I should have remained the same, naive me who when asked: "What's up?", would reply promptly: "Fine, thank you." I should have stayed the same me who wrote the date "backwards", said "hu-erbs" instead of "erbs", and almost flipped over in fright when the model stripped naked during my first drawing lesson. My friends made fun of the way I spoke. On one occasion, they wrote out a list of all the words I said "wrong", and how they were pronounced differently in the US; kind of like a legend, or key to "understanding Sonia". After many instances of going to the end of the line in the cafeteria, asking where the, "queue" was,-and being pointed in the direction of the pool tables, I have learnt a new language. I look back with amuse-ment at how I used to confuse people. Yet, when I come home at the end of each semester, my mind races through that list to reverse the code, so that "flashlight" becomes "torch-light" again, and the "trunk" of a car is once again a "boot". It reminds me of a bizarre episode of Seinfeld shown a few months ago when everything was reversed and all that was formerly acceptable was no longer. That was how I felt when I first went to the US. Now, it is how I feel when I come home (Chia 1996).

The returning graduate is different from the way he or she was before and these differences necessitate a process of accommodation. The interviewees described efforts to "bed-in" their new persona and adjust the mould of the old context to allow it to fit. The adjusting of the edges of that mould or niche in small and sometimes large ways caused the stresses they experienced. The accumulation of many such adjustments in this "bedding-in" process made the first few months quite painful but, as those around began accommodating their changed world view, the pain of adjusting diminished. Many of the graduates described particular issues where they encountered stress due to changed world view and where the diminishing of those stresses over time was brought about by adjustments both in themselves and those around them. On the one hand, they had to evolve strategies to diminish the stress and, on the other hand, others affected by their world view had also to make accommodation.

4.3 LIFESTYLE EXPECTATIONS

The third major area for adjustment for returning graduates was lifestyle expectations. To understand this it is helpful to know that middle class societies in the countries of origin are very materialistic in character. The strong family values of these societies give an extra edge to this materialistic pursuit by making it a virtue to provide well, materially, both now and for the future and for one's extended family. In every society there are terms that are used to describe the character of that society for its participants. We understand the term "The rat race" to loosely refer to the working world in our society. In Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia the term "The five Cs" was used to describe the character of a materialistically motivated society. This was the society the graduate had to enter on returning home. Part of the strategy for giving the graduate a good start in "The five C" world was to send them for an overseas education. On return they were expected to make their mark in "The five C" world and to succeed in each area of that world. The term "The five Cs" was used often by graduates in describing the lifestyle expectations they had to adjust to. A definition of what this term meant was asked for and a series of combinations of six terms was used. The six are:

1. Cash.
2. Credit Card.
3. Car.
4. Condominium.
5. Career.
6. Country Club.

Essentially the term "The five Cs" is an expression of the desire to obtain job, money, housing and social standing. These desires are said to be achieved when one can display the outward trappings of success as listed above. One's overall success in "The five C" world is measured by the relative extent of achievement. Both the pressure to meet these expectations and the comparative aspect of them within "The five C" world imposed

stress on the returning graduate. Each graduate acknowledged that material prosperity was a personal goal they had. They felt it was a right goal. Somehow the open and dedicated pursuit of "The five Cs" and the blatant and sometimes ostentatious ways in which successful pursuits of these were communicated made them uncomfortable.

All sixty-seven interviewed commented on various aspects of being challenged about their entry into the world of "The five Cs."' Their comments fell into three general categories. The first category related to pressures encountered soon after returning. Their existence was under pressure because they had not entered sufficiently into the world of "The five Cs." Early in the experience of the returning graduates they found they lacked resources to move freely in "The five C" world. They lacked cash; their career was not yet established; credit was not readily available; housing depended on relatives or sharing with friends; they could not get sponsorship to social institutions. In essence they were only at the entrance of "The five C world" and their former peers and friends were very much into it. Fifty-three graduates commented without prompting on these early pressures. They felt left behind and under pressure to catch up. Expectation and pressure came through in the interviews of which the following example, drawn from one of them, is illustrative:

> "Its more of a getting. I think other issue..... Social environment like here group pressure because when the student like myself came back from NZ there's pressure of there ah & how....good pos My peers doing well good jobs... good prospects some got married so I think some element of peer group pressure there.... When I consider another the external environment would be family pressure because many students were sponsored and financed by the family I'm to some extent also sponsored by my family so I think there is pressure there la....You have to live up to their expectation.

> So I think expectation is one of the major issues which I think many students have to grapple with ....expectation that the family places high hopes on you and that you need to match some of this hope....this expectation so I think that is ah great anxiety to ensure that you get a job fast. Not just get a job fast but also to get a good job which ah pays well ... financially so its a lot

> driven by family expectation driven by wanting to do well.......with... with your peers... a lot of your friends."
>
> Interview 18MG

The second general category related to the pressures they felt after getting established, when they had been back around six months and became somewhat adjusted to work and the home country context. At this point, pressure was experienced in the area of ensuring they were in the right job and were beginning to acquire some stake in "The five C" world. To achieve this they had to make a longer term commitment to being in this society. For some this meant gaining credit; for others it was to commit themselves to housing and to some it was to invest in a car for transport and image. Up to this point returning graduates seemed to have had the feeling or view in their emotional psyche that they could return to New Zealand and a different lifestyle if they chose, but such commitments made them realise this might not be realistic. They had committed themselves to being involved in "The five C" world as the appropriate lifestyle demanded of a returning graduate. The third category of comment on adjusting to the lifestyle related to the period following the such commitment and it largely centred on the strategy regarding the extent of involvement. Of the 67 graduates interviewed only two appeared to have fully embraced the pursuit of "The five Cs." The other 65 showed by their comments that they had decided upon a course of partial involvement. The pursuit of material prosperity, along with the outward evidence and trappings of it, were important to simply relate in the societies. Those interviewed felt their sojourn in New Zealand had opened up a different world to them and they found aspects of this pursuit repugnant. A strategy of partial involvement in "The five C" world was the outcome of rejecting aspects of material pursuit and also adopting aspects of lifestyle they had been exposed to in New Zealand.

Adjustment to lifestyle expectations caused some pressure. For example, the five female graduates at home caring for young children felt intense societal pressure because they had decided to opt out of the lifestyle expectation to care for children. This pressure also extended to their husbands as middle class professional people were expected to employ a maid to do such work or hand over the children to a grandparent. Caring for children was regarded by most as less important than 'The five Cs,' because the latter determined your standing in society on which your future security and prosperity hinged. Providing materially for your family's future was considered of highest value and therefore a mother with high earning potential should use that potential to its fullest.

An enduring theme in the interviews was how they disliked the intense pressure to keep up the lifestyle expected of them. Often the very occasion of the interview was cause to reflect on the contrasting lifestyle of New Zealand from that of their home country. Parallels of pace, time, space, environment, and recreation were frequently drawn. The lifestyle expectation provided no acceptable alternatives for a middle class professional person. Opportunity for lifestyle pursuits, such as what one took for granted in New Zealand, were limited until one had achieved in "The five C" world, in which hard work was a virtue; long hours of work a necessity; and low grade environment a reality. Two-parent incomes were also considered very sensible, as were grasping the present opportunity to ensure future prosperity. Life in the middle class professional lane was seen as fast moving and pleasures within it had to be taken quickly and efficiently and savoured more in length of memory than in reality.

A strong whimsical expression of desire for the New Zealand lifestyle was often mentioned. However, the majority of graduates interviewed were engaged in their current career fully and felt they were coping with lifestyle expectations. They had come to an accommodation with the expectations that ranged from total involvement through partial involvement (the case of most) to a significant level of rejection for a few interviewees. Most felt a willingness to go with the pressures the lifestyle produced simply because their New Zealand experience had taught them that it was their choice, and they had the right to the option of choosing to be different or to opt out.

In the early stages of return, lifestyle expectations produced stress especially if accompanied by family pressures. After two or three years the lifestyle expectation was accepted as normal and part of the culture they had entered on return. The stresses generated by it were to be accepted because the individual had decided upon the extent to which they wanted involvement. They could withdraw at any time and to any extent but the decision to remain involved to the degree they did rested with them.

4.4 DISTINCTION AND DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE UNIVERSAL FINDINGS

When a graduate returns situations in the work environment and the lifestyle create re-entry adjustments for them. Graduates working in New Zealand also face adjustments due to work environment and lifestyle expectations. These two areas of adjustment are normally faced by all who graduate from university and move to the next stage of life. The graduate must adjust to the work environment they move to and the lifestyle context the find themselves in. The returning graduate is no different. The difference is that the work environment and the lifestyle expectations they encounter belong to the country they return to. They need to make a cross cultural transition. The work environment and

the lifestyle expectations are proscribed by their home country. They cannot, and New Zealand cannot, change the situation they encounter. They simply must adjust. However, when it comes to world-view change there is a difference. The distinguishing feature of world-view change is brought about by the country of sojourn. A second feature is the change has occurred within the individual, and the individual carries those changed, beliefs, values and behaviours into re-entry. The adjustments that occur, occur as a consequence of their world-view change. This change occurred in New Zealand and is affected by the New Zealand cultural context. The individual does not readily recognise what is going on. The changes that have occurred within have generally been progressive over time. Very occasionally there has been a cathartic or dramatic point where they might recognise that a fundamental change had occurred within. Most often, they do not even think they have changed, other than the normative changes of maturing and their stage of life.

A set of adjustments, the causes of which have occurred in New Zealand, are carried with the individual into re-entry. Some of the change within has been fundamental and is irreversible. World-view change under these conditions means in re-entry the contact, and at times the clash, of two cultures occurs within the individual. For adjustment to succeed, when an aspect of change is irreversible, an accommodation must be worked out. The re-entrant graduate, of necessity, accommodates themselves to living within the culture as someone different. Those who have most to do with the re-entrant graduate must also accommodate them in much the same way as they would a person of another culture.

Tremendous change occurs in the life of an individual in moving from adolescence to adulthood. Enrolling in an educational institution at that time additionally influences that change. The world one lives in also affects that change. Put together, the returning graduate contains within themselves the seeds of a major area of adjustment occasioned by the change in world view that has occurred outside of their own culture. They are the third culture person as they return and for a period they will be uncomfortable until they and the edges of the culture that surround them can make an accommodation.

> If you come back, you wanted to leave again; if you went away, you longed to come back. Wherever you were, you could hear the call of the home-land, like the note of a herdsman's horn far away in the hills. You had one home out there, and one over here, and yet you were an alien in both places. Your true abiding-place was the vision of something very far off, and your soul was like the waves, always restless, forever in motion.
> (Bojer, 1925, 351)

Such are the feelings generated within the graduate as their particular world-view change begins to impose upon adjustments on them in their return. They belong to a third culture that does not fit either place. Now a further cross cultural transition is needed.

In this chapter the universal findings have been described. However, the interviews revealed much more than these three major areas of adjustment. In Chapter Five indicative findings, arising from the range of experiences of interviewees, are described.

CHAPTER FIVE

INDICATIVE FINDINGS

In the previous chapter, the universal findings from the interviews, were described. They were like threads that bound all the interviews together and obviously they represent a major source of descriptive information regarding the adjustments graduates encounter on returning home to Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. In this chapter, the focus changes to look at findings that are indicative rather than universal. Each graduate that was interviewed described a unique experience. The sixty-seven unique experiences, recorded in the interviews, share a common intersection of universal findings that bind them together in the manner of a three fold cord. In addition, there are other subset intersections, not common to all sixty seven interviews, but significant in their own right, as they indicate aspects of adjustment experience shared by some of those interviewed. These indicative findings can be significant in two ways:

First, an indicative finding may show that an expected aspect of difference is not significant, e.g., the graduates interviewed returned to three different countries. In the responses of those interviewed there was little detectable differences in their adjustment experience due to the country they returned to. Non-findings like this are significant in themselves and indicate that a difference inherent in the sample does not affect the adjustments encountered. In the example given, the countries to which the graduates returned either had very similar impacts on the graduates in terms of re-entry adjustment or the re-entry adjustments were generically related to returning home and not country specific.

Second, an indicative finding may represent the experience of some and not others, yet may be particularly significant as it indicates something of importance that should be noted. A very good example of this is found in comparing the re-entry adjustment of the twenty one graduates who had mentors, with the experience of the forty-six that did not. Those who had mentors reported high levels of appreciation as they felt their mentor had helped and encouraged them and made their re-entry experience better. This finding is significant and is explored in more detail in this chapter and the discussion in Chapter Six.

As mentioned in the introduction in Chapter One, demographic information related to interviewees was recorded and is presented in this chapter. The purpose of recording such information was to see the extent to which demographic factors affected re-entry adjustment. The factors thought possibly to have some effect were: gender, marital status, age, ethnicity, country of birth, length of stay in New Zealand, home town return and level of study. A description of the findings related to the demographic information collected follows in section 5.1.

The second area of indicative findings arose out of the literature survey and uses the work of Lawrence and Westwood (1988) and Espinelli Chinn (1987). A grid of potential re-entry problems (appendix 2) was constructed. The relevance of using it enables a comparison of the experiences of the sample for this study with other studies and also it enables an indication of the extent to which such problems were encountered.

The third area of indicative findings were those items that stood out as being significant for a proportion of those interviewed. These findings contribute information and understanding of significant value to answering the research questions. Obviously, a

subjective assessment has to be made in determining which findings can be regarded as significant, but those that are presented in section 5.3 stand out in two ways. First, they were significant to the graduates who were interviewed. In mentioning them the graduates also added significance to them by the way they mentioned them and the weighting they put on them in relation to their individual re-entry experience. Secondly, they stood out to the researcher in that they seemed to contribute to answering the research questions (see chapter 1.2) especially the two secondary spin-off questions.

The findings in section 5.3, taken with the findings presented in Chapter Four, form the main basis of the answer to the research question. Section 5.2 forms a basis of comparison and connection with other research and reveals the extent to which the subjects of the sample of this study experienced the indicative areas of adjustment listed by Lawrence and Westwood (1988) and Espinelli Chinn (1987). The demographic information in section 5.1 gives significant background information on the subjects of the interviews while maintaining their anonymity. The main contribution of this section in answering the research questions is to eliminate some factors as causal to re-entry problems and to put some others in focus as contributing to some of the causes of re-entry adjustment. Because of the nature of interviews not all demographic information was collected with absolute exactness.

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

The demographic information collected in the interviews is presented here along with the findings as to how each demographic factor affects or is affected by re-entry adjustment.

5.1.1 Country of Birth and Country of Residence: The sample has been divided according to the country where the graduates are presently living. It should be noted that of the twenty-eight Singaporeans interviewed almost half (twleve people) were Malaysians who had moved to Singapore as part of their job strategy. A view was apparent amongst Chinese Malaysian Graduates that Singapore was an integral, important and acceptable place for them to gain a job. All of those interviewed in Malaysia and Indonesia were born there. Over half of the total sample (37/67) were born in Malaysia. The country of birth and the country of residence seemed to have little or no effect on re-entry adjustment. The adjustment issues for all three countries seemed to be the same as far as the graduates were concerned.

5.1.2 Gender: Over one third of the total sample were females and, as figure 5.1 shows, that proportion was similar for each of the individual countries in the sample. Female graduates did not have any different experiences in adjustment to male graduates with one exception and that was the societal pressures on the five female graduates who opted to stay at home to care for young children. The pressure was felt more intensely by the females than the males who had participated in similar decisions but were not the ones who stayed at home with the children.

Figure 5.1 - Gender
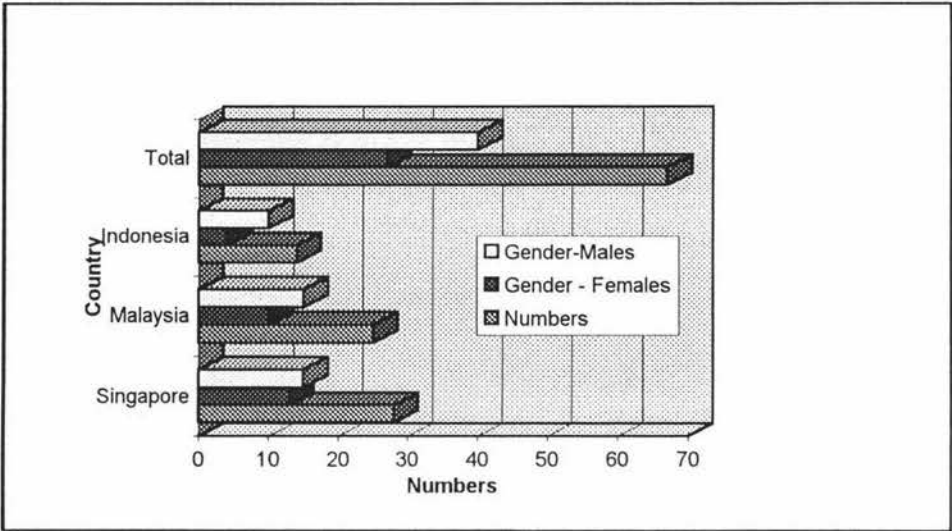
Source: Fieldwork by researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

5.1.3 Marriage: Four graduates were married before commencing study, with a further 16 marrying before returning home, and an additional 24 since returning. Five students became engaged in New Zealand to other students they met at university and the marriages were formalised almost immediately after they returned home and obtained jobs. Of the 19 marriages contracted in the graduates' home country, all but four were with overseas educated graduates met after returning home. Of the four married to non-overseas graduates, one was arranged by a former fellow classmate who wanted to see both his friend and his sister married to each other; one was to a childhood home town sweetheart and fitted extended family intentions; while the other two were with partners met locally. All four non-overseas marriage partners were local graduates. The information received on marital status of the graduates interviewed is summarised in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 - Marital Status
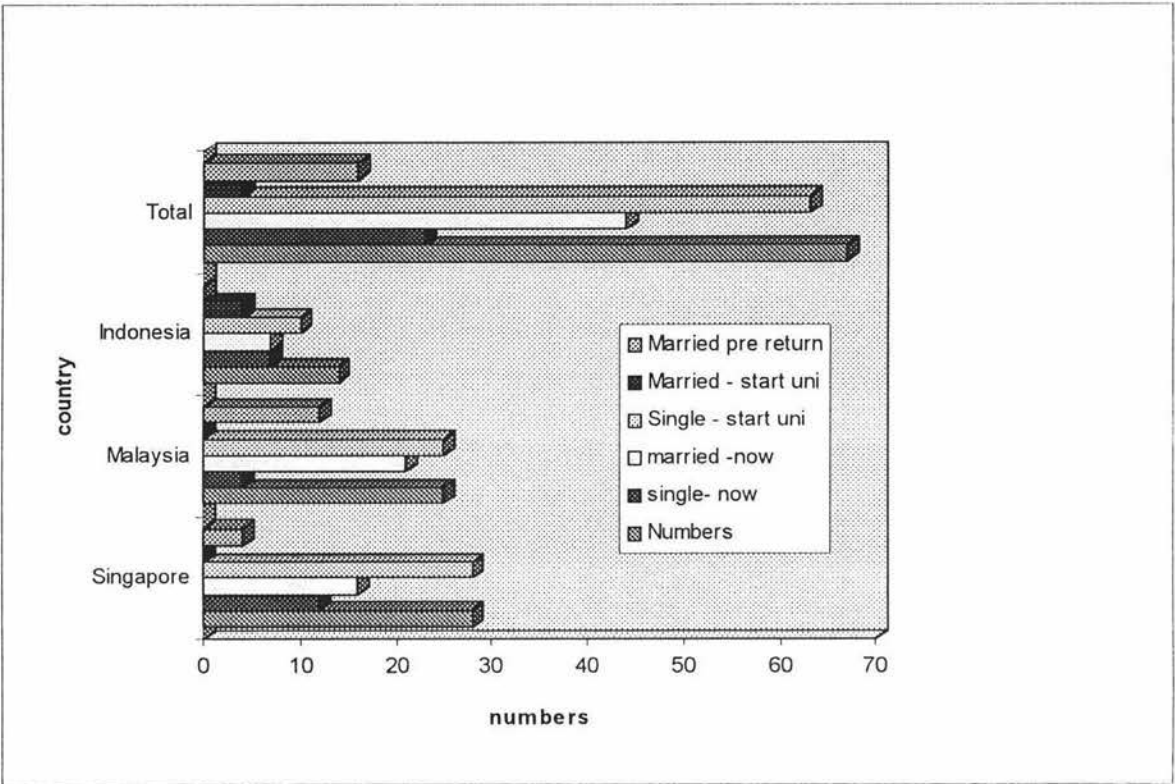
Source: Fieldwork by researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

The factor of marriage here is normative for the stage of life and there was little that could be gleaned in the interviews to suggest that the decision to marry or not was greatly influenced by anything to do with re-entry or re-entry adjustment. However, when marriage occurred before or immediately after return there were some effects on re-entry adjustment. Several (six) of the sixteen that married before returning commented in phase one of the interview that they decided to marry before returning home as they felt it would in some measure help to preserve their freedom of action and decision making. A mild fear of family interference in the decision to marry was part of the reason for marrying in New Zealand. They, and the others who married in New Zealand, gave reasons for doing so centred around the fact that they wanted to marry and they could

see no real reason for delaying. The five who married immediately after returning home all commented they decided on a home marriage so as to ensure family were involved.

