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**Intercultural Interactions in a New Zealand University:
Pakeha and Asian Perspectives**

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ABSTRACT

Research on the phenomenon of intercultural contact in Western higher education has attracted the interest of a wide scope of academic disciplines. Psychologists and communication experts have underlined the inextricable link between positive friendship encounter with host students and well-being of sojourning students. Educationalists have also highlighted the impact of culturally diverse classrooms on the academic experience of both home and overseas students. Against this backdrop, the focus of my study is to offer some sociological observations on the intercultural contact phenomenon from the perspective of Pakeha and Asian international students in the New Zealand university context. The present study has adopted a qualitative approach using focus groups and in-depth interviews.

Results from the current research underscore that growth in the export education sector has strengthened New Zealand economy but it has not necessarily enriched the socio-cultural arena of its higher institutions of learning. Instead, ethnic segregation of varying levels has become more apparent institutionally as a result of the strengthening subcultures within the Asian international student communities. The proliferation of ethnic enclaves has had significant social implications for both Pakeha and Asians. The research outcome also indicates that academic capitalism has dominated the agenda of New Zealand higher education. Hence, the task of promoting international understanding and global interdependence in New Zealand higher education has been relegated to the periphery in terms of issues to be addressed. These sociological trends demonstrate an antithesis of the objective of international education. The challenge, therefore, is for those responsible for managing higher education to review and renew its commitment towards the cultivation of intercultural global citizens.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why Research On This Topic

The idea of researching the phenomenon of intercultural contact between *Pakeha*¹ (King 1991) and Asian international students in a New Zealand university first germinated in my mind more than a decade ago. My personal experience as an international student in this country in the early 1990s provided the initial source of inspiration for this study. My desire to research on this subject was fuelled by similar stories and experiences shared by numerous Asian international students with whom I have had contact in the course of my pastoral ministry. The final impetus came from a range of research literature that I was exposed to which repeatedly underscored the paucity of contact between domestic and international students in Western higher education. With these three reasons in mind, I embarked on my research project.

1.1.1 A Personal Sojourn

New Zealand was the first Western country I ever set foot on and the first that I lived in for a considerable length of time. When I arrived in this country in 1993, I anticipated meeting local students and developing meaningful friendship with some of them. In the early 1990s, there were fewer Asian student faces on campus and even fewer residing in campus accommodation. Understandably, I assumed that I would stand out in the crowd since I was one of the few foreigners in this particular campus. I also expected that New Zealand students would be interested in getting to know me and in finding out more about my cultural origins and ethnic background.

The reality was quite different. Instead, I discovered that of all the local students that I met in that particular tertiary institution in my first week, only one showed any interest

¹ I adopted Michael King's (1991:7) definition of *Pakeha* specifically to refer to New Zealand students who are of European descent, genetically and culturally, but whose identities are primarily derived from their location and experiences within New Zealand.

whatsoever in befriending me or other internationals I knew of. It did not take very long for me to become disillusioned with Kiwis and their culture. This was aggravated by my experience of culture shock that happened simultaneously. Gradually, I withdrew from all things and people associated with the host culture. I found myself regretting my decision to come to New Zealand to pursue higher education. I wondered if the only way I could survive the next three years of my academic sojourn would be to simply focus on study and rely socially and emotionally on the support of my co-national and international friends on the campus, who were then few and far between. As I recalled the reasons for choosing to study in New Zealand, the endless red tape I had to overcome in order to gain my study permit and the huge financial resources I had incurred as an overseas student, it seemed so pointless to obtain an overseas tertiary qualification without any real cross-cultural engagement with people in my foreign sojourn.

1.1.2 A Different Breed of Sojourning Students

Many Asian international students in this country have identified themselves with different aspects of my sojourning story in New Zealand, although not too many of them would share my intensity as a wandering scholar seeking acculturation into the host culture. Most Asian international students today rely less on friendship with local students to meet their social and emotional needs since there are now so many of their own ethnic cohorts here. Irrespective of where these international students come from, whether it is the People's Republic of China, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Japan, India or Vietnam, they seem quite content to stay within their ethnic enclaves and seek mutual comfort and support from co-nationals.

Nevertheless, it is important to point out that many Asian international students still have a desire to maintain some degree of contact or meaningful interaction with host students both in the academic context and social setting. In the wake of globalisation, the pursuit of higher education in the West is one of the transmigration strategies adopted by many Asian international students and/or their families for capital accumulation as propounded by Ong (1999). Hence, pursuing interaction with host students and acquiring socio-cultural competence in the host society is instrumental to their academic achievement and success

in life. Many Asian students are seeking meaningful interaction with the local people not as an end in itself but as a means of reproducing wealth for themselves and/or their families and boosting their privileged status in a transnational world. This presents an interesting contrast to my own sojourning experience and the stories of many other Asian international students in the previous generation who are essentially not transnational capitalists at heart. Inevitably, it raises the question of whether friendship with New Zealand students for this new generation of Asian sojourners serves as “bonding” social capital or “bridging” social capital for the latter, in accordance to Putnam’s (2000) sociological framework.²

1.1.3 Literary Evidence

A final source of inspiration that spurred me on in the direction of my research emerged from the range of literature reviewed by Ward (2001) on social interaction between domestic and international students across Western higher education. Ward’s analysis reiterates similar social difficulties that international students encounter with New Zealand students due to apathy and indifference of host students. Subsequent to her literature review, Ward and Masgoret (2004) carried out a survey among international students to assess their level of satisfaction in terms of social contact with New Zealanders. Once again, their conclusion suggests that international students in general are disappointed and dissatisfied with the level of interaction they have with local students.