Those married in New Zealand and soon after returning all reported that the adjustments to families and by families to them generated a variety of stresses and tensions for all parties. The perceptions of all graduates in this situation was that their marriage helped to insulate and protect them from some extended family pressures yet also provided other areas of adjustment such as the almost instant need to relate to their spouse's extended family without having time to cultivate relationship.

The nineteen marriages contracted at home seemed to have proceeded with family blessing and the decision as to who to marry to have rested with the graduate themselves. These marriages all occurred after the re-entrant graduate felt adjustment to re-entry had been made. Of the twenty three who at the time of the interviews were single, eight were females and fifteen were males. One of the males was to marry in a few weeks. This proportions of males to females remaining single was the same as the proportion of males to females in the sample. There were no indications that female graduates deferred marriage any more than male graduates. ·

The main indication on marriage was that graduates preferred to marry other overseas graduates. Only four marriages were to non-overseas educated graduates. The other indication is that all married graduates preferred marriage partners of similar education. When marriage occurred in New Zealand or soon after re-entry it impacted re-entry adjustment, particularly in the area of adjusting to family, adding the pressure of an instant, new, extended family, but there was also a perception that marriage protected

from some extended family pressures. Seven graduates who had married in New Zealand volunteered the opinion that their marriage helped them in their re-entry adjustment as they supported each other as they journeyed together. Marriage is a life issue that affects re-entry adjustment for those who marry near the time of re-entry. It adds an additional change to the context which both produces pressures and reduces pressures.

All marriages were to partners from the same ethnic background with the one exception of an Indian and Chinese marriage. This marriage had some additional family adjustment factors in its early stages, however, the couple who had met in New Zealand decided to return home and gain family approval before marrying. The relating to the two different ethnic family backgrounds created extra adjustments on return but these adjustments were not viewed by the couple concerned as related to re-entry. Three marriages were between Singaporeans and Malaysians and one was between an Indonesian and a Singaporean. All were Chinese and no graduates involved in these marriages reported any adjustments due to living with their partner out of their country of birth that differed in any way from the adjustments reported by the other graduates who married citizens of their own country..

5.1.4 Age: Four Singaporeans and five Indonesians came for post-graduate studies and were in their mid twenties on arrival. Most other graduates completed high school and came direct to university (eight Singaporeans did National Service before commencing university). The average age for students starting undergraduate study at university was twenty years. Those interviewed were largely young when they came to New Zealand. They arrived as adolescents and left as young adults. The key indication that can be drawn from this is that the sample were at a very formative stage in their lives when they

studied in New Zealand. This has already been mentioned in Chapter Four in the context of world-view change. The few slightly older students in the sample reported lower levels of stress in re-entry but these few older ones were also those with prior work history and in some cases were married. It is difficult to conclude that if a student is older when studying they will find re-entry easier, but no firm conclusion can be drawn on this point. What is certain is that the youthfulness of the graduates and their general lack of life experience contributed both to the extent of change while in New Zealand and probably the somewhat naive and high expectations on return. The factor of expectations is further explored in section 5.3.

5.1.5 Length Of Stay In New Zealand: This ranged from two years to ten years. seventeen graduates worked in New Zealand after graduation and prior to returning home. The average length of stay in New Zealand was just a little over four years. The average age on return was twenty six years (there is an apparent inconsistency in figures for ages and length of stay which may be due to how some people remember and the imprecise recording in the context of the interviews). All graduates interviewed had been back for at least two years, though some had been back as long as twelve years (average was seven and half years). The sample chosen ensured that graduates were reasonably close to the main adjustment period but, on the whole, sufficiently removed from it as to not be overly tied up in the adjustment process. The length of stay in New Zealand did not seem to affect the nature or intensity of re-entry adjustment. It would be expected that those who stayed longer would face greater adjustments, yet there was no discernible difference due to length of stay. This may be due to the fact that all had spent at least two years in New Zealand and that this length of time away may be sufficient to ensure the graduate is sufficiently affected as to encounter re-entry adjustments.

Table 5.1: Demographic Information of Returning graduates

	Singapore	Malaysia	Indonesia	Total
Numbers	28	25	14	67
Gender	15M, 13F	15M, 10F	10M, 4F	40M, 27F
Marital status-now	12S, 16M	4S, 21M	7S, 7M	23S, 44M
Marital status-uni	28 S	25S	10S, 4M	63S, 4M
Married pre return	4	12	0	16
work prior to study	12 yes, 16 no	1 yes, 24 no	5 yes, 9 no	18 yes, 49 no
Under/Post Grad	14 PG, 14 UG	6 PG, 19 UG	6 PG, 8 UG	26 PG, 41 UG
Home town return	12 no, 16 yes	19 no, 6 yes	8 no, 6 yes	39 no, 28 yes
Ethnic Origin	25 Chinese 1 Indian 2 Eurasian	25 Chinese *	8 Chinese 1 Sundanese 1 Javanese 4 Batak	58 Chinese 9 non Chinese

Note: * No Malays were interviewed partly due to sampling technique and partly due to the beginning of Ramadan occurring during the time in Malaysia.   Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97.

5.1.6 Ethnicity: Included in Table 5.1 is an indication of the ethnic origins of the sample. Fifty-eight graduates were Chinese. The sample was not balanced to reflect the ethnicity of the origin countries nor the ethnic balance of students from those countries studying in New Zealand. The ethnic imbalance in the sample arises from the use of relationship networks to find graduates willing to be interviewed. In addition, the time spent in Malaysia and Indonesia occurred during Ramadan, the Moslem fasting month, making it difficult to obtain interviews with graduates that were observing Ramadan. Often a graduate would feel ashamed at not being able to offer customary hospitality and the busyness associated with the social and religious aspects of Ramadan itself contributed to it being difficult to interview Moslem graduates. The result of this is that the sample used for the study is mainly Chinese. A comparison of the adjustments of the nine non-Chinese with those of the 58 Chinese did not reveal any difference in the patterns of re-entry adjustment as described in Chapter Four and in this Chapter. In looking for indicative results within the interviews there were parallels for each particular item that the non-Chinese and Chinese interviewees experienced alike. The indication that is drawn from this is that ethnicity does not affect the nature of re-entry adjustment for people from

Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. However this needs to be qualified by saying that the small numbers for comparison purposes and the fact that no Malays were amongst the sample suggests that a more representative sample would be desirable to be certain of such an indication.

5.1.7 Work Prior To Study: Eighteen of the graduates had worked prior to coming to New Zealand to study. Figure 5.3 shows the distribution revealing that two thirds of those that worked prior to study came from Singapore.

Figure 5.3 - Work Prior to Study
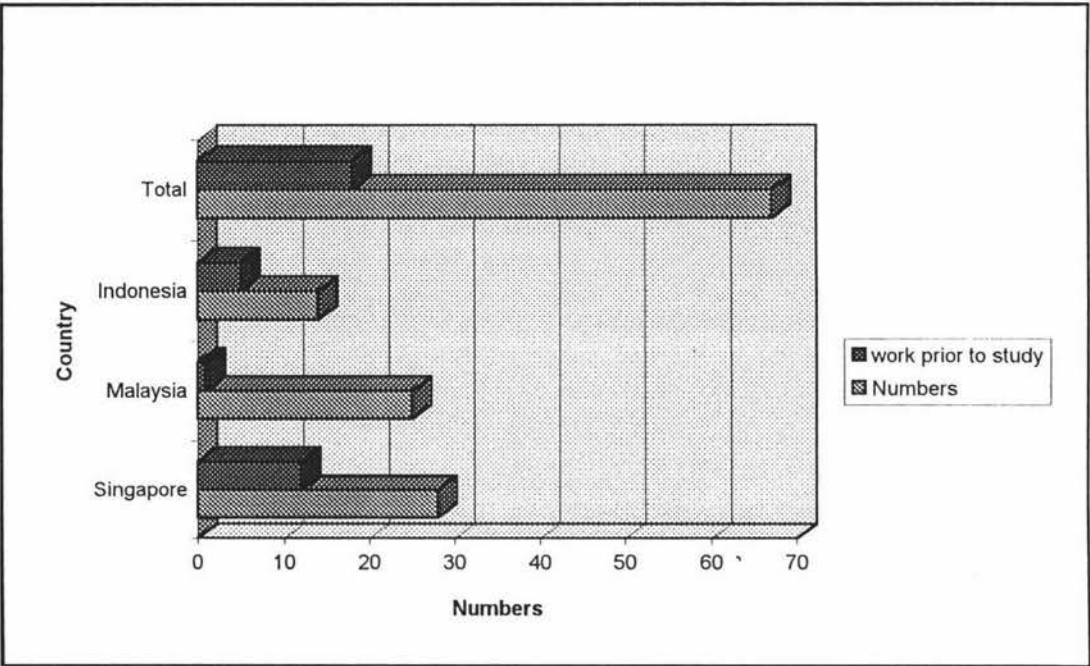
Source: Fieldwork by researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

It is important to note that those who had prior work experience before studying showed in the interviews a difference in perception regarding expectations relating to the workplace in their country of origin. Every graduate reported the work environment as a

major area of adjustment. However, those with prior work experience reported being less taken by surprise than those who had not worked previously. The findings relating to the work environment were the same for those with prior work experience but they reported lower expectations of the work environment, especially in the areas of work relationships. The lower expectation of, and the fact of knowing what the work environment was like, enabled those with prior work experience to be comparatively less stressed than those who were starting work in their country of origin for the first time. Those with work experience in New Zealand reported encountering some workplace stresses that were due to differences from what they had grown used to in this country. The two factors of expectation and prior knowledge identified in this area are developed further in section 5.3 in a wider context than the work environment as they show out as indications of significance.

5.1.8 Undergraduate & Post-graduate Differences: The distribution of numbers relating to level of degree received before returning is shown in Figure 5.4. What is not shown is that some post-graduates began as undergraduates and some entered New Zealand for the purpose of obtaining post-graduate qualifications.

Figure 5.4 - Undergraduate and Post-graduate Numbers
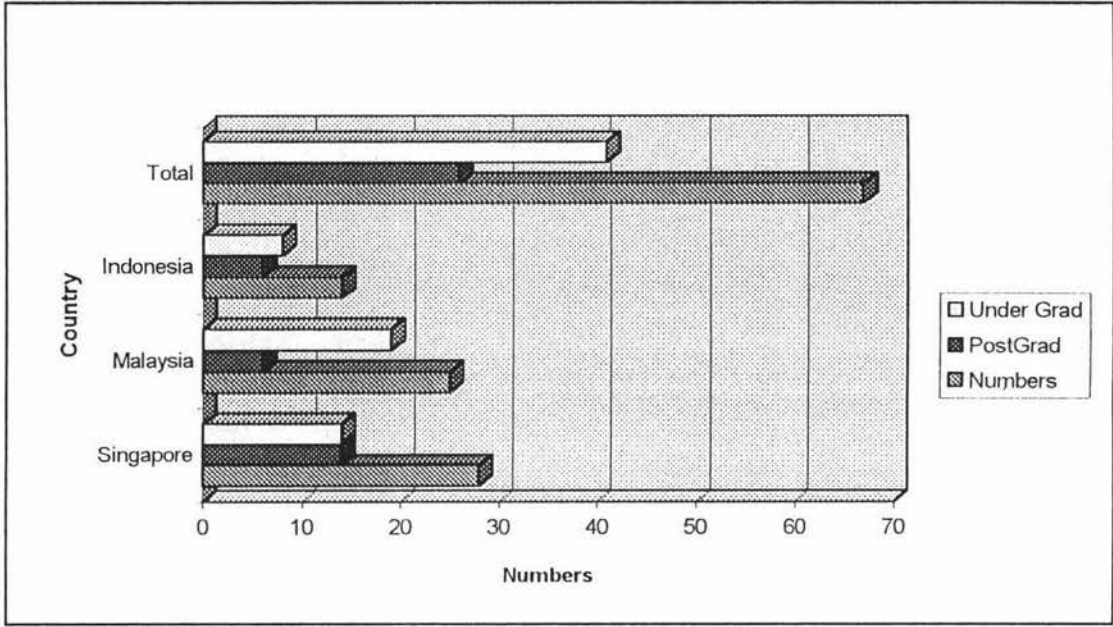
Source: Fieldwork by researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

Figure 5.4 indicates that students returning to Singapore are more likely to have obtained post-graduate qualifications than those returning to Indonesia and Malaysia. All of those who came for post-graduate study had worked prior to coming to New Zealand. Those who had begun as undergraduates and completed post-graduate qualifications and who had not had prior work experience had very similar experiences in re-entry to those who returned after undergraduate study.

5.1.9 Home Town Return: Very few Malaysians returned to their home town. The twelve that returned to Singapore were Malaysians. This indicates Malaysian graduates tend to have to move to get work. Figure 5.5 shows that over half the sample did not return to their home town. It was thought this could have some bearing on their re-entry adjustments as those who did not return to their home town were likely to be in less

contact with family. Issues of adjusting to family were assumed to be less for those who did not return to their home town.

Figure 5.5 - Home Town Return
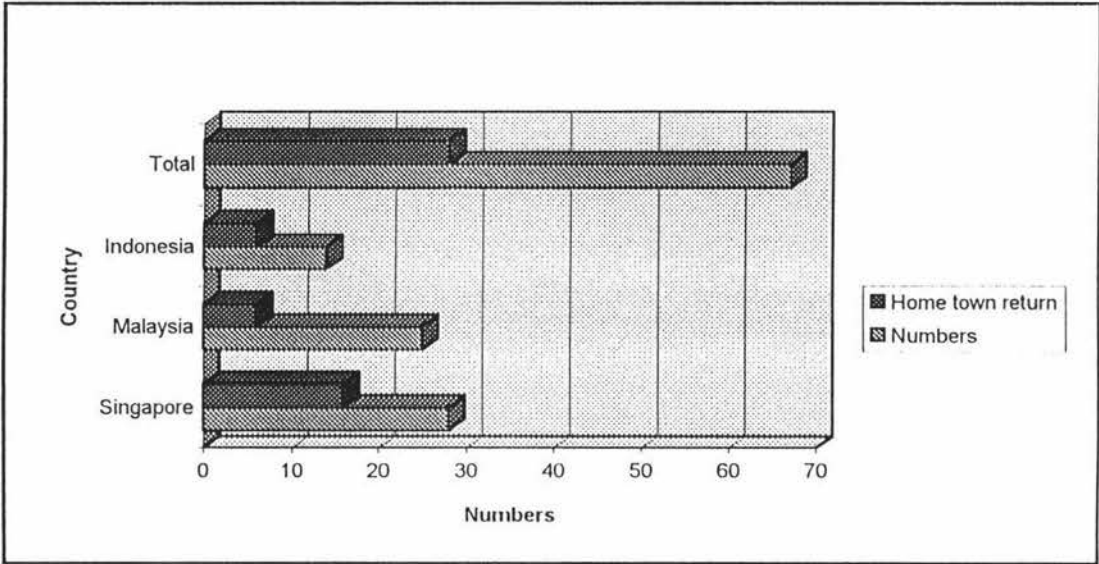
Source: Fieldwork by researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

The interviews, however, showed that those who did not return to their home town reported similar levels of adjusting to family. Home town return seemed to produce similar re-entry adjustments to returning to another town.

5.1.10 General Picture: This is one of young, predominantly Chinese people leaving home as adolescents and returning as adults. During the time away they lived independently of their families and were exposed to different models of living. A third of the students married before returning and a further third contracted marriages relatively soon after returning. Table 5.1 summarises the general information gathered. The breakdowns of nationality, ethnicity and gender provide an overview of the unchangeable characteristics of the sample. In addition, marital status (see figure 5.2), prior work

history (figure 5.3), study being postgraduate or undergraduate (figure 5.4) and whether the graduate returned to their home town (figure 5.5) were recorded. Each demographic factor recorded was looked at to see if there was any bearing on graduate re-entry adjustment. The presentation of information about the sample of graduates interviewed helps to create a picture of the sample.

The indications are that differences of gender, nationality, ethnicity, level of study, length of stay beyond two years and home town returns do not affect re-entry adjustment. Age, marital status and prior work histories do have effects on re-entry adjustment.

5.2 INDICATIONS FOUND USING THE GRID OF POTENTIAL RE-ENTRY PROBLEMS

In the second phase of the interviews, the interviewee was asked to comment on the categories listed in appendix 2. This happened only if they had not already volunteered information in phase one. The procedure used was to mention each general heading and only use the more specific items under each heading if the interviewee asked for direction. The information from phase two, along with appropriate information volunteered in phase one, is presented here.

A matrix was envisioned as the means to present the breakdown of numbers and a measure of intensity in the areas listed in appendix 2. After conducting the interviews, it became apparent that a simpler descriptive presentation would be appropriate. The three categories that were presented in chapter four stand out clearly. Some of the items in

phase II fit exactly into these three areas. They are allowed to remain in this analysis of potential re-entry problems for completeness of comparison.

The use of appendix 2 was an outcome of the literature survey and it seemed a useful format to present indicative findings relating to re-entry adjustment. It could certainly be useful in comparing this study with other studies that have used this format. The information generated from the interviews has been examined to identify the extent to which the potential problems listed in appendix 2 are encountered and a simple measure of degree of intensity has been attempted.

Some items were volunteered in phase I of the interviews and some in phase II. To reflect this a very simple measure of degree has been used. If an item was mentioned in phase I of the interviews it has been presented on the grid as the number 2. If it was mentioned in phase II then the number 1 was used. A blank means no mention was made. This simple presentation (see appendix 3) allows for limited comment and comparison to be made with other studies that are similarly framed. It is convenient to be able to distinguish one interview from another within the grid, so all interviews have been renumbered and presented to reflect country, gender and degree-completion level. No names or means by which an interviewee could be identified are presented, as it was promised that anonymity would be preserved in the presentation of any information arising from the interviews.

The numbering was further processed to give a pictorial representation of the extent to which an item from appendix 2 was an area of adjustment within the whole sample. By giving a phase I response a score of 2 and a phase II response a score of 1 with no score

for a non-response a subjective measure has been introduced. Each item listed in appendix 2 was scored to give a measure of the extent to which this item was an area of adjustment across the sample. The scoring is a simple summation for each individual item converted to a percentage of the sample or sub sample under consideration. The percentages were graphed to give a pictorial representation. Within the pictorial representation items can be compared with one another and within an item sub samples can be compared. The numbers are just a means of converting a subjective measure into a graphical representation. The shape of the graph is what is important as it describes a trend. The absolute measure within the next 20 graphs could not and should not be used to interpolate further data as this is an approximate way of processing.

If a full survey were used, then a relative measure for each item could be asked of each person surveyed and over a large sample quite an accurate measure of a trend could be found. In this situation the focus of attention is on the trend and whilst numbers and mathematical functions are used to indicate the trend they are an arbitrary convenience. There is a weakness in this technique as the assignment of an initial score of 2, 1, or 0 to an item is subjective. The reason for such an assignment is to allow distinction within responses and a means by which sample responses can be taken as a whole and processed.

The plotting of responses in appendix 3 shows that responses under the headings "National and Political Problems" and "Educational Problems" are minuscule and do not warrant graphing. The responses under the other five headings are graphed and presented with comment. Under each heading the trend for the total sample was examined. The sub samples for country, gender and degree-completion level were chosen

as they lend themselves to straight forward examination and comparison. The graphs arising from processing the data of appendix 3 are presented as follows:

5.2.1 Cultural Adjustment: The first set of items in appendix 2 was the potential re-entry problems related to cultural adjustment. Figure 5.6 indicates that all interviewees experienced problems related to lifestyle changes. The other items experienced by many, were those of expectations and the pressure to conform. Changes in fashion did not seem to have been a problem, and provinciality was a problem for a few. Problems with the concept of time were minor, but the pace of life bothered a significant number and identity confusion impacted on the sample to a similar extent.

Figure 5.6 - Cultural Adjustment by Total Sample
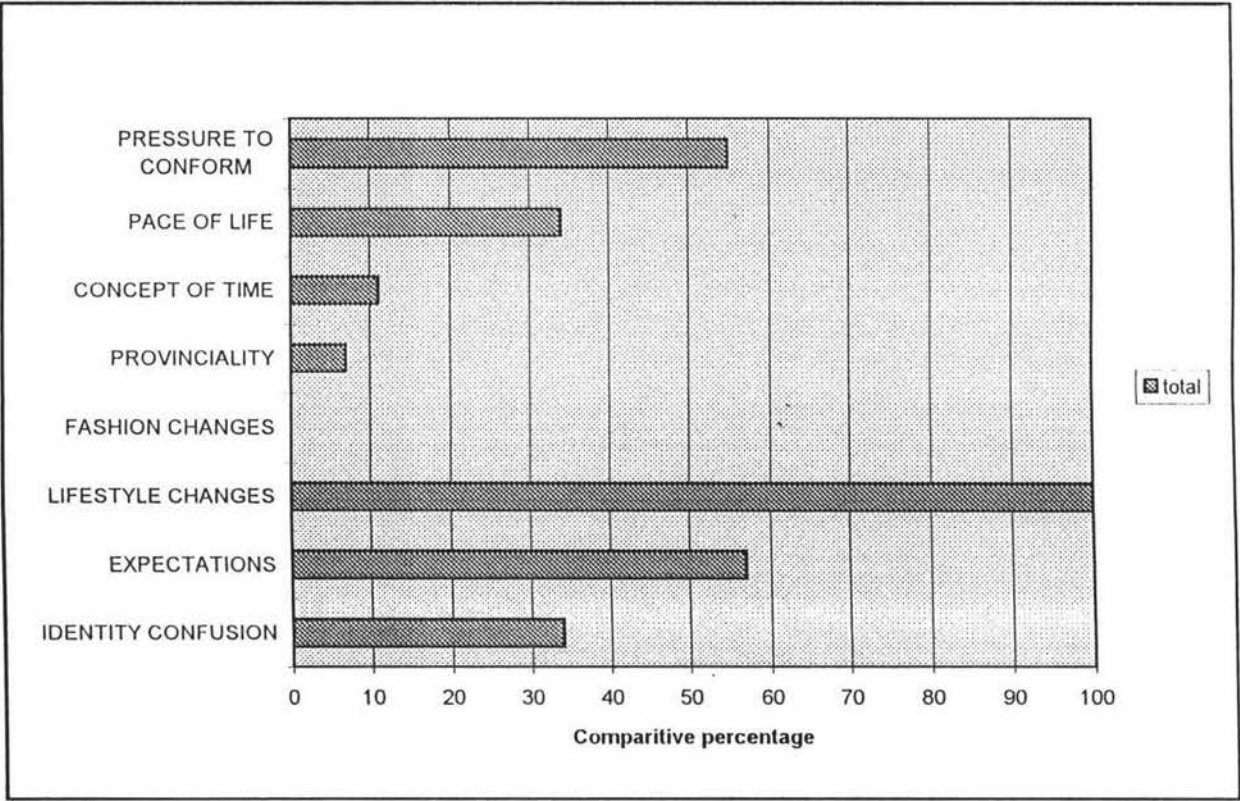
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

The breakdowns in terms of the sub samples of country, gender and level of degree are depicted in figures 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 respectively.[1] Some trends emerge from examining the comparison of cultural adjustment by countries, as depicted in figure 5.7. Singapore shows greater pressure to conform and a greater pace of life. The Indonesians seem to have had fewer problems with cultural adjustment than the Malaysians, who in turn seem to have had fewer problems than the Singaporeans apart the area of expectations. The lifestyle changes remain universal for all and are consistent with the findings in chapter four. Looking at the comparison for gender, figure 5.8 shows there is little difference in cultural adjustment for male and female graduates. The only deviation from that is in the area of expectations where it appears females have more unrealistic expectations of their cultural adjustment than do males.

Figure 5.7 - Cultural Adjustment by Country
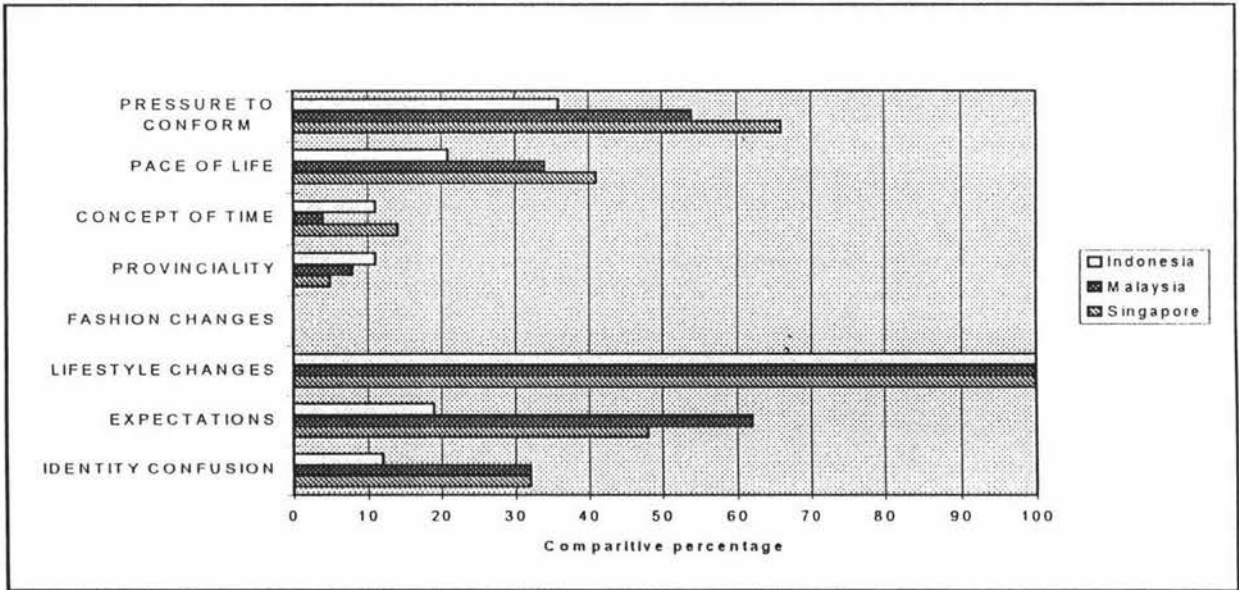
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

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[1] Note in reading Figures 5.7-5.9 the percentage measure for these sub samples is based against the number within the sub sample and is not a partition of the total sample

Figure 5.8 - Cultural Adjustment by Gender
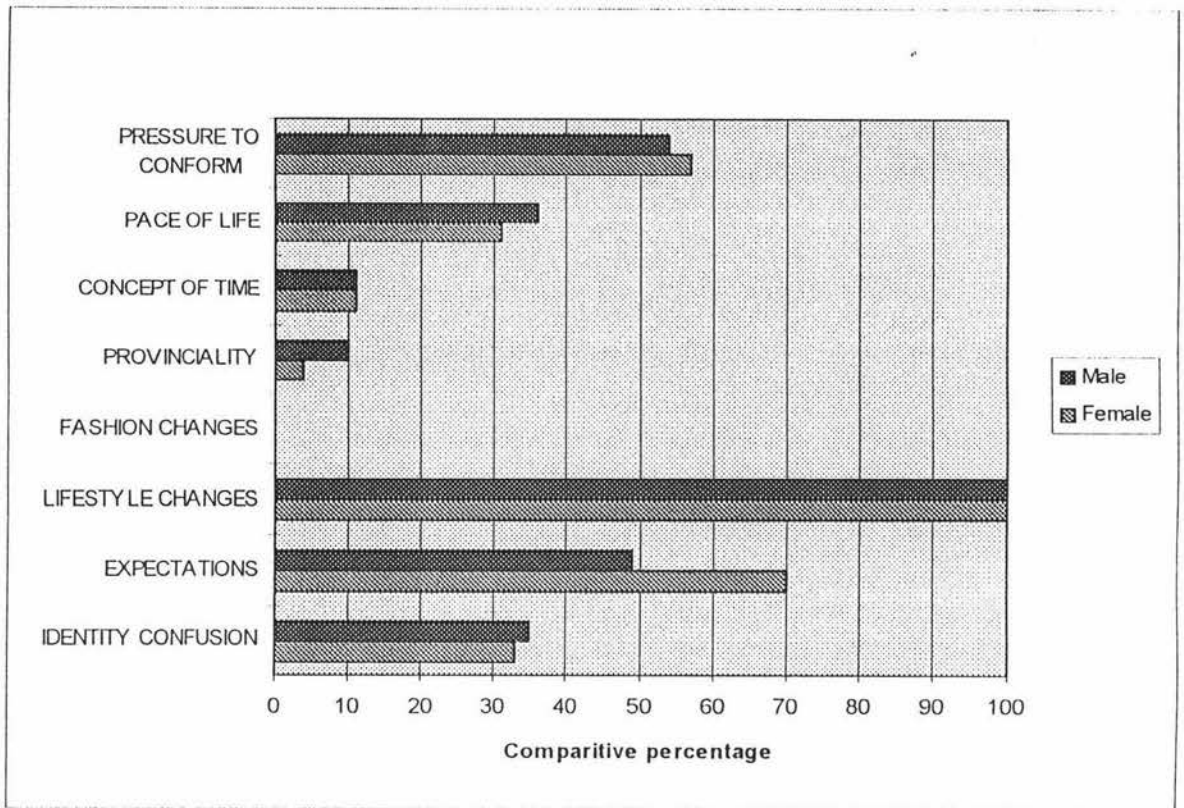
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

Figure 5.9 - Cultural Adjustment by Degree-completion Level
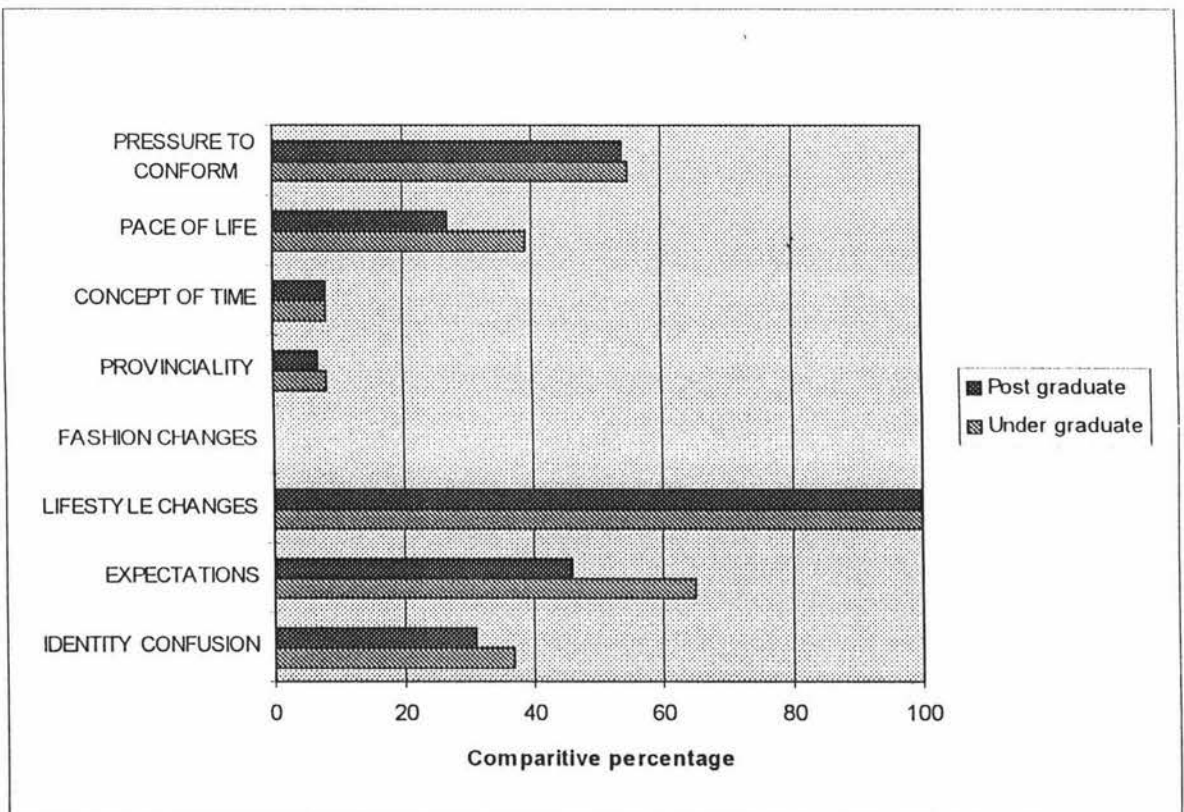
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

A similar trend is revealed for undergraduates. There is little difference revealed in figure 5.9 for the cultural adjustment of those completing undergraduate degrees to those completing post-graduate ones. Undergraduates, however, like the females, show higher levels of unrealistic expectations. This factor of expectations should be investigated further as there may be a gender related aspect to it, or alternatively a question of degree-completion levels, or a combination of both. In the sample, only six of the 26 post-graduates were females. This results in the undergraduates containing a higher proportion of females and the female sample containing a higher proportion of undergraduates. What we can say is that female undergraduates show higher levels of unrealistic expectations of their cultural adjustment. We cannot with any certainty conclude male undergraduates and female postgraduates will encounter higher levels of unrealistic expectations of cultural adjustment. Exploring this could be part of a further study.

5.2.2 Social Adjustment: Envy and distrust in interpersonal relationships was the most significantly-felt item of social adjustment in the list of potential re-entry problems. It was not universally felt and a significant group of graduates commented on how good relationships had aided their re-entry transition. It should, however, be noted that only five interviewees did not comment on this item in either phase I or phase II of the interviews. Many did so when the area of social adjustment was mentioned in phase II. That little prompt brought memories to mind of envy, distrust, jealousy and difficulties in relating to colleagues at work and sometimes to family members. Figure 5.10 also shows that different interests scored fairly highly as a trend. Surprisingly, feeling superior, because of international experience and travel did not rate a mention.

Figure 5.10 - Social Adjustment Total Sample
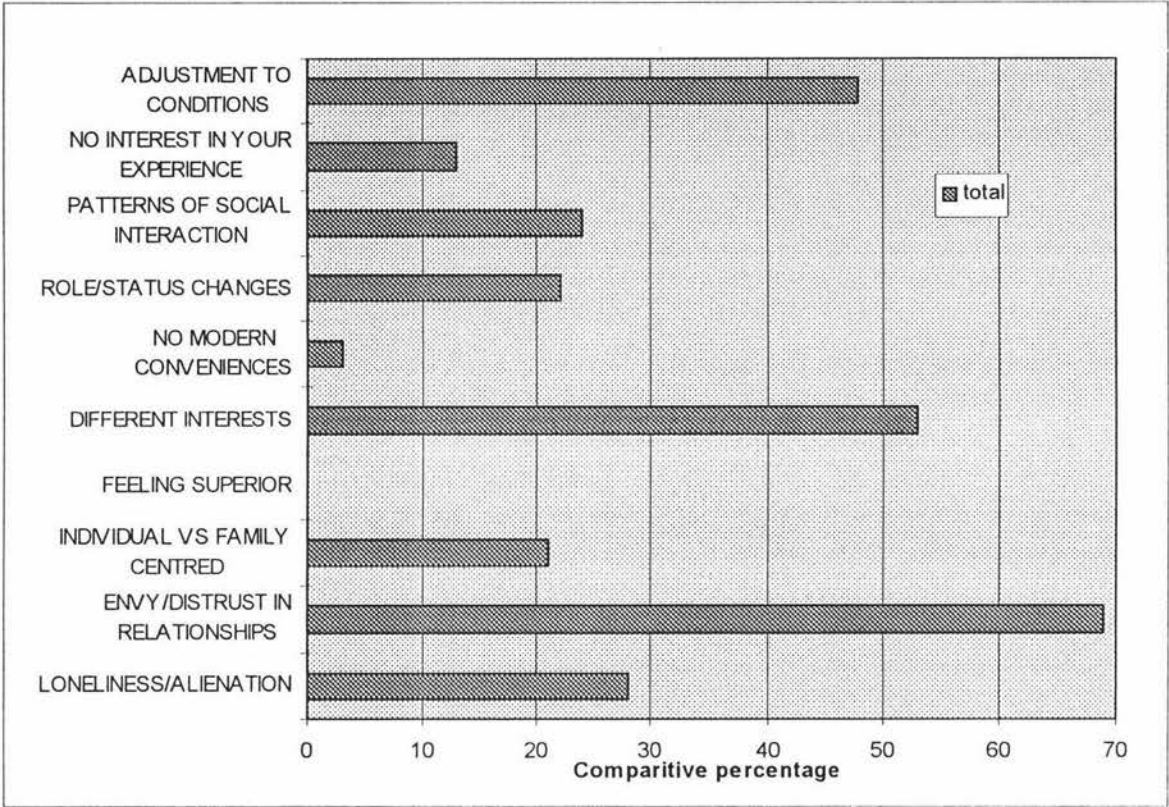
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

Certainly no returning graduate was willing to volunteer that they had feelings of superiority. Detectable within the interviews was a level of humility and there were expressions of regret that in some social contexts some fellow citizens would flaunt wealth and social standing. One other comment that was recorded because it was made strongly in the interview related to bad local etiquette. The interviewee found in their social context, people acted selfishly and proudly as if they were more important than those around them. The interviewee considered many such people to be bad mannered.

Adjustment to conditions also rated highly. Most acknowledged that noise, pollution, congestion, etc, were a consequence of returning home and choosing to work and live in

a large Asian city. Most were aware of what they were going to and their adjustment was hardest in the first month to six weeks but they acclimatised quite rapidly. The noisy, polluted, congested environment offered a lot of opportunity. One graduate commented that living in the big city offered the opportunity to make significant amounts of money and secure a future for their family.

When examining the social adjustment by country as depicted in figure 5.11 there are a number of trends that emerge. The Malaysians had the fewest problems with adjusting to conditions; the least tension with family; but the greatest problem with loneliness and alienation. Most Malaysian graduates lived in a different town from their families as they moved to the job. The Indonesians were more affected by differing interests from locals and were the most dissatisfied with patterns of social interaction. However, they were the least affected by loneliness and alienation. The Singaporeans maintained themselves fairly consistently with the highest overall total social adjustment.

Figure 5.11 - Social Adjustment by Country
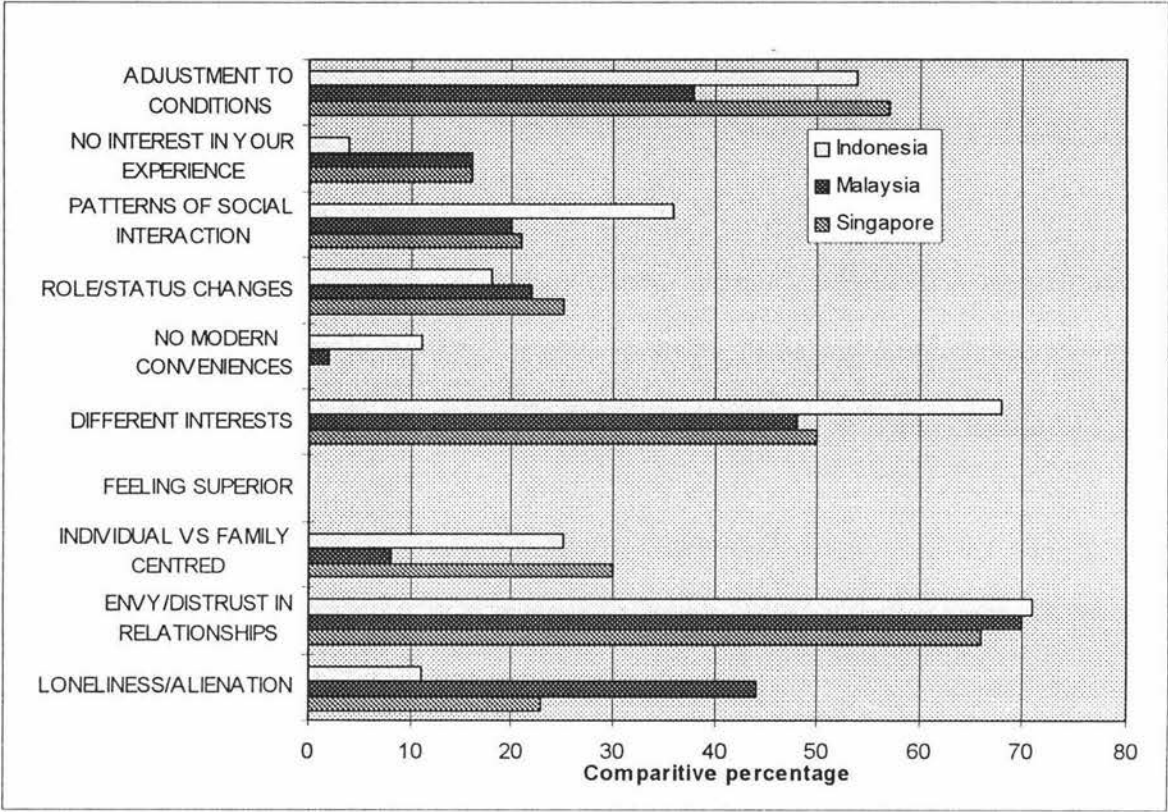
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

There are no noticeable outstanding differences in the comparisons of gender and degree-completion levels other than it seems the male graduates developed greater differences of interest than their female counterparts. The graphs of these, figure 5.12 for gender and 5.13 for degree-completion level are included here for completeness and to reinforce the extent of each item of social adjustment.

One area, not covered in this section, is that social adjustment was aided by friends who acted as mentors, and by maintaining friendships with other graduates who returned about the same time and ended up in the same city. Friendships forged during university

days provided a support base and a social context for many of the returning graduates.

These items are looked at in more detail in section 5.3.

Figure 5.12 - Social Adjustment by Gender
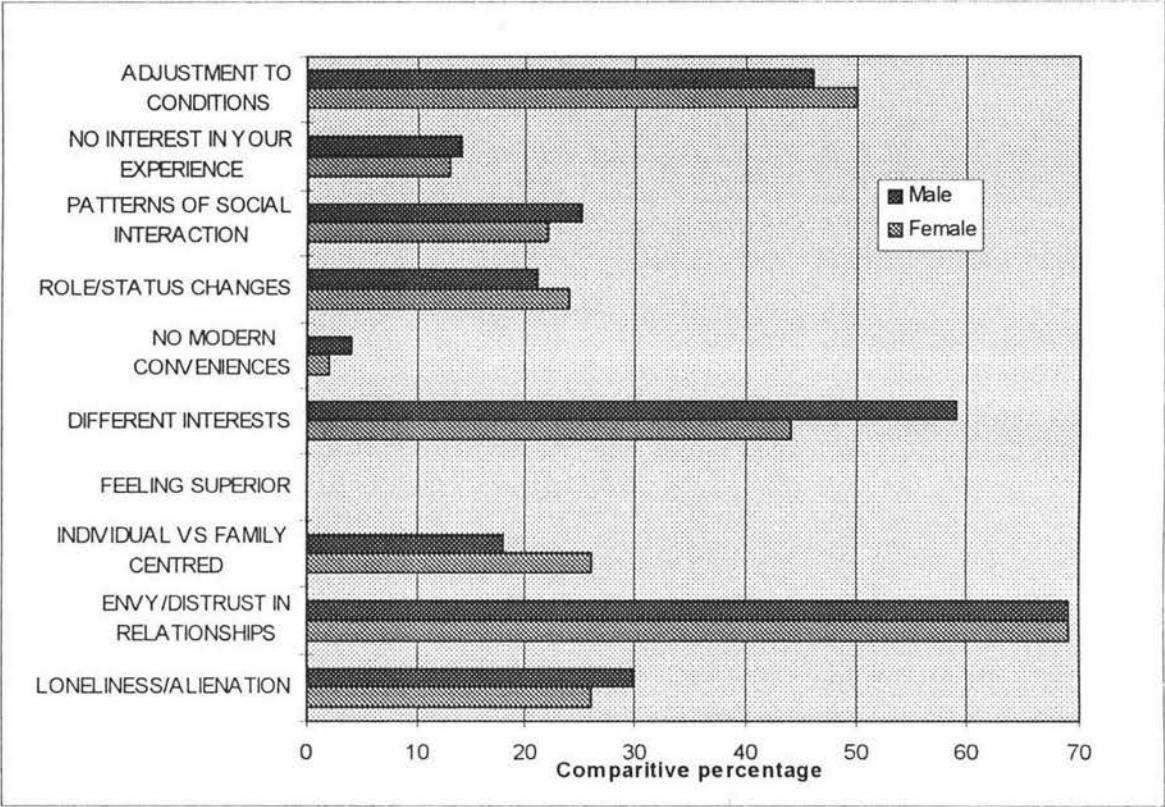
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

Figure 5.13 - Social Adjustment by Degree-completion Level
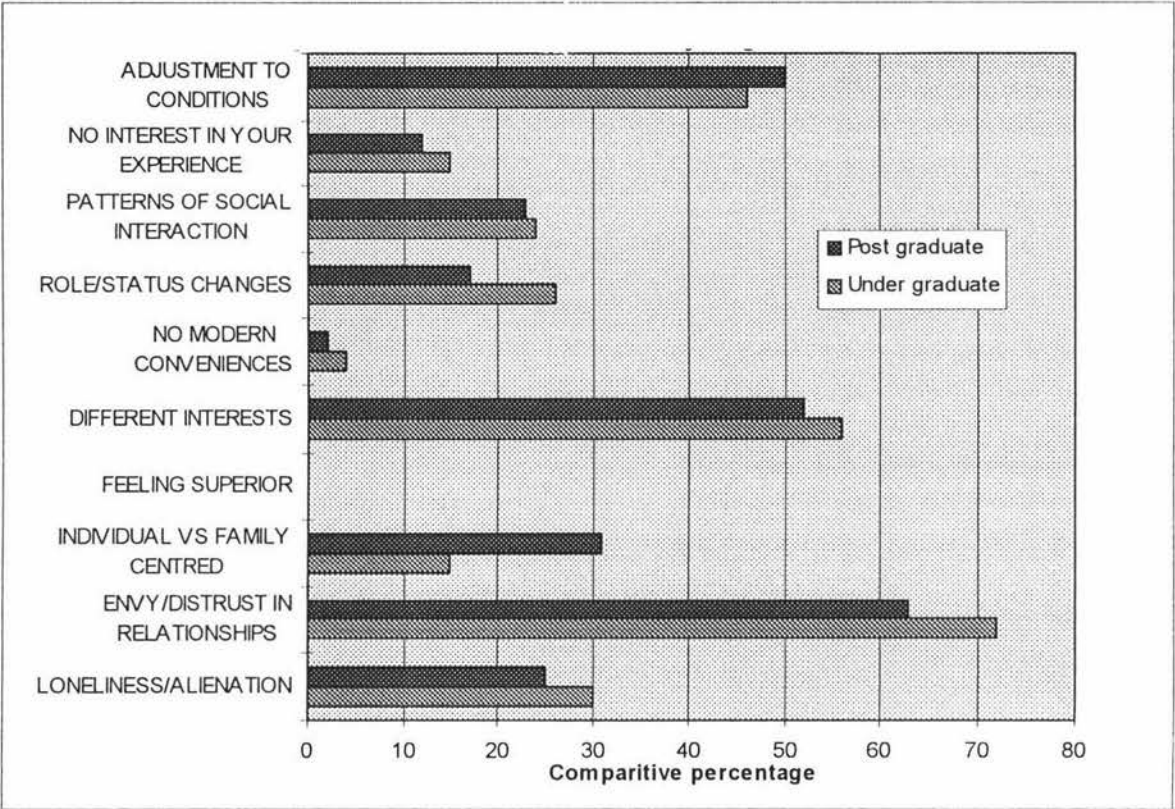
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

5.2.3 Communication Barriers: In phase I of the interviews a number of graduates mentioned how they had to adjust their language and accent to ensure they were accepted at work and in some social contexts. The way they were speaking created a social barrier rather than a communication barrier. In figure 5.14 five barriers to communication are looked at. The leading barriers recorded were being unfamiliar with new forms of communication and impatience with regard to indirect communication.. Very few of the interviewees felt they were isolated from colleagues who spoke the same "language."

Figure 5.14 - Communication Barriers, Total sample
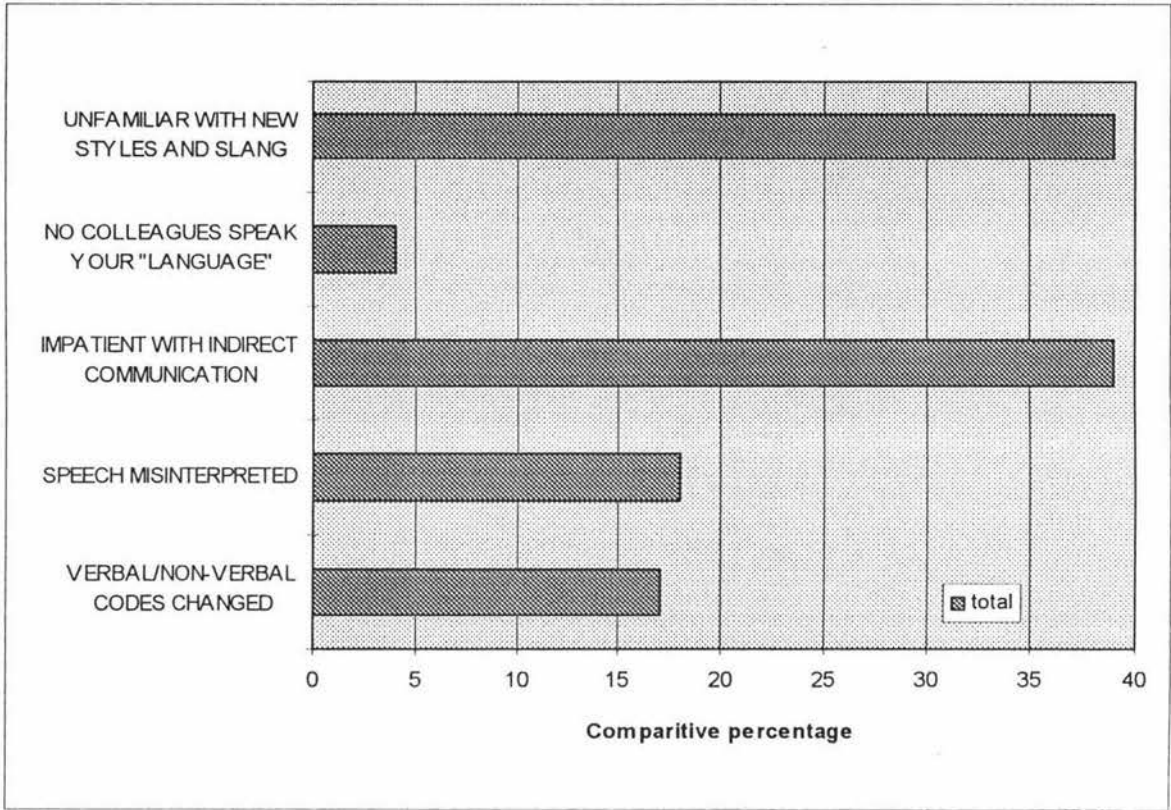
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

An interesting trend emerged when the communication barriers are considered by country. The Indonesians display in figure 5.15 a significant variance from the overall totals for the sample. They are least affected by new styles of communication but most affected by indirect communication and they provide all of the interviewees who had problems finding colleagues that speak their own "language." They were contrastingly lowest in adopting non-verbal codes which are not familiar to other Indonesians. This trend is a curious one as it would be expected that each of these four items would be related and the trend would be similar. The Singaporeans are consistent with the totals for the overall sample but the Malaysians were at variance with the overall sample on the item of impatience with indirect communication where they showed up as the lowest.

On communication barriers and gender (figure 5.16) there is little overall variance from the total sample. Females displayed a greater level of impatience with indirect communication and males were slightly more familiar with new styles of speaking and slang.

Figure 5.15 - Communication Barriers by Country
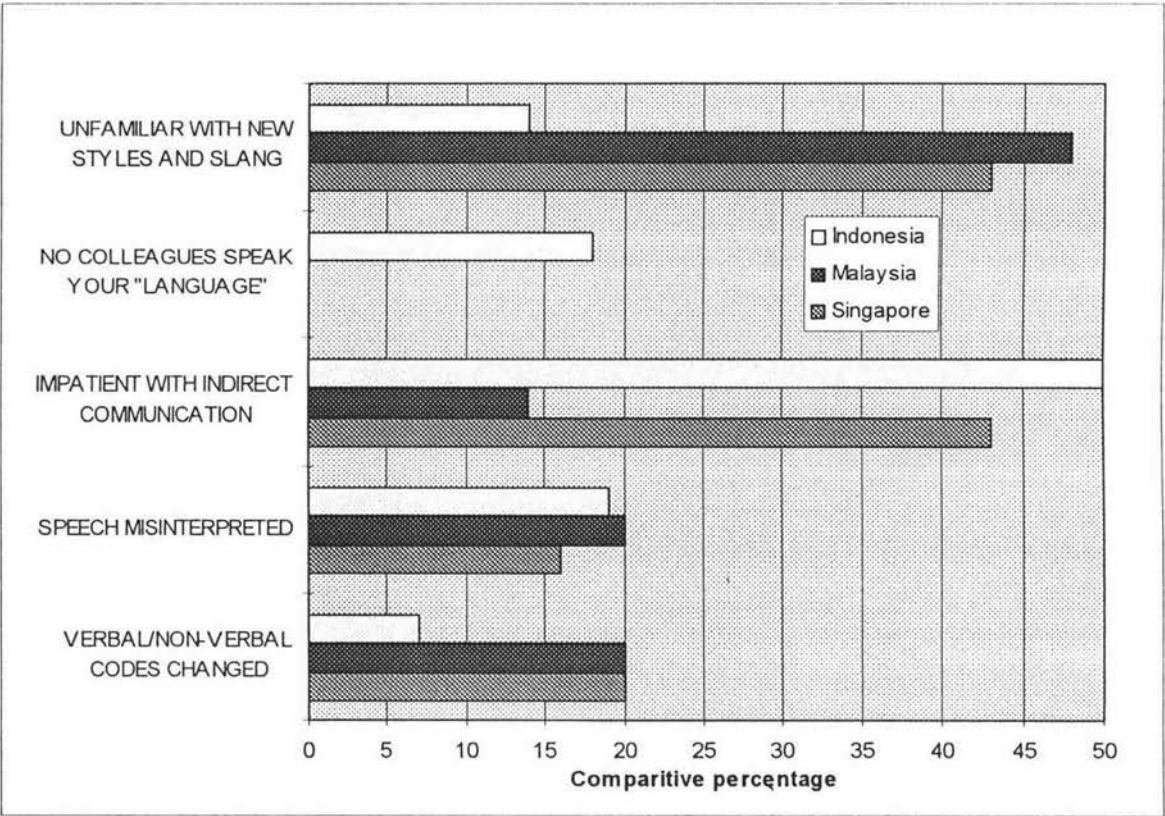
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

Figure 5.16 - Communication Barriers by Gender
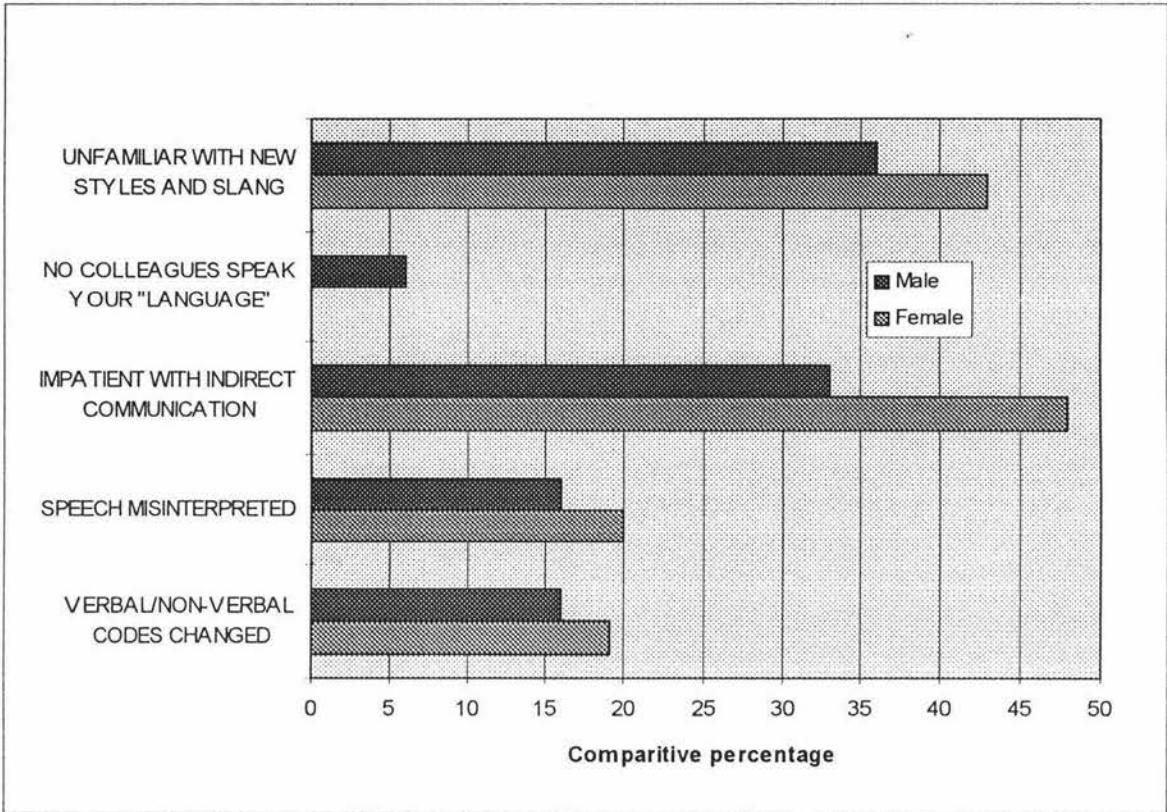
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

Figure 5.17 - Communication Barriers by Degree-completion Level
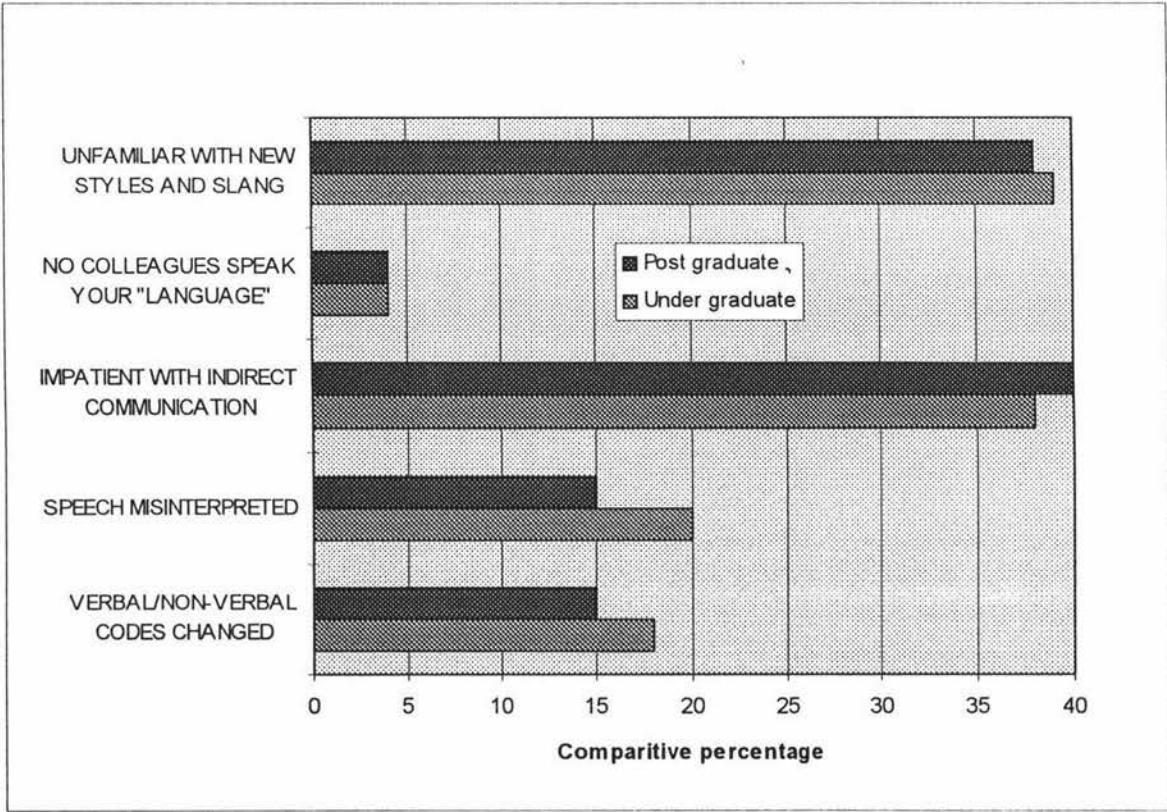
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

Looking at figure 5.17, it appears that those completing undergraduate degrees and those completing post-graduate degrees had very similar experiences on return with communication barrier problems.

In the other column in appendix 3 there were quite a few notes regarding communication barriers. These individual comments are significant as they identify specific communication problems. One problem identified was the issue of being able to communicate with one's supervisor. This was identified more strongly under the issue of relating to one's supervisor and has been covered in Chapter Four. Communication is clearly part of relating. The other barrier identified is that of language and, more specifically, speaking Malay in Malaysia was a problem to a number of graduates as it seems they had received very little formal training in the language and it had become more important for work and dealing with government. The other items mentioned specifically were: Singapore English in the vernacular or "Singlish" as it is often referred to, and a supervisor who insisted in speaking all the time to his staff in one of the lesser known Chinese dialects.

The level of communication problems is low when one considers the diversity of languages and cultures in the three countries. It can be assumed that the interviewees, having grown up in that context, learned strategies for overcoming barriers to communication strategies which they continued to use in New Zealand in relating to New Zealanders and their brand of English, and the diversity of international students they encountered in New Zealand universities.

5.2.4 National and Political Problems: Not enough of these were recorded to produce other than flat line graphs. Five graduates offered comments. Sixty-two did not. The national and political scene in each of the countries had very little impact on the returning graduate in respect of their encountering problems in adjusting. Of the five responses the two from Singapore were outside the appendix 2 items. One was a comment that Singapore is over-regulated and the other was from the unemployed graduate who felt highly impacted by the inadequate social welfare system of Singapore. Of the other responses, one Malaysian had concerns related to the economic uncertainty within the country, and two Indonesians identified with the concept of the political not being helpful to their advancement. Apart from these five, the other interviewees felt the national and political scene had very little impact on their adjusting to re-entry.

5.2.5 Educational Problems: The category of educational problems also had very little response amongst the returning graduates. In the items of appendix 2 only six graduates responded. However a further four offered items in the other category. No graphing was attempted. Of the six respondents within the grid of items, four were under the heading of educational goals not fulfilled. Three of these were Indonesian graduates all of whom had been on scholarships. Each had received scholarships that had a limited term. Each had the experience of being encouraged by supervisors to sign on for higher degrees and being told they were on track for that. They had shifted goals during their time in New Zealand and when the terms of their scholarship were insisted upon and they had to return, they felt they had underachieved. The three others of the six came from Singapore and two felt that their education in New Zealand lacked relevance to the work they had obtained. The third also claimed to have underachieved, having had to return to meet Singapore government requirements regarding their loan to train in New Zealand. They had been personally motivated to go to a post-graduate level rather than by a

supervisor. Of the four comments in the other category, three Singapore graduates mentioned the issue of standard operating procedures. A lot of jobs were required to be done efficiently and in a particular way, hence the concept of a standard procedure. They felt they compared badly to Singapore graduates who had far more practical drilling and training for carrying out functions important to the nature of their work. The other comment came from a Malaysian who said that much of their study in law and business had used New Zealand as the context and therefore much of their training was irrelevant to their Malaysian situation.

5.2.6 Professional Problems: Figure 5.18 details the professional problems encountered. Unmotivated co-workers and unrealistic expectations were covered in Chapter Four and identified throughout this analysis as universal. The jealousy of colleagues and impatience at slow promotion and salary increase seem to have affected a proportion of the sample.

Figure 5.18 - Professional Problems by Total sample
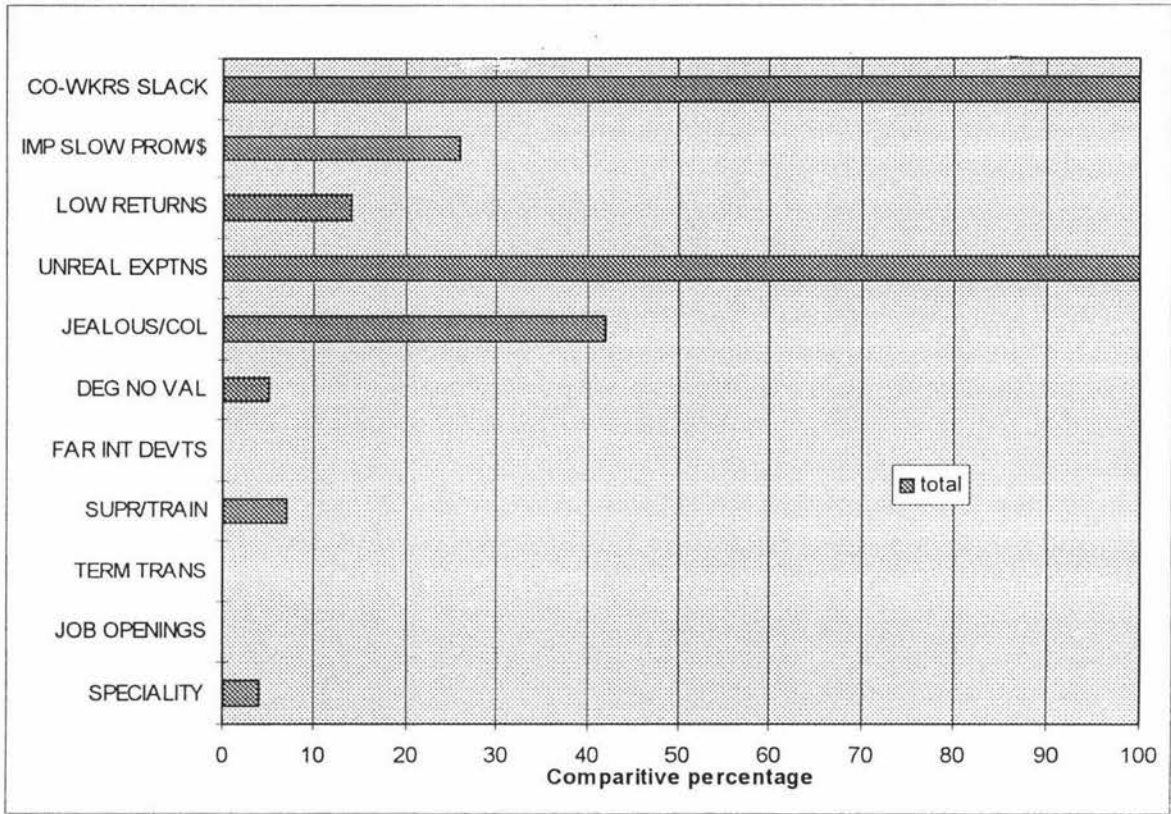
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

No-one interviewed felt that the job market lacked openings, however, they did feel, as has been mentioned in Chapter Four, that they lacked the skills needed for finding a job. No one felt they were isolated from international developments in their field and no one identified difficulties in translating foreign terminology. They largely felt their degree was appreciated and valued, and generally they did not feel they had problems due to regarding their training as superior. Most had been able to work in their chosen speciality.

When looking at the analysis by country (figure 5.19), the main variance is due to the Malaysians experiencing greater degrees of slow promotion and salary increase; less

benefit; and a greater degree of jealousy amongst colleagues. The Indonesians did not seem to find promotion and material success a problem but did experience a higher degree of feelings that their overseas training made them superior.

Figure 5.19 - Professional Problems by Country
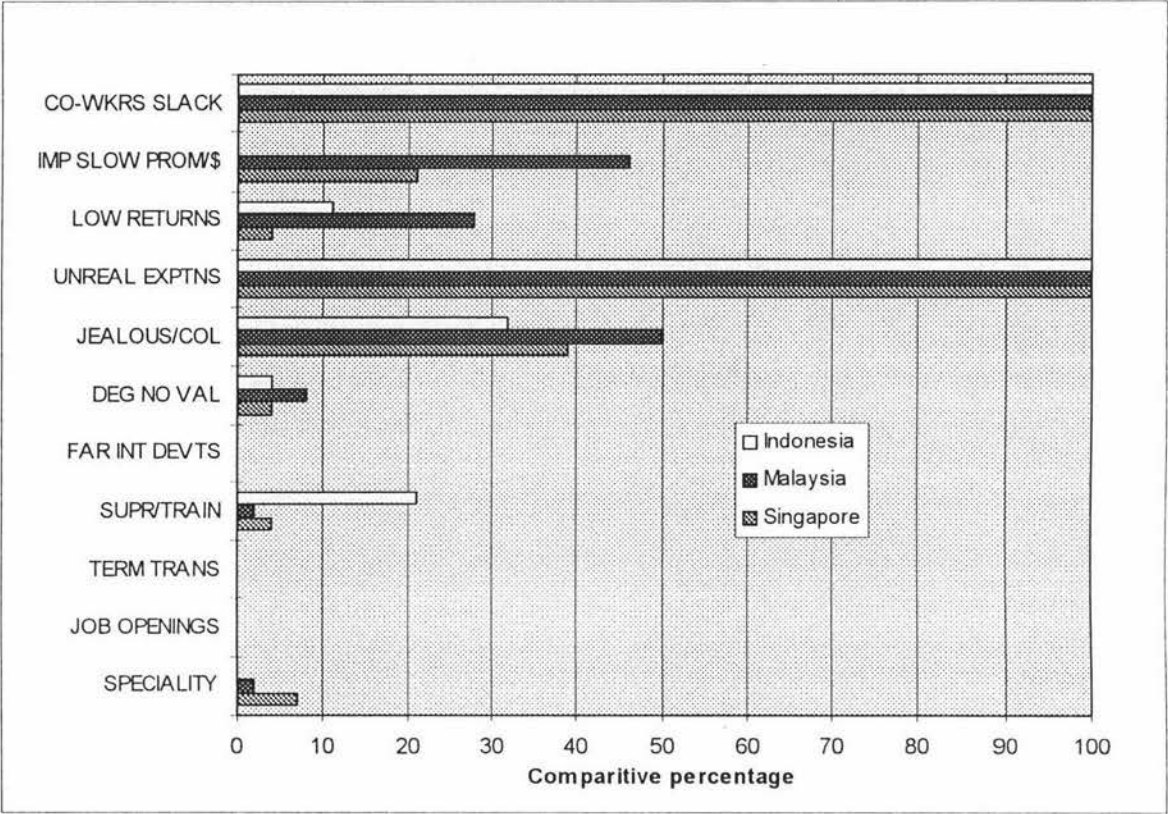
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

Figure 5.20 Professional Problems by Gender
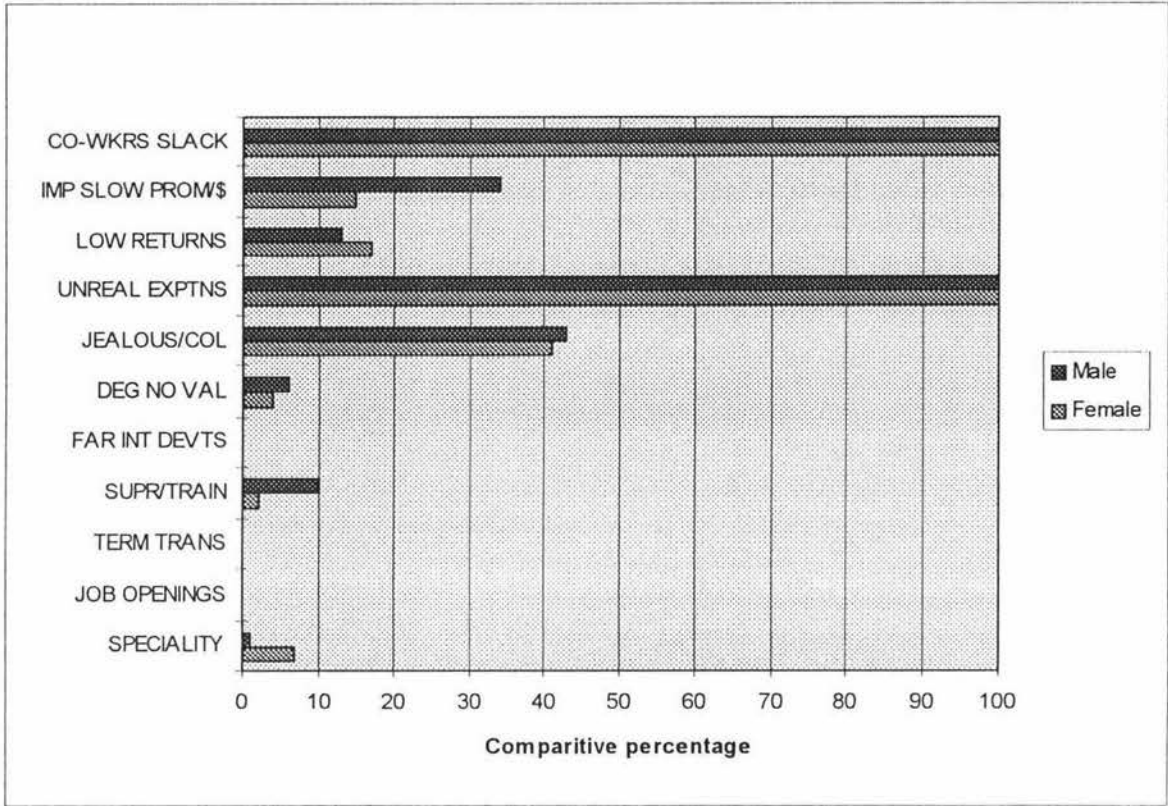
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

The significant item related to gender to show up in figure 5.20 is the of impatience with slow promotion and concern over the lack of quick material success. The males show a higher level of adjustment in this area. All other items follow the sample trends. There is a small predisposition for males to have feelings of superiority due to overseas training, and a slightly higher percentage of females experiencing problems with getting work in their area of speciality.

The graph for degree-completion levels, figure 5.21, follows the pattern for the total sample. It seems the level of degree-completion has little impact on the levels of adjustment experienced within the sample.

Figure 5.21 - Professional Problems by Degree-completion Level
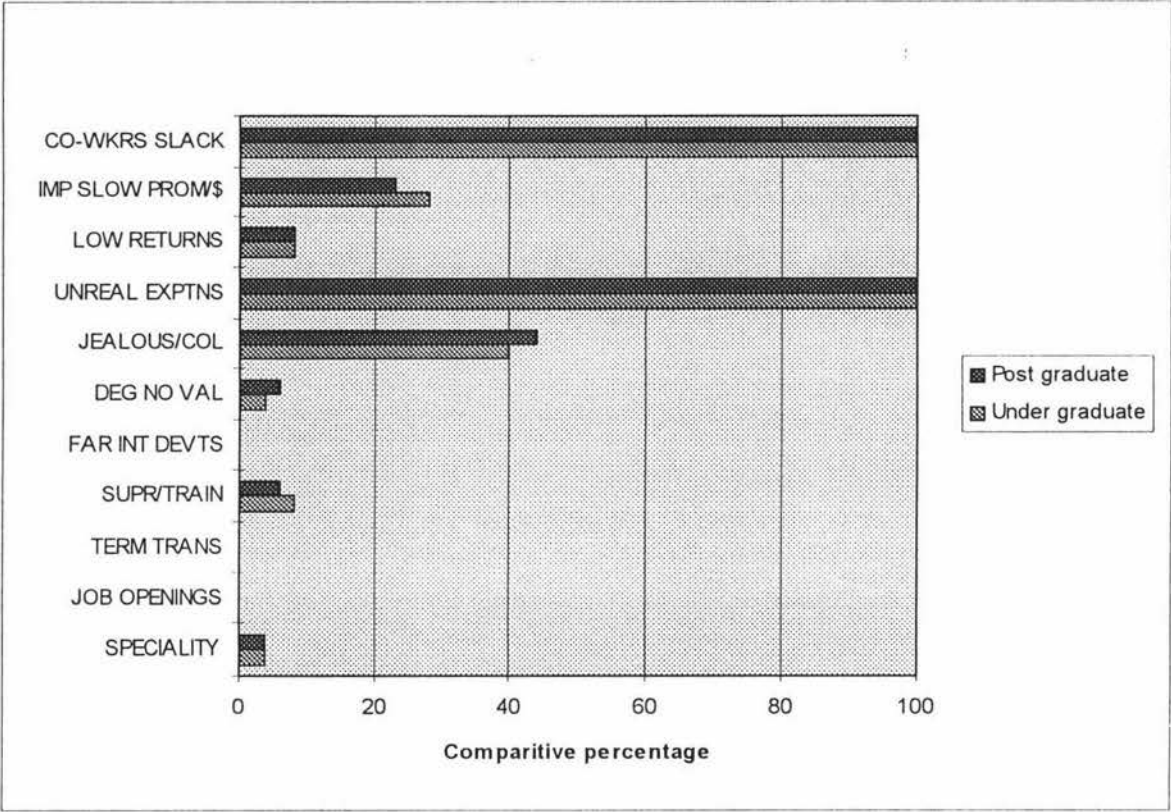
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

In the other category, one graduate reported their life was severely impacted by corrupt practice within their job. The principals of the firm required the graduate to falsify accounts, but the graduate concerned felt that this was contrary to their conscience and the levels of professional integrity that had been required of them when working in New Zealand. They had membership of the New Zealand Society of Accountants. The outcome was they resigned and had to find a new job in the face of being maligned by their previous employer. The lack of a professional association to deal with such conflict was keenly felt by this individual. Two other graduates made mention of the New Zealand Society of Accountants. They valued such a professional association for ensuring high standards of practice as well as policing integrity, honesty and arbitration

for its members. All three of these returning graduates were working in Malaysia and had previously worked in New Zealand. The other two comments in this section relate to the stigma associated with unemployment, and the issue of differences of functioning of overseas trained graduates versus locally trained graduates.

5.2.7 Spiritual Problems: This section was not in the Westwood and Lawrence (1988) information but was in the Espinelli - Chinn (1987) workbook. It was adapted to fit the return of New Zealand trained graduates and the concept of the spiritual widened to religion in general as distinct from Christianity alone. In phase I of the interview religion featured quite a bit in the context of world-view change and this is mentioned in Chapter Four. In this section the focus is on spiritual problems rather than dealing with a changed world view and the adjustments that it caused (see Appendix 2).

Looking to the total sample as depicted in figure 5.22 it is important to note that the X axis only covers twenty per cent. Most items, if registering at all, are registering under ten per cent. The absence of support was the leading spiritual problem, followed by the family approach to religion versus the more individualistic approach in New Zealand.

Figure 5.22 - Spiritual problems by Total sample
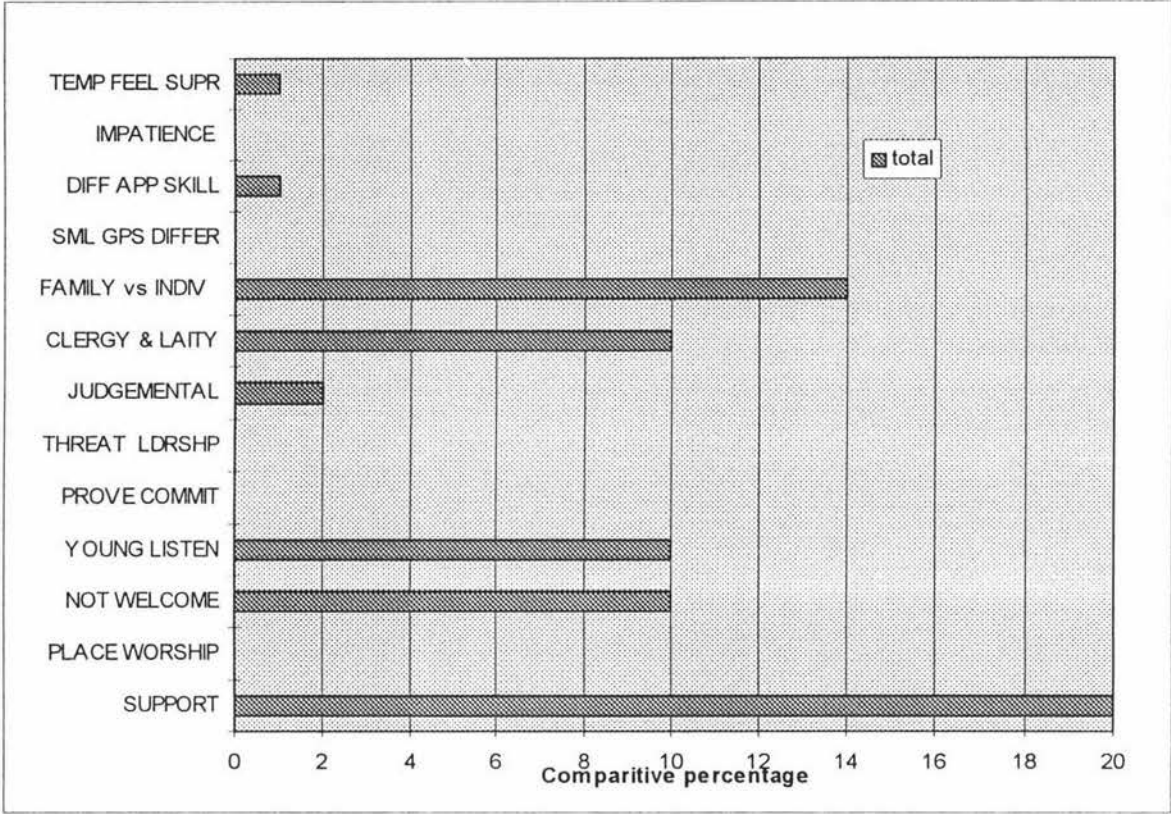
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

No difficulties were encountered in finding places to worship, proving commitment, or impatience with the local brand of religion. Small groups seem to have had very similar dynamics and no graduate perceived they were regarded as a threat to leadership. Some did experience not being welcome and some felt they were expected to listen to and accept what the elders said. Some, too, perceived a distinction being made between clergy and laity. Three returning graduates found themselves exercising a judgemental attitude toward religion in their home country as compared to their experience in New Zealand. Two graduates experienced some temptation to feel superior and one found difficulty in applying skills they had learned in New Zealand. The reality overall that is while many graduates reported having to adjust spiritually, they did not identify strongly

with the problems listed in appendix II. The comparisons by country (figure 5.23), gender (figure 5.24) and degree-completion level (figure 5.25) are included for completeness

Figure 5.23 - Spiritual Problems by Country
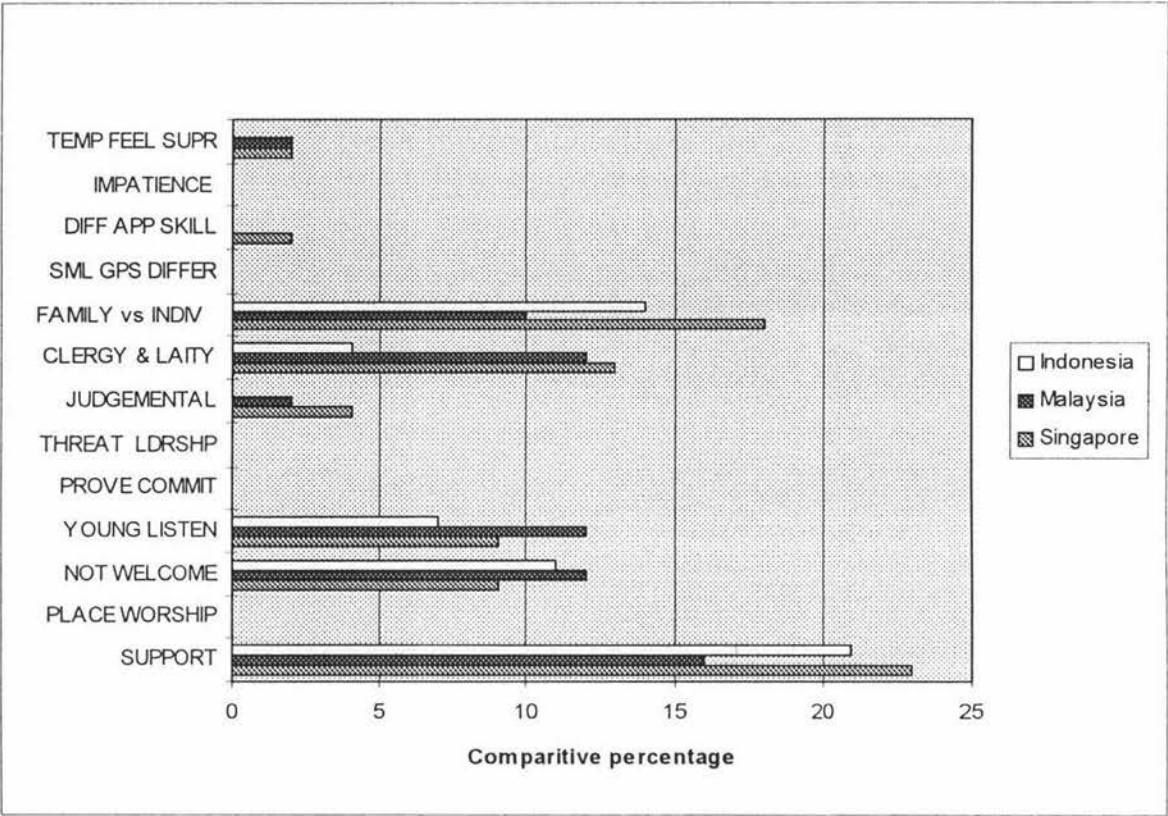
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

The variations here are only a few percentage points and very much what one could expect from the sample size. Males found the impact of the family approach to religion a little more disconcerting than females and females encountered a few more problems than males in the area of being expected to listen to elders.

In the other column there were several responses recorded. They centred around two concepts regarded as helping to overcome problems, or a reason for why the graduate had encountered few problems. These were the concepts of getting into a "cell" group or small group that supported one's spiritual life and the idea of exercising a commitment to an in-depth, personal, devotional life. These two items were highly regarded as preventatives and palliatives for spiritual problems.

Figure 5.24 - Spiritual Problems by Gender
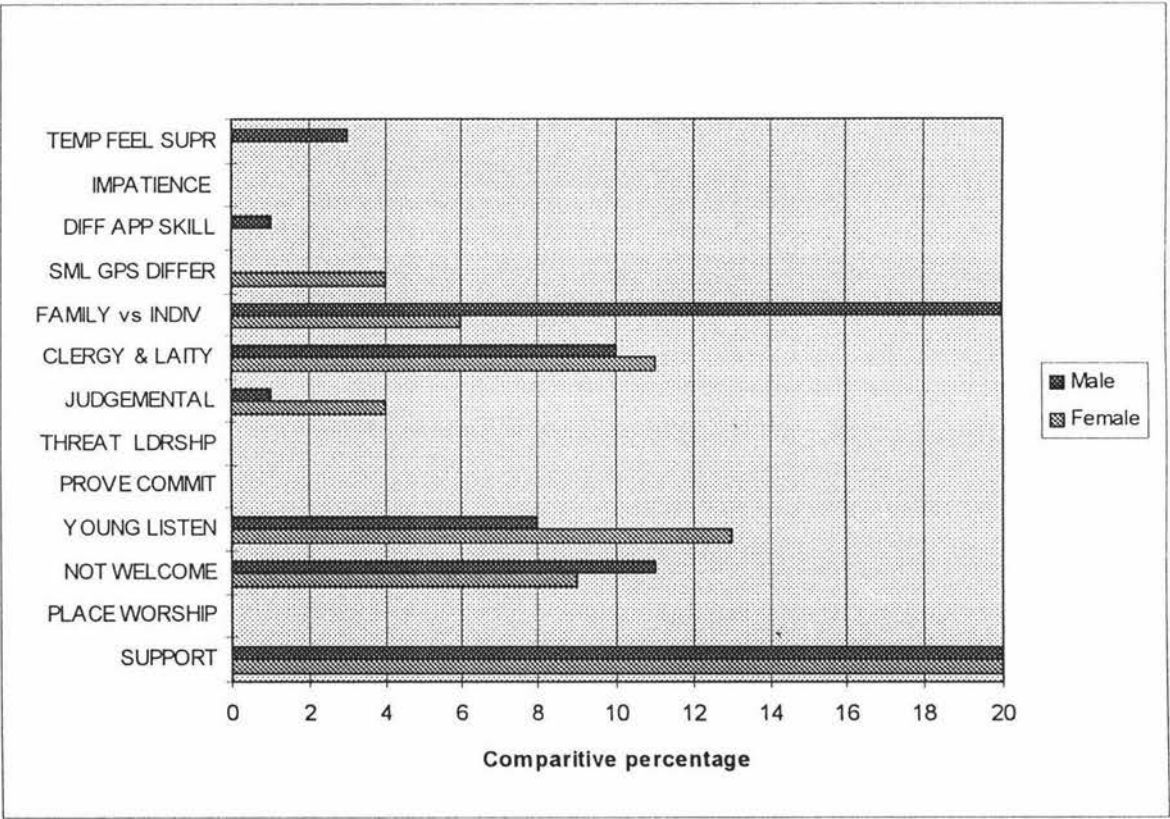
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

Figure 5.25 - Spiritual problems by Degree-completion Level
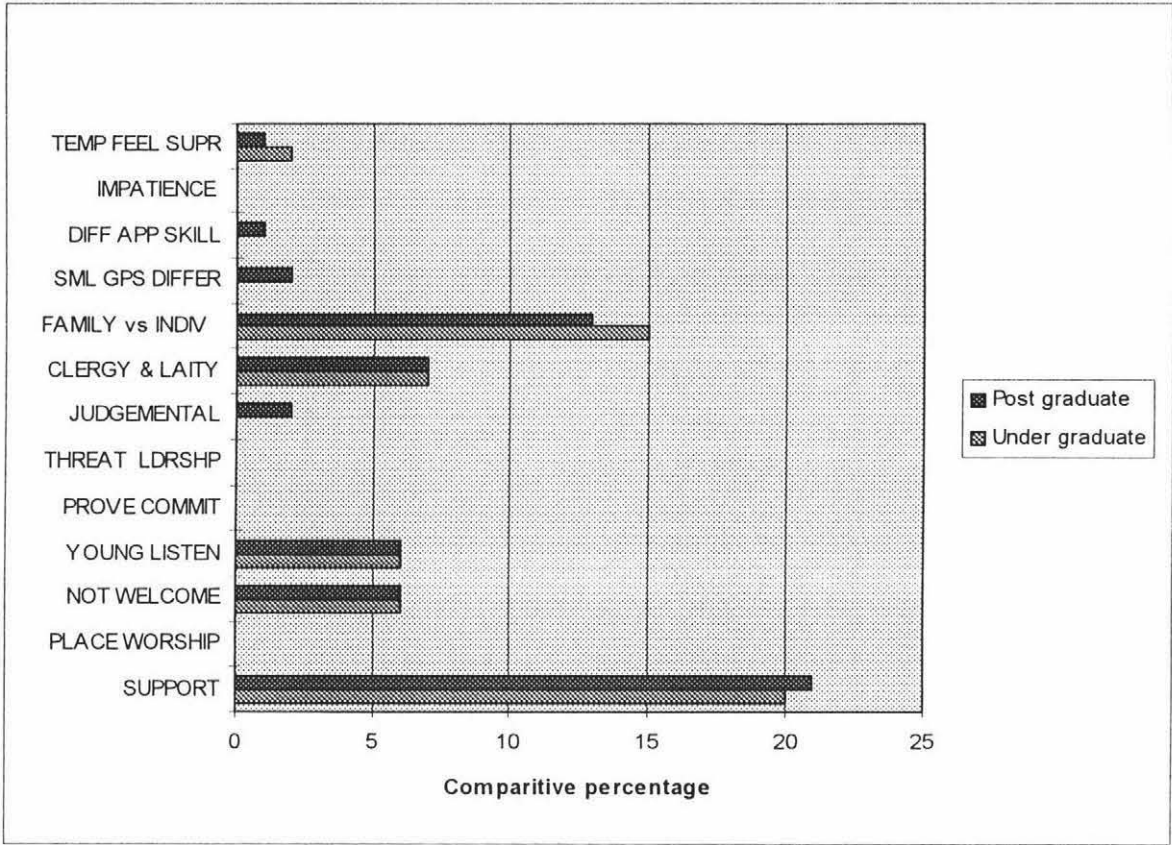
Source: Fieldwork by Researcher Dec/Jan 1996/97

In each area of potential re-entry problem reviewed in the sections above there are indications that the sample in this study experienced some but not all of the categories of appendix 2. Overall the analysis of items in appendix 2 has generated some additional insight into re-entry problems. The value of this information is discussed in Chapter Six.

5.3 INDICATIONS SIGNIFICANT TO A PROPORTION OF THE SAMPLE

In addition to the universal findings described in Chapter Four and the indications

associated with appendix 2, described in the preceding section, there was a third

category of findings. These were items that were volunteered in phase I but were not

universally volunteered. These items are significant to note. As aspects of experience of a

proportion of the sample, they are significant in providing answers to the two secondary

research questions:

"What can be done to better prepare the graduate to return home?"

and

"What helps the graduate through the re-entry transition?"

Their importance in helping to answer the above two questions is discussed in the next

chapter. In this section the significant proportional indications relating to mentors,

expectations, prior knowledge, family and job, jobs and multinationals, and

understanding personal changes are described.

5.3.1 Mentors: Twenty one graduates received significant support from mentors they

were fortunate enough to have in the early stages of their return. They expressed

appreciation for the help and support they received from their mentor(s). Their

perception was that the stress associated with re-entry was reduced by the presence of a

mentor in their lives. The forty-six non-mentored graduates did not mention the lack of

mentors, but did identify issues causing stress that mentored graduates claimed

mentoring had assisted them in handling. An illustration of this was in the work place.

Mentored graduates made fewer mistakes in this area as they received briefings from their mentors on work place politics and appropriate behaviour.

Work and spiritual encouragement were areas where the most appreciation for mentors was expressed. Their assistance was also felt in the area of social adjustment, especially advice in relation to family, friends and social institutions. Looking over all the interviews, those with mentors appeared to have an easier adjustment than those who did not. Certainly those who had a mentor felt it had been helpful. The presence of a mentor being available for a returning graduate seems significant in helping the graduate through their re-entry transition.

Those who acted as mentors were themselves all returned graduates. They shared interests and linkage points with those they mentored. They had been back for periods of three to ten years ahead of those they mentored and at the time they linked up to the returning graduate they could be considered over their own re-entry adjustments. Inquiries relating to who acted as mentors revealed some interesting information. The common links recorded were: 15 alumni of the same university; 17 from the same profession; four relatives; 20 formerly members of student Christian organisations; Only one a non-New Zealand graduate (Australia). Of the 21 mentored returning graduates, 20 had been members of The Navigators or Overseas Christian Fellowship groups (student Christian organisations in New Zealand). They had met their mentor through informal networks associated with alumni of these organisations. No evidence was found of similar informal networks arising out of other student organisations or for that matter professional associations. In reviewing the interviews for the 46 who were not mentored, there was evidence that many of them had access to people who could have acted as

mentors. The reason they did not get mentoring is probably due to not realising it could help and thinking that those who had succeeded with re-entry would not want to help them. The concept of access points to mentors came to the surface when analysing the interviews and it was too late to investigate further. This is an area for future study.

5.3.2 Expectations: Another helpful piece of advice recorded in several interviews in various forms related to unrealistic expectations. Many graduates, as they reflected on their experience of re-entry, expressed the view that their expectations of themselves were very high and differed significantly from the reality they encountered. To some extent this relates to having good prior knowledge, but it also has much to do with building up unrealistic projections of what life will be like on return. In section 5.1.7 comment was passed to the effect that prior work experience lowered expectations of the work environment. The surprise factors were greatly reduced for the 18 graduates with prior work experience.

On this subject of expectations, two graduates who had not had prior work experience commented in detail about their expectations and the reality they encountered. Both had begun study in New Zealand as undergraduates and had proceeded on to post-graduate courses. They had been away from Singapore and Malaysia, respectively, for five years. Each had preferred to work in New Zealand in the summer vacation to help their finances. Their comments focussed on the view that prior to returning, it would have helped them and their friends if they could have heard a returned graduate relate their experiences of re-entry. They felt it would have helped to have been briefed on potential problems they might encounter. Thirdly, they put forward the view that it would have helped them if their expectations of themselves could be lowered before they returned.

During that early period, their unrealistic expectations had given them an overwhelming sense of failure and discouragement.

> "If we could have been led to identify ...realistic aims...., be...objectives that ah... could have helped..... been ah, what was like for survival... then ... that would be good."   (Interview 22 MP)

This same graduate was so keen on offering help to me that he insisted on convening a group of his friends as a working party. The researcher was invited to sit in and take notes. They addressed the questions, "What would they advise a graduate to do to prepare themselves for returning?" and, "What would be helpful to a graduate going through re-entry adjustment?" The most important recommendations they made related to the second question. They were: Have a mentor to assist you in making re-entry adjustments especially in the work place; Friendships made at university should be continued as you return here and you should meet together regularly to support one another. The recommendations they made relating to the first question were that the soon-returning graduate should make every effort to get as much information about home as possible. The university should help them in providing some of this information and/or providing a means and an encouragement for the prospective returning graduate to access it. They should think through on the changes that have occurred within them and decide which of these changes are superficial and which are fundamental. Base level or minimum aims needed to be set to ensure that those changes that they wished to retain were maintained. As well as this, they should anticipate the welcome home beyond the mandatory three-day celebration. They should also come up with some minimum strategies for coping with home as it really is.

The second post-graduate did not convene a working party but he made similar comments to the above. In addition, he mentioned that he had been offered an exit interview to help him bring closure to his time in New Zealand and to help him think through on the next stage. He had refused, preferring to focus on completing his dissertation and use his free time to organise a tour before leaving. Some of his colleagues had taken the exit interview. He felt they were better prepared for re-entry as a result of doing so. He provided the following information about the exit interview despite not having taken it and he seemed well-informed about it. The exit interview offered the opportunity to sit down with a university staff member who would ask a series of questions. These questions would help a person to bring closure to their time in New Zealand. They would ensure completion of all that needed doing before leaving and helping the development of realistic expectations of returning home. Part of the exit interview had questions and statements that were designed to dispel myths and misgivings and to challenge assumptions about re-entry. This information was not a complete overview of the exit interview offered but it should have been sufficient to track down details. Sadly, it seems this service is no longer offered, however, the idea appears to be a useful one and could be redeveloped.

These two post-graduates had placed enormously high expectations upon themselves and had suffered as a result. Their experiences made them want to shelter others from similar experiences. Expectations, prior knowledge and prior preparation seem to be the major items being identified here.

5.3.3 Prior Knowledge: The two helpful post-graduates and the 18 graduates with prior work experience bring into focus the need for prior knowledge. From these and

others in the sample it becomes clear that the more knowledge a prospective returning graduate has, the better they are prepared for return. Encountering the unknown and the unexpected was often mentioned among the hard things about going home. Having realistic expectations fits well with having good prior knowledge. The thirty-two graduates who had not worked at a career job before returning showed they had little knowledge of what they would encounter. Their courses did not prepare them for the work environment. They found that they had built up, through their studies, a concept of an ideal work place that was in effect a myth. Those who worked in New Zealand were a little better prepared and those who had prior work experience at home were far better prepared. Prior knowledge helps.

Thirty-seven interviews contained reflections on re-entering families. Those who married in New Zealand had suddenly to learn to relate to their spouses extended family. In many families, changes had occurred and often the graduate had not thought through the implications of that change. A common change was the death of grandparents. Grandfathers dying changed the role of fathers. Another example was the retirement or semi-retirement of fathers. On arriving home the graduate found they had a father with high availability that had never previously been the case. Some reported they found this very hard to handle.

Overall, it seemed the interviewees lacked a good general knowledge of what they would encounter on return home and generally they had not thought through on the implications of their own specific situation on return. Better knowledge might have affected some of their behaviour, and certainly would have affected the way they approached some of the situations they found themselves in.

5.3.4 Family and Job: Fifty-four graduates had to find jobs on return. In Chapter Four it was mentioned that they felt they had little knowledge of how to go about it. In the case study, Kim was helped by his sisters. Family help was the most common help experienced in finding jobs. Forty-one interviewees mentioned their families assisting them in finding jobs. At the same time the family sought to help the graduate find a job they also projected their expectations. Though this created pressure it was also a form of extrinsic motivation. Examples of how family helped included providing expenses to go to interviews; accommodation through extended family when relocating from home for job hunting; arranging interviews through contacts; and generally keeping the graduate trying by creating a sense of urgency and pressure to get a job.

5.3.5 Jobs and Multinationals: Multinational businesses featured highly as employers of the interviewees. Five had obtained their first and only job with multinational companies and a further twenty-seven moved to multinationals. The views expressed about this in the interviews were that multinationals offered a better work environment and more readily met the expectations of the graduates in terms of salary, job conditions and working relationships. It could also be that multinationals sought overseas trained graduates as they were a good fit for the way multinationals work. What is significant here is that New Zealand universities train overseas students to fit the multinational work environment and ethos better than local companies. Perhaps more consideration could be given in the training as to where an overseas graduate could potentially work.

5.3.6 Understanding Changes: World-view change was a major area of adjustment described in chapter four. Adjustments in areas of world-view change were universally recognised in all of the interviews. In 23 of the interviews a variety of expressions were recorded that centre around an idea associated with understanding the changes within. Had the graduates recognised and understood the change that occurred in their lives whilst studying in New Zealand, then they would have been better positioned to explain to their families and to know where change might bring them into conflict or stress.

Both the working party and the exit interview mentioned in section 5.3.2 made comment in a similar way. It seems identifying and understanding personal change could be helpful in preparing the graduate for re-entry. The insight gained allows the graduate to predict the points where those changes will intersect with the situation at home.

5.3.7 Significance: The above six sections have covered items of significance in preparing and helping graduates in re-entry. Mentors aid the graduate going through the re-entry transition. Family help the graduate to find work. Multinational businesses generally provide work environments more in tune with the graduates training. Good preparation for returning could be to gain knowledge of home. A quality briefing would aid this immensely. Thinking through on the changes in one's life while away studying also helps in being prepared when those changes are challenged. Redefining one's expectations of oneself to be realistic and setting minimum aims and strategies to implement expectations is also a good exercise to prepare graduates for returning.

This chapter has described the indicative findings from the interviews. A picture has emerged of the sample of graduates that were interviewed. The content of the interviews

has been analysed and presented to complete the emerging picture of graduate re-entry adjustments that began to be revealed in Chapter Four. There are a variety of adjustments graduates face. Some are universal and some not. Some problems are encountered by a few and there are some differences that emerge within the sample. There are some items that are significant to preparing graduates for and helping them through re-entry. In Chapter Six discussion is entered into to provide some basis as to why such a picture has emerged and what the implications from this are. Additionally, the limitations of this study are discussed and recommendations are made for follow-up action and for future research.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION

The voluntary responses of those interviewed determined the description of the adjustments faced in re-entry. The depiction of three major areas: work environment, change in world view and lifestyle expectations reflect a general overview of the specific responses obtained in the interviews. Had an analytical framework, such as Lawrence and Westwood's (1988), been used to shape the first phase of the interviews the content would have reflected such a framework as interviewees would have responded to the questions asked. By taking a non-directed approach to the interviews a more general picture has emerged of the adjustments faced by graduates on return, and this is also more in keeping with the graduates' perceptions. This is not to say that surveys conducted by Lawrence & Westwood (1988) and Gardiner & Hirst (1990) are wrong as they have also generated worthwhile information about graduate re-entry adjustment, although it is specific to the guided nature of their surveys and also examines transitions from countries other than New Zealand. The addition of phase II to the interviews and the analysis of appendix 2 categories in Chapter Five allows some comparison with the above studies. The picture is completed by the inclusion of demographic and significant helpful indications. The information gained from this research complements the work of other researchers and gives insight into the perceptions of graduates returning to Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia after study in New Zealand.

6.1 CHANGE AND CULTURE DISTANCING

The graduates interviewed answered the question "What were the adjustments you faced on re-entry?" with answers that indicate all those interviewed had faced adjustments in

the areas of work environment, world-view change and lifestyle expectations. These three categories are very general and, on analysis of the responses, a trend is noticeable. The fact of adjustment and re-adjustment stress encountered in the early stages of re-entry seems at least in part to be due to the fact that the sojourn experience in New Zealand fundamentally changed the graduate, so that on re-entry a sense of distance from their culture of origin was experienced. It is true that home changed while they were away but, they as individuals, also changed a great deal. The intersection of these changes with the graduates' expectations and the expectations of the context they are re-entering, creates a sense of not fitting, not belonging, difference and cultural distance.

Research into culture shock experienced amongst students studying overseas has looked at culture-distancing as an explanation for adjustment difficulties (Barbiker et al 1980), (Furnham & Bochner 1982). It is apparent in the responses of the graduates interviewed in this study that their sojourn experience has changed them. When they re-enter their country of origin there is an element of distancing themselves from the culture to which they return. This element of distancing naturally occurs as an in built mechanism to preserve one's identity, when one enters a culture. In re-entry it works, in a curious twist, to prevent reversal of change when a person returns home. Using this concept of culture-distancing occurring in re-entry can help us understand why returning graduates encounter adjustments and adjustment problems in the areas they do.

6.2 UNIVERSAL INDICATIONS

In Chapter Four three universally experienced areas of adjustment were identified and described. These three taken together form a major part of the adjustment graduates face on re-entry. A lot of the stresses and adjustments coming from the cultures they return

arise from the lifestyle expectations thrust upon them and from what they encounter in the working environment. There is little that could be done to change these two areas of adjustment. However, prospective returning graduates could be informed of these and helped to prepare themselves for adjusting in these two areas. Additionally, world-view change was recognised as a major area of adjustment. The occurrence of this has much to do with the sojourn experience of the student. As students graduate and prepare to go home, they could benefit by identifying and understanding the changes within them. They could evaluate those changes before returning and think through on their impact upon their life and the lives of those they will encounter on return. Having done so, strategies to reduce the stress related to finding accommodation for the changes they are certain to retain, would naturally evolve.

6.2.1 The Work Environment: The returned graduate encountered feelings of alienation in the work environment as they had to negotiate a variety of challenges with the local culture. Such encounters often caused stress because of the distance between the reality of the workplace and the graduate's view of what constituted a good working environment. Part of this distancing is due to the training they received in New Zealand creating a picture in their mind that differed from the work environment encountered. Part is also due to the transition all new graduates face in moving from study to work. The graduates felt the job situation did not reflect the norms and mores of the cultural context in which their training was received. This contributed to feelings of uncertainty relating to the suitability of the first job and, in many cases, subsequent jobs. The distance between expectations of the job environment and the reality reduced when the graduate obtained a job working for a multinational. This was because multinationals had a work environment that more closely matched the training and expectation of the

returning graduate. This preference for jobs that better fit with their New Zealand training is an added dimension of adjusting in the work environment for the returning graduate. This is the dimension that creates feelings of distance and alientation in the work place when a local job is found. New Zealand educational institutions that train internationals could consider ways to appropriately prepare them for the work environment they are likely to encounter, and in so doing could contribute to the returning graduate having a more realistic view of the work environment they were to return to.

The expression of isolation and aloneness in the work environment suggests a good case for mentors. Pearse *et al* (1986) and the findings from this study support the value of mentors in the early job experience. This indication supports the view that professional and alumni associations can be significant in helping returning graduates to integrate more efficiently into working life. This same indication could well be of value to companies when employing newly trained overseas graduates, as a mentor within the company could be of value in the orientation period. A mentor acts as a sounding board and a source of empathetic information. A mentor can lessen the feelings of not fitting the work environment and distancing from it. They slow down or prevent the returning graduate progressively distancing themselves within, and from, the work environment by providing understanding, empathy and advice.

6.2.2 World-view Change: World-view changes caused areas of adjustment. Various levels of stress and conflict were encountered when the changed world view of the graduate juxtaposed itself on a situation at home. The returning graduates have changed within and as a result are distanced from their culture. Adjustments due to changes

within differ from adjustments due to the work environment or the local lifestyle, as the graduate feels responsible for internal change and especially so when conflicts arise. The discovery that adjustments are occasioned by changes within can cause the graduate to experience feelings of alienation from the re-entrant culture. The further realisations that changes within are irreversible, or ones the graduate wants to hold on to, encourages the returning graduate to distance themselves from the local culture as a stratagem to protect and preserve changes within. The result is that initially, the graduates feel they do not belong at home and this lasts until they settle to an accommodation with their locale. World-view change has made them a person of a third culture and they have to make a cross-cultural transition as a person of that third culture to the first culture they left.

Some world-view change was due to growing from an adolescent to an adult. The fact that this happened in New Zealand, a context culturally distant from South East Asia, further exacerbates that change. Add to this change, that gains momentum from educational training and entry into another culture, and it is plain to see that the cumulative effects in the life of the graduate add up to major changes in their world view. The findings related to adjustments concerning changed world view hold within them strong evidence to suggest that the W-curve idea being applied to re-entry does not hold true. The returning graduate's experience of their return adjustments does not follow the repeat U to make their whole experience of leaving home and returning to follow a W-curve. The world-view change they experienced in New Zealand contained within it very strong elements of fundamental irreversibility. They did not, and do not, revert to what they would have been if they had not left home. The returning graduate is different and remains different. The universality of this observation suggests that the W-curve idea must be seriously doubted in the context of graduate re-entry adjustment. The discussion

in Chapter Three is reinforced here by these findings. This doubt means using the W-curve idea of Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) to describe the re-entry of international students is unwise. This study shows that the experiences of returning graduate cannot be easily fitted to a W-curve description. Further research, such as tracing a group of international students through their entry and re-entry experiences, could assist in confirming this observation.

Understanding world-view changes that occur amongst students studying in New Zealand could be a worthwhile area for future research. It would be interesting to know the extent to which particular world-view changes relate to the context of the host culture and the extent to which they relate to the stage of life the student is going through. Comparative tracer studies utilising a number of different country-to-country transitions would be invaluable in shedding light on that question. Seven common areas of world-view change were identified in the interviews. Why they occur is perhaps the subject of future research, but their identification can help us in providing information about the likely areas a graduate returning home will encounter.

6.2.3 Lifestyle Expectations: The material culture exemplified by "The five C's" imposed adjustment stress and pressure on graduates. Those interviewed seemed to expect this to be an area of adjustment or readjustment. The unexpected was largely in the area of world-view change involving lifestyle beliefs. Paradoxically, very little related to lifestyle beliefs had changed in the area of the pursuit of material culture. In fact, if anything, the New Zealand experience reinforced the notion that greater opportunity to pursue material goals lay with the return home. Only where it imposed pressures on

family life and beliefs about raising children were there expressions of distress relating to the lifestyle expectations.

Graduates seemed to view the lifestyle expectations as being part of the next stage of life for them and one to which they had to adjust. In this it was a little like growing up, something inevitable which one must live through. Most of those interviewed had come to a successful accommodation relating to the pressures generated by lifestyle expectations. Inherent in the process of going for overseas education was the expectation that the fact of such an education was a means to the end of the lifestyle expectations in themselves. All three countries, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia, were perceived by the interviewees as fundamentally different from New Zealand in the way they provided lifestyle opportunities for their people. The graduate returning home fitted into a path that had a very strong materialistic lifestyle expectation that was a major part of the returning cultural context and demanded the graduate's participation. That a change of the graduate's values, away from materialistic pursuits did not occur, may be a reflection of the values the student was exposed to in their training, but may also have something to do with the context the graduate encounters on return. Perhaps they were feeling left behind when they first returned and were encountering pressure to catch up and be involved in the lifestyle of "The five C" world. They had come to an accommodation with the lifestyle pressures with an active, but modified, involvement in "The five C" world. There were areas in which they did not participate as some value or belief acted to moderate a total involvement in the pursuit of materialism. It appeared that the adjustment to lifestyle expectations was a normal process of maturing for the returning graduate and one that had been interrupted, to some extent, by the sojourn in New Zealand for study.

Lifestyle expectations seem to be part of the motivation for study abroad and, while they create pressure to adjust on return, that pressure is a consequence of what the student set out to achieve when opting to study overseas. It in many ways parallels the pressure the student has to succeed at their studies. It is real pressure and the impact of it is greatest on first returning. The stress caused by it was often compared to the range of lifestyle options available in New Zealand. All graduates interviewed felt they had knowingly chosen to re-enter their societies and they had been aware at least in part of the lifestyle expectations they would face.

6.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The demographic description of the sample was undertaken to enable a picture to emerge of the interview sample. It was also undertaken to check if some of the factors in the sample might effect the re-entry adjustment. Marriage close to the adjustment time affected the re-entry adjustment. Age had bearing, in that the older graduates seemed to adjust a little easier, however, the older graduates tended also to be those with prior work history and ones who were married. Certainly, those with prior work history found returning to work a little easier than those getting into work for the first time. However, because of the mix of these factors and the smallness of the sample, it was not possible to fully gauge the effect of each factor. A larger, more comprehensive study would be needed for that. The factors of gender, country of birth, length of stay in New Zealand, home town return and degree completion level did not generate noticeable differences of overall adjustment in this part of the study. The proportion of Chinese graduates in the sample is high so the finding that ethnicity does not seem to matter is weak. In a future study it would be useful to have a sample that is ethnically balanced to reflect the ethnic proportions amongst graduates returning home. If findings from this study were to be

used in advising and preparing Malay students for return to Malaysia then there could be some differences of experience for Malay graduates, but because they are not represented we cannot know for sure.

6.4 POTENTIAL RE-ENTRY PROBLEMS

Appendix 2 builds on the insights contained in the previous section. The full and comprehensive analysis of potential re-entry problems in Chapter Five, Section Two resulted in the identification of a number of trends. These identified trends add to the understanding afforded from the three universal areas of readjustment experience described in Chapter Four and discussed above. The grid used to analyse for potential re-entry problems allows a straightforward comparison with other studies that use a similar type of analysis. A cautionary note should be added here. The method by which the information for the grid was gathered was fairly simple and subjective. In addition, the weighting placed on the intensity of the responses was approximate and subjective. What was attempted was to identify trends or themes but the weighting should not be regarded as quantitative, and no measurements should be taken from or interpolated into the analysis. It can be regarded as indicative but not definitive.

The trends identified can be used to describe the potential problems a graduate may encounter. Not all items in the grid of appendix 2 seem to have featured significantly for the sample in this study. This could be due to the limit of sample size. Some trends were noticeable. National and political problems have not featured nor educational problems. It could be inferred that these two areas of potential problems do not feature much for graduates returning from New Zealand. Alternatively it could be inferred that the New Zealand experience does not create problems for returning graduates in these two areas. Additionally, the national and political issues of the re-entrant countries do not impact

upon the returning graduates, and the education they have received is well received and fits with the situation back home. Lawrence and Westwood (1988) and Espineli- Chinn (1987) were the prime influences in including these two areas, within the grid of appendix 2. It could be inferred that the sample, from which this study gained information, differed, in terms of re-entry experience, from those who formed the basis of studies from which the above commentators drew their information.

Looking at the other five categories, there is a level of agreement with Lawrence and Westwood (1988) and Espineli - Chinn (1987). Not all items within categories gain support from the sample but a significant number of graduates within the sample experienced adjustments within the other five categories. This fits with the assertion of Polita (1990) that such studies are indicative of problems.

The category of spiritual problems was based on the Espineli-Chinn(1987) information alone and did not feature in the Lawrence and Westwood (1988) information. It was included for completeness and because of personal interest. In the findings on world-view change, changed religious beliefs were identified as one of the related themes. If the responses for this part of the study are reviewed, the element of spiritual problems seems weaker than it is as a theme of the world-view change. In the findings related to world-view change it was a lot stronger but it was stronger because it featured as an *element of adjustment* rather than being considered under the heading of adjustment problems. The spiritual dimension featured in the re-entry journeys of many interviewees as an area of support. Where it featured in their adjustment it largely featured as assisting them in coping with change and adjustment. Also the Espineli-Chinn information looked at spiritual problems as being problems encountered by international students converted to

Christianity while studying in the United States. They then returned to countries where Christianity was a minor expression of religious life and was culturally unlike its USA expression. This section was adapted to be more appropriate to the question of spiritual problems on a more general basis. If this section were to be included as part of any future study then it would be advisable to carefully recast it as there is the dimension of spiritual change within and its consequential problems for the re-entrant that is not adequately picked up by Appendix 2. Some of the information on this is touched on in the description of world-view change and some is picked up by the Appendix 2 grid. Further details were offered by several interviewees, but outside the interview time, and deemed to be in that section of time with the interviewee that was regarded as confidential.

The other four categories compare well with what has been written by these other commentators. The sample that featured in this study experienced problems in the areas of cultural adjustment, social adjustment, communication barriers and professional problems. The full range of problems, canvassed under each category, did not feature, but sufficient of the range did for the conclusion that returning graduates were likely to encounter problems of adjustment in the areas mentioned. The trends that emerge from the analysis form an insight into each category of potential re-entry problems.

6.5 INDICATIONS SIGNIFICANT TO A PROPORTION OF THE INTERVIEWEES

It is useful to discuss findings that describe elements of the re-entry experience of graduates that could be used to help future graduates in their returning home. In Chapter Five, Section Three a set of such findings was described. Mentors, expectations, prior knowledge, families as job-search helpers, multinationals as providers of desired work environments and the need to identify personal change within are all significant in helping

re-entry adjustment. Just how important these items are is hard to gauge but some have been identified by others prior to this study. Pearse & Sunaro (1986), in their study of Indonesian post graduates trained in Australia, mentioned the value of having another overseas trained graduate in the place of work and the high value returned graduates obtained from having supervisors in their work place who themselves were overseas trained. The place of expectations contributing to re-entry stress has been identified in several studies (Polita, 1990, 86). Espineli-Chinn's (1987) workbook for prospective Christian returning graduates contains several sections that address the issue of prior knowledge being an important element of preparation for graduates close to returning. Gardiner and Hirst (1990, 24) found a very strong indication that family were the most-used helpers to re-entrant graduates in their study. In addition this study has reported the value families are in finding jobs, the significance of multinationals in providing work environments better matched to training and expectations and the significance of a returning graduate identifying and understanding the changes that have occurred within during sojourn.

These findings, while not universal, like those described in Chapter Four, are nevertheless significant in that where they were identified in this study was in the context of items that would help to make the re-entry transition smoother and less stressful. Alumni associations have an important part to play in providing mentors. Unrealistic expectations could be addressed by university staff as a graduate approaches re-entry. Seminars, exit interviews, re-entry briefings and workbooks have a role to play in helping to address this also (Espineli-Chinn, 1987 &1992; McGrath, 1997; Mirza, 1993; Polita, 1990). Similarly, the need for a prospective returning graduate to gain prior knowledge can be addressed by these same means and perhaps by the regular provision of up-to-

date information and briefings related to home. One cannot choose one's family but one can be helped to realise the value of family in assisting in the re-entry process. The part family can play should be included in pre-re-entry briefings. The finding that multinationals provide preferred working environments for returning graduates has significance for the educators, the returning graduate, the home country and the development practitioners who use overseas education as a means to assisting development. Espineli-Chinn (1987) has a section on thinking through on change before return. This is an excellent concept as understanding the changes within and the effect they will have on re-entry adjustment is a way of getting prepared before return home. The process of change within while the student is still studying in New Zealand, has not been described in any detail. Lewthwaite (1995), Sodjakumsumah (1996) and Trinh(1968) have all touched on it in their studies. There is a need to describe and understand world-view change occasioned by study overseas. By so doing ways in which the effects of such change could be minimised might become apparent. Alternatively, changes could be channelled and directed to ensure that the returning graduates were better able to fit in on return. Such a study in itself would hold high intrinsic interest for those who work amongst international students, and particularly those who educate them.

Mentors, realistic expectations, prior knowledge, understanding change within are all important for the returning graduate to come to grips with. Knowing about obtaining a job and how helpful family can be is also beneficial; also knowing how to assess a prospective work environment to ensure it will fit well with the graduate. The items identified are significant in providing help to the returning graduate and should be considered well of by those who would seek the welfare of returning graduates.

6.6 LIMITATIONS

The study had several limitations. These need to be recognised to ensure the findings are understood in the context of the study's limitations. The value and reliability of the findings can then be assessed and application of the findings can be done correctly and accurately.

The limitations can be summarised as follows:

The sample size was small compared to the total population from which it was drawn. (67:13000 or about 0.5%)

The sample was not statistically representative in respect of ethnicity, range across the ten year period and the scale was restricted to returning graduates to Singapore,   Malaysia and Indonesia.

The interview method drew on memories and memory is not infallible, often subjective convenient and selective.

Keeping these limitations in mind the study was good for gaining accurate indicative descriptions of the re-entry experience of the graduates interviewed. The non-directed nature of the interviews ensures the study provides an accurate description of the re-entrant experiences of the sample. The fact that the sample is smaller than what is statistically desirable and not completely representative would be a weakness if quantitative information were to be drawn from it. However, since qualitative description is the outcome, the limitations of sample size and representation are less important than if

a quantitative and definitive study was being attempted. Non-directed, subject first interview techniques are good for obtaining indicative qualitative information and in this study the 67 interviews are more than sufficient for that purpose.

Taking the above listed limitations into account the study continues to have application for returning graduates and those interested in and associated with their welfare. It describes with a fair degree of accuracy the experiences of graduates returning to Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia during the period from 1984/85 to 1993/94. Further research conducted in this area will help to close the limitations of this study. The findings of this study give rise to a number of recommendations and these along with the conclusion are contained in the Chapter Seven

CHAPTER SEVEN

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout this study a number of recommendations have been made. A group of these recommendations relates to action that can be undertaken by interested people. A second group of recommendations relates to areas for further research.

The recommendations arising for action are directed at those who have an interest in the re-entry of graduates to Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. These include staff of the universities where students from these countries study, especially staff associated with the welfare of international students. The cultural and national student associations within the various New Zealand universities, whose members are drawn these countries, should also be interested. Scholarship providers having invested a great deal in their students could well take note of these recommendations. The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, who are committed to ensuring action that enhances New Zealand's reputation, should note the opportunities for that in providing assistance to returning graduates. The alumnus of the various universities and the New Zealand university's alumnus can also be part of implementing these recommendations. In addition, the countries that receive their overseas educated nationals back have a vested interest in their making a good re-entry adjustment.

7.1.1 The recommendations for action are these:

1. Instruction and assistance to prepare for re-entry to be provided before graduates return. Such assistance could include:

    (a) providing knowledge of what graduates encounter in re-entry.

    (b) helping graduates understand the changes they have undergone.

    (c) instruction in how to obtain an appropriate job.

    (d) helping the graduate to modify expectations to fit reality.

    (e) providing information and connection to organisations and individuals that could assist the individual's re-entry adjustment at home.

    (f) making available things that might help graduates prepare for re-entry such as exit interviews, workbooks and alumni articles and stories of their experiences.

2. Assistance for the graduate needs to be provided in the process of re-entry. Such assistance could include:

    (a) providing mentors.

    (b) providing linking to organisations that may assist re-entry such as alumnus.

    (c) providing help in obtaining suitable work.

    (d) providing a reorientation to the country for graduates upon re-entry.

3. While the student is studying the following could help with the eventual re-entry:

    (a) courses where appropriate could be modified to take into account the work situation graduates encounter.

(b) information could be provided regularly on the country of origin and/or students could be encouraged and assisted by suitable provision in keeping up to date.

7.1.2 The recommendations for further research are these:

1. Implement other studies that will close the limitations of this study:

    (a) Investigate other graduate transitions from New Zealand.

    (b) Use a survey questionnaire type study to build on and complement this study.

    (c) Repeat this study with a larger more representative sample. This could be done in conjunction with (a).

    (d) Investigate re-entry transition by means of present-time tracer studies.

2. Implement a further study to confirm the new findings of this study

    The major dimension this study adds to knowledge already known about graduate re-entry is that there are three universal areas in which graduates find their adjustment These new findings need to be researched further and confirmed by other studies. Also, these findings need to be checked to see if they apply in other country-to-country transitions. A more comprehensive and extensive study could better describe these and analyse these three universals and confirm or disprove their universality.

3. Implement a study to investigate the process of world view change amongst international students in New Zealand. An understanding of this may be helpful in reducing the re-entry adjustment in this area.

This study has not answered all questions but it has helped to describe re-entry and has enabled some conclusions to be reached.

7.2 CONCLUSION

Three major areas of adjustment for graduates on re-entry have been identified and described. The question "What are the re-entry adjustments graduates face?" has been answered by describing the three areas of work environment; world view change; and lifestyle expectations. In addition, potential re-entry problems have been looked at. The frequently occurring ones, for returning graduates, have been found to be cultural and social adjustment, communication barriers, and professional and spiritual problems. The knowledge gained from this research provides information that could influence the shaping of programmes to prepare graduates for re-entry. Describing the adjustments graduates face on returning home takes the element of the unexpected from the transition for the graduate. Mentoring, developing realistic expectations, prior preparation, assistance in obtaining jobs and understanding the changes wrought by sojourn in New Zealand, all help to provide an answer to the question, "What can help in re-entry?"

The aim of this study was to describe the re-entry adjustment of graduates returning to Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. This aim has been achieved and information contributed from this study will assist in preparing graduates for re-entry and aid them during re-entry. Even with limitations, a clear picture has emerged of graduate re-entry. This picture has two facets. The first is that of the realities at home. The work environment and the lifestyle expectations contribute most to this facet. The returning graduate must adjust to this and prior awareness and help from family and friends can smooth the adjustments to home realities. The other facet came into being while the graduate was studying in New Zealand. Their world view was changed irrevocably resulting in their becoming a fundamentally different person. Going back means they

have another cross-cultural transition to make. Home does not feel like home any more. They and those who relate to them have to learn to accommodate one another. This second facet of adjusting takes time and is often emotionally draining for the returning graduate. The two facets do not separate within the re-entry transition but a complexity of mix, at any one time, creates adjustment problems for the graduate. Good preparation before returning and assistance in the process can alleviate some of the adjustment stresses, but cannot entirely do away with them.

This study contributes to our knowledge of re-entry by describing the re-entry of graduates after studying in New Zealand. In doing so it can stand alongside the few other studies available in the literature and complement and extend the knowledge contained in them. The leading contribution this study makes is in the description of the three major universal areas of re-entry adjustment and in identifying items significant to assisting and smoothing re-entry adjustment.

Further research in some areas is needed. Tracer studies and an in-depth study of the world view change occurring during overseas study could provide further insight into the re-entry transition. There are some implications for those delivering education to overseas students in terms of what they are training them for and also for those using overseas education as a means of development assistance. Further work could be done to follow up on these implications. Those seeking to provide welfare assistance to international students will be aided in designing pre re-entry programmes for prospective returning graduates by the findings contained in this study.

What can we take from this investigation? Simply the conclusion that graduates will encounter re-entry adjustment occasioned by their expectation of the work environment,

their world view change and the lifestyle expectations of the context they re-enter. They may encounter some of the range of re-entry adjustment problems and they may have a re-entry experience made smoother by application of the items identified as helpful in this study.

If I could turn back the clock
And never face the wind again

If I could retrace my steps
And somehow eliminate my pain

Then I would have flown
I would never have grown

If I could relive the past
And never go through the hurt

If I could sail through my life
As if none of those things occurred

Then I would have flown
I would never have grown

If I could extend my myopic vision
And see my future beforehand

If I could twist my fate
And manipulate my life's path
from where I now stand

Then I would have known
And then I would not have grown

Annabel Tan - a returning graduate to Singapore (Tan, 1996)

"Until the day I die, I never will forget New Zealand. Part of it is me and part of me is it always."   Interview 41MG

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Appendix 1

Appendix 1 - International Student Numbers in NZ State Universities and Polytechnics (1992 on)

Legend:
- total numbers
- plus polytech
- Indonesians
- Malaysians
- Singaporeans

Source Tertiary Education Statistics - Ministry of Education, Wellington NZ
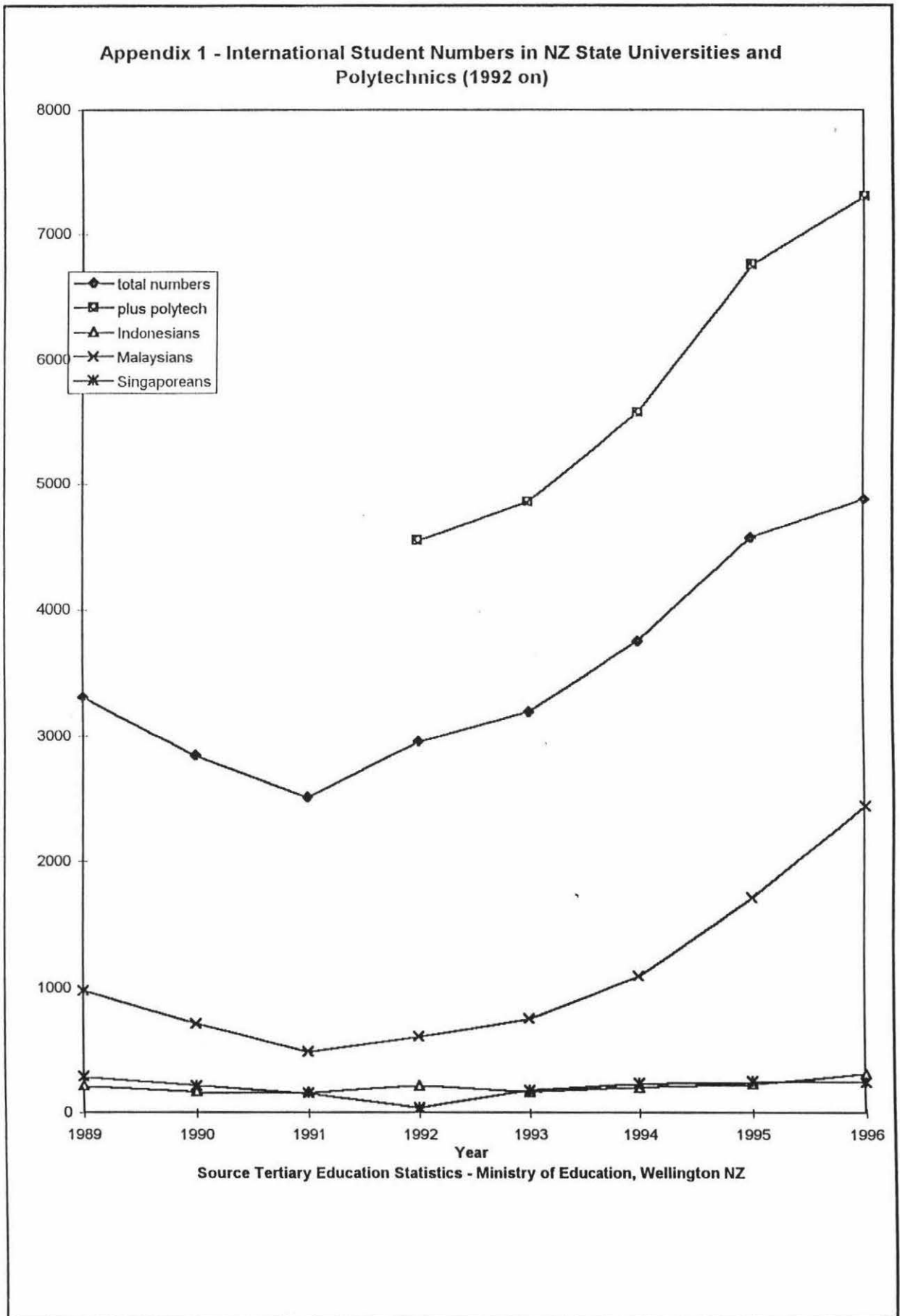
Appendix 2
POTENTIAL RE-ENTRY PROBLEMS

Adapted from Lawrence & Westwood(1988) and Espinelli Chinn (1987). In Phase II of the interviews graduates were asked to respond under the main headings listed here if they had not already mentioned things in that area in phase I.

Cultural Adjustment

O Identity confusion-who are you now?
O Unrealistic expectations
O Changes in lifestyle
O Changes in fashion
O Localised or "provincial" mentality of relatives and friends
O Different concept of time
O Different pace of life (faster or slower)
O Family or community pressure to conform
O Other

Social Adjustment

O Loneliness and alienation
O Envy and distrust in Interpersonal relations
O Tension between individual and family centredness
O Feelings of superiority due to international experience and travel
O New and different interests from local peers
O Lack of modern conveniences
O Role or status changes
O Dissatisfaction with some ritualised patterns of social interaction
O Indifference of friends and relatives to your foreign experience; lack of serious, interestedand willing listeners to your stories
O Adjustment to noise, pollution, crowds, city congestion. Unsanitary conditions etc.
O Other

Communication Barriers

O Adoption of verbal and non-verbal codes which are not familiar to your countrymen
O Speech mannerisms which may be misinterpreted
O Impatience with roundabout, indirect communication styles
O Absence of colleagues who speak the same "language"
O Unfamiliarity with new forms of communication and styles of expression; current jargonand slang
O Other

National and Political Problems

O Changes in country's conditions, national priorities, policies, views
O Political climate not helpful to professional activity and/or advancement
O Economic uncertainties and conditions
O Changes in leadership, ruling parties
O Bureaucracy,-how efficient and effective?
O Reluctance to live in a setting of political uncertainty
O Dissatisfaction with political situation
O Observed lack of national goals
O Other

Educational Problems

O Relevance of NZ. education to home situation
O Lack of facilities and resources for research or application of skills
O Absence of professional education programs to keep up with new
  developments and knowledge in the field
O Little opportunity to improve skills
O Incomplete fulfilment of educational goals Overseas and its implications back
  home
O Other

Professional Problems

O Inability to work in chosen specialty
O Facing an oversupply in the job market/no openings
O Absence or inadequate translation of foreign scientific terminology
O Feeling of superiority due to Overseas training
O Isolation from academic or scientific developments Overseas and in own field
O Non-recognition or appreciation of foreign degree
O Jealousy of colleagues
O Unrealistic expectations of position, salary, what a NZ degree "should" bring,
  etc)
O Low compensation; few benefits
O Concern with quick material success; impatience with rate of promotion
O Perceived lack of enthusiasm and/or commitment among co-workers
O Other

Spiritual Problems

O Absence of support, and security of others of similar spiritual conviction.

O Difficulty in finding a place of worship.

O Not being welcomed with open arms when finding a place of worship.

O Young people are expected to listen and accept what older people say

O Some places of worship want to prove returnees commitment before accepting him or her.

O Returnees may be viewed as threats to the leadership

O Judgmental attitude towards home religion compared to the NZ expression.

O Sharp contrast between the clergy and laity

O family approach to religion contrasting with NZ personal private approach.

O Small group fellowship may not have the same dynamics as in NZ. (Or there may not be any small group structures), and the people may not be as open or intimate.

O Difficulty in using or applying some ministry skills learned in NZ.

O Impatience by the returnee: program, process, or "production" may be slower than in NZ

O Temptation from the broader exposure, experience, or knowledge from the overseas experience to feel superior to the leaders who may not have been overseas.

O Other

Appendix 3 - Re-entry Problems

NAME	IDENTITY CONFUSION	EXPECTATIONS	LIFESTYLE CHANGES	FASHION CHANGES	PROVINCIALITY	CONCEPT OF TIME	PACE OF LIFE	PRESSURE TO CONFORM	OTHER	LONELINESS/ALIENATION	ENVY/DISTRUST IN RELATIONSHIPS	INDIVIDUAL VS FAMILY CENTRED	FEELING SUPERIOR	DIFFERENT INTERESTS	NO MODERN CONVENIENCES	ROLE/STATUS CHANGES	PATTERNS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION	NO INTEREST IN YOUR EXPERIENCE	ADJUSTMENT TO CONDITIONS	OTHER	VERBAL/NON-VERBAL CODES CHANGED	SPEECH MISINTERPRETED	IMPATIENT WITH INDIRECT COMMUNICATION	NO COLLEAGUES SPEAK YOUR "LANGUAGE"	UNFAMILIAR WITH NEW STYLES AND SLANG	OTHER	CHANGES IN POLITICAL SCENE	POLITICAL CLIMATE NOT HELPFUL TO GOALS	ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY	CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP	BUREAUCRACY - EFFICIENT/EFFECTIVE?	LIVING WITH POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY	DISSATISFIED WITH POLITICAL SITUATION	LACK OF NATIONAL GOALS	OTHER
SINGAPORE																																			
1FG	2	2	2					1			2	2		1					2																
2FG	1	1	2			2	2	2			1			2		1			1			2		1											
3FG	2	2	2			2	2		2	2	1		1		2	2	1	2		2			1											
4FG		1	2		1		2				2			1		1		1			2	2		1										
5FG		1	2			1	1		2	2	1		1		1		2						1	Singlish										Regulations
6FG	1	1	2				2			1					1	1		2		1		2		1										
7FG		2	2			2	2	1		1	1	2		2			1	2 illness		1		1												no social welfare
8FP		2	2								2		1					2		1		2	2 superviser											
9FP	1	2	2					1				1			1	1		2				2												
10FP		2	2					1		1			2								1													
11FP		1	2					1		2	1	2					1			1	2	2	1 superviser											
12FP	2	2	2			1	2			2	2		1		1	2	1				1	1												
13FP		1	2					1		1	1		1				1			2	1													
14MG	2	1	2	2		2	1			1				2		2					1													
15MG	1	2	2				1		1	1		2			1	2						2 business big boss											
16MG		1	2			1	2			2		1			2			1	1			1												
17MG		1	2		1		1			2		2			2		1			2														
18MG		2	2			1	2				1		1		1		1		2	1														
19MG			2			2	1		1	1									1 superviser															
20MG	1		2			2	1		2			1		2			2 superviser																	
21MP		2	2		1	1	2				1		1	1		2																		
22MP	1		2			2	2		2	2	2	1	1		1		1																	
23MP		2	2				2			1		1		1	2		1																	
24MP	1		2			1	1		1	2	1	2	2	1		1																		
25MP		2	2	1		1	1		1			1	2		1	2		1 superviser																
26MP	2	2	2		2		2	1	2	1			2		1	2 superviser																		
27MP	1		2			2	1		1			2	1	2		2	1																	
28MP			2					1		2	1			2																			
MALAYSIA																																			
29FG		2	2					1	2	1		1					1			2														
30FG	1	1	2			2	2		1	1		1		1		2			1	1														
31FG		1	2				1			1				1	1				2 malay															
32FG	2	1	2			1	2		1	2		2			1		1	1	1															
33FG		2	2		1		1			2	2		1	2	2		1 superviser				1													
34FG	1	1	2			1	1			2			1	2	2	1	1	1																
35FG		2	2				1		1	1			1		1	2	2	2 chinese/superviser															
36FG	2	1	2							2		1		1	2	1																		
37FG		1	2			2	1			1				1	1	1	2	1 superviser																
38FG	1	1	2						1	1		1																						
39MG		1	2	2	1	1		2	2		2			2	1	2																		
40MG	2	2	2					1	2		1	2	1	2	1	1 malay/superviser																		
41MG		1	2			1	1		2	2	2	1				1 superviser																		
42MG	1	1	2				2		2	2		1			1	1	1																	
43MG		1	2			2	1		1	2		2			1	2																		
44MG	1	1	2	1			1			2		2	1	1	1	2	1	1 superviser																
45MG	1	1	2			1	2		1	1		1				1	1	2																
46MG		1	2		1		2				1		2	1		1																		
47MG	2	2	2			2	2		1	1				2	1	2 1	2 malay																	
48MP		1	2				2		1	2		1				2																		
49MP		1	2	1		1	1		1	1		1			1	1	1																	
50MP	1	2	2					2	2	1		1	1	1																				
51MP		1	2			2				1			1		2																			
52MP	1	1	2				1		2	1		2		2	1	1	1																	
53MP		1	2			1	2			1							2																	
INDONESIA																																			
54FG		2	2							1			1					2			1													
55FG	1	1	2			1	1		1	1		2		2				2	1															
56FP		1	2				2			2	2	1		1		1		2	1															
57FP	1	1	2	2		2	1			1		1	1		1		1 1																	
58MG		1	2		2				1	1		1			1	2	1 2																	
59MG	2	1	2							2		2		2	1 1																			
60MG	1	2	2			1	1			2		2	1		1	2 1																		
61MG		2	2						1	2		2		1																				
62MG	1	2	2	1					2			1	1			1	1							1									
63MG	1	1	2			2	2			1		1		2	2	2 bad etiquette local	1																
64MP	2	1	2		1		1		1	2	1		2			2	2						1										
65MP	1	2	2							1			1			2	1	2 1															
66MP	2	1	2							1	2		1	1	1	2		1															
67MP		1	2				1			2			1					2																

KEY:

The interviews were renumbered after completing all. They are presented here in country of return order and females are listed in each country before males. In addition undergraduates are listed before post graduates. The number on the left is the number assigned to the person interviewed and replaces their name so they remain anonymous. The following letters are representative of:

F = female, M = male, G = undergraduate, and P = post graduate.

Each 2 represents a response in phase I of the interviews. Each 1 represents a response in phase II of the interviews.

A blank can be considered a non indication as the interviewee either did not consider it or for some reason failed to mention it. Other indications have one word responses in the box.

RE-ENTRY PROBLEMS

Column groups: **EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS** (E), **PROFESSIONAL PROBLEMS** (P), **SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS** (S)

NAME	EDUCATION NOT RELEVANT	LACK OF FACILITIES/RESOURCES	NO PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS	LITTLE CHANCE TO IMPROVE SKILLS	EDUCATIONAL GOALS NOT FULFILLED	OTHER	CAN'T WORK IN SPECIALITY	NO OPENINGS IN JOB MARKET	FOREIGN TERMINOLOGY NOT TRANSLATED	FEEL SUPERIOR DUE TO TRAINING	FAR FROM INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS	DEGREE NOT VALUED	COLLEAGUES JEALOUS	UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS	LOW COMPENSATION/FEW BENEFITS	IMPATIENT AT SLOW PROMOTION/MONEY	CO-WORKERS NOT ENTHUSIASTIC/COMMITTED	OTHER	ABSENCE OF SUPPORT	DIFFICULTY IN FINDING A PLACE OF WORSHIP	NOT BEING WELCOMED	YOUNG PEOPLE EXPECTED TO LISTEN	COMMITMENT PROOF REQUIRED	VIEWED AS THREAT TO LEADERSHIP	JUDGEMENTAL ATTITUDE	CONTRAST CLERGY & LAITY	FAMILY APPROACH TO RELIGION CONTRASTS N	SMALL GROUPS DIFFERENT	DIFFICULTY IN APPLYING SKILLS	IMPATIENCE BY RETURNEE	TEMPTED TO FEEL SUPERIOR	OTHER	NAME
1FG														2			2					2											1FG
2FG													1	2	1		2								1								2FG
3FG													2	2			2																3FG
4FG													1	2			2		1			1						2				cell group	4FG
5FG				1			2							2			2			2													5FG
6FG													1	2	1	2	2				2												6FG
7FG														2			2	unemployed	2						1							cell group	7FG
8FP						Std Op Procedure							2	2			2									1							8FP
9FP							2							2		1	2		2							1							9FP
10FP														2			2									1							10FP
11FP										1			2	2			2		1														11FP
12FP	1												1	2		1	2			1	1				1						personal devotions	12FP
13FP													1	2			2								1							13FP
14MG									1					2			2		2										1			personal devotions	14MG
15MG													1	2			2																15MG
16MG														2	2		2		1						1	2							16MG
17MG													2	2			2					1										cell group	17MG
18MG						Std Op Procedure								2	2		2																18MG
19MG										1			1	2			2																19MG
20MG	1													2			2		1			1				2							20MG
21MP													1	2		1	2															personal devotions	21MP
22MP						Std Op Procedure								2			2	overseas vs local		1						1							22MP
23MP									1	2	2		2	2	2	2		2					1									23MP
24MP														2			2									2				1			24MP
25MP													2	2			2		1														25MP
26MP													1	2		1	2									1	1					cell group	26MP
27MP														2			2								1								27MP
28MP													1	2			2																28MP
Malaysia																																	
29FG														2			2																29FG
30FG													1	2			2															cell group	30FG
31FG														2	2	1	2																31FG
32FG													1	2			2		1		1			1		1							32FG
33FG													1	2	1		2																33FG
34FG												1	2	2		2	2					1											34FG
35FG												1	2	2			2		1							1						cell group	35FG
36FG													2	2	2		2						1										36FG
37FG													1	2		1	2																37FG
38FG														2	1		2		2													cell group	38FG
39MG													1	2		1	2	NZ Soc of Accts														personal devotions	39MG
40MG														2	1	1	2		1			2				1						cell group	40MG
41MG													1	2		2	2																41MG
42MG							1						2	2		2	2	Corrupt practice		2						1							42MG
43MG														2	2	2	2									1							43MG
44MG													1	2		2	2	NZ Soc of Accts					1			1							44MG
45MG						NZ Bus Law useles				1				2		1	2									1				1			45MG
46MG													1	2		2	2		1														46MG
47MG														2	2		2						1			2							47MG
48MP													2	2	2	1	2									1						cell group	48MP
49MP										1			2	2		2	2						1										49MP
50MP										1			2	2	1	2	2						1			1						personal devotions	50MP
51MP													1	2		1	2		2	1													51MP
52MP														2			2																52MP
53MP												2		2			2																53MP
Indonesia																																	
54FG														2			2																54FG
55FG													1	2			2				2												55FG
56FP				1										2	1		2		1					1									56FP
57FP														2			2																57FP
58MG											1			2			2			2													58MG
59MG										1	1	1	1	2	2		2		2														59MG
60MG										2				2			2																60MG
61MG				2									2	2			2															local leadership	61MG
62MG													2	2			2		1		1						1						62MG
63MG													2	2			2										2						63MG
64MP														2			2										1						64MP
65MP				2							2		1	2			2		2														65MP
66MP														2			2																66MP
67MP														2			2																67MP

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