Obviously, this is not solely a New Zealand problem. Research studies (Arthur, 2004; Furnham, 1997; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Leung, 2001) have unequivocally stated that international students studying in Australia, United States, United Kingdom and Canada encountered the same difficulties socially with students of European descent in these receiving countries. My research, therefore, focuses on the interaction of Pakeha and their international peers in the New Zealand university context rather than Maori or other ethnic categories of domestic students. To me, the low incidence of intercultural friendship between host and international students across the Western world seems antithetical to the

² Putnam (2000, p.22-23) described “bonding” social capital as social networks that tend to be inward looking while reinforcing exclusive identities and homogeneous groups. Some examples include ethnic associations and church-based women’s knitting group. By contrast, he defined “bridging” social capital encompass people across diverse social and geographical cleavages, such as ecumenical religious organisations.

ethos of internationalisation of education which upholds the importance of international exchange (Arthur, 2004; Fenwick, 1987; Pickert, 1992; Yang, 2002). International education basically stresses the important aspect of making all students more knowledgeable about other cultures as well as preparing them to live and work in international or multicultural settings (Pickert, 1992, p.9). The paucity of contact between domestic and international students in Western higher education inevitably raises questions about how international this education is. Does the increased presence of international students in Western higher education necessarily mean that these academic communities have become more internationally-minded?

1.2 Purpose Of The Study

In the light of a drastic shift in the social, ethnic and cultural demography within New Zealand higher education in the last decade or so, an investigation into the phenomenon of intercultural interaction among New Zealand tertiary students is timely. As this is an exploratory study on the subject area, the purpose of the research is simply to:

- a. offer some sociological explications for the lack of intercultural contact in a New Zealand university, and
- b. explore the role of the university in fostering intercultural interaction among students within the broader context of internationalisation.

I have decided to undertake the study from the perspectives of both Pakeha (who represent the domestic student category in this thesis) and Asian international students using a qualitative approach. My decision to reflect a dual-culture perspective is influenced by the range of past literature on social interaction between domestic and international students which invariably carry the views of overseas students (Ward, 2001). Instead of testing hypothetical constructs, my research is essentially descriptive in nature. The ultimate goal is to explore a sociological phenomenon through the eyes of the research subjects using focus groups and in-depth interviews to gain insights into how we can better bridge the

social gulf as well as promote true solidarity and genuine acceptance among a culturally diverse student population in New Zealand tertiary education context.

CHAPTER 2: ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

2.1 Is There Intercultural Interaction In International Education?

The role that higher education plays in international relations unfolded in the early 1920s through activities such as “improving the working conditions of intellectual workers in Central and Eastern Europe, and supporting international exchange of professionals and scientific publications, as well as funding of research and promotion of copyright agreements” (Pickert, 2002, p.3).³ Subsequent to World War II, the goal of enhancing international collaboration through education, science and culture continues to dominate the agenda of politicians worldwide seeking for an international solution to war (Pickert, 2002). Across the Western world, international education became associated with government foreign-aid programs created to help rebuild the war-torn and less developed countries. New Zealand, like other Western nations, have expressed its commitment towards Third World development via the provision of technical assistance and practical education to elite students from Southeast Asia through the “Colombo Plan” scholarships introduced in the early 1950s (Tarling, 2004).

Over the post-war period, many Western bureaucrats and academics have also deployed the rhetoric of “international exchange” to justify the flow of students from one country to another (Fenwick, 1987, p.128; Pickert, 2002, p.7). These Western government officials and educators became aware of the importance of developing international understanding because of global interdependence. In New Zealand, the government and educators came to a gradual realisation that the progressive growth in the number of Asian international students between the late 1960s and the late 1970s had helped counter the insularity of New

³ Pickert (2002) postulates that the roots of the concept of international education can be traced back to the reign of Alexander the Great (336 –323 B.C.) who established universities and libraries throughout his empire, or to the reign of Emperor Asoka The Great of India (273-232 B.C.) who founded the University of Taxila. Modern higher education began in the 13th century with the founding of universities at Bologna, Paris, Montpellier and Oxford. What renders these early universities as international is that their scholars shared the common goal of advancing universal knowledge even though at times they segregated themselves by language and ethnic group.

Zealand universities (Tarling, 2004). Tarling (2004) noted that students from differing cultures also provided New Zealanders with the chance to enhance their own culture through the sharing and interaction they had with the internationals. This was why New Zealand kept its door opened to both scholarship and privately funded international students under its “open entry” policy (Tarling, 2004).⁴

By the 1990s, however, the New Zealand government has become much more in favour of the sale of places in universities (Tarling, 2004, p.83). Today New Zealand universities like Australia and United Kingdom are increasingly dependent on full-fee paying foreign students as a major source of discretionary revenue (Hawley, 2002). The feverish recruitment of international students seems to be driven predominantly by academic capitalism (De Vita & Case, 2003; Marginson, 2002). Even though the official ideology surrounding the making of international student policy within New Zealand has in principle upheld the idea of “international exchange”, in practice it is always subsumed under the notion of foreign aid prior to the 1980s (Tarling, 2004, p.49). Currently, many stakeholders within the New Zealand export education sector continue to pay lip service to the contributions that international students make to the social and cultural development of New Zealand students (Stevens, 2005). Nonetheless, recent decline in international student numbers (Richardson, 2005; *Press*, 17 January 2005, “Tertiary market failing: an era’s end”) has become a grave concern for the bureaucrats and education providers due to the fiscal implications for educational institutions and domestic economy. Both the government and academic communities in this country are now preoccupied with the retention of international student numbers (Stevens, 2005). The task of promoting international awareness and fostering positive intercultural relations on the campus is, once again, being relegated to secondary place.

In sum, the growing presence of Asian international students in New Zealand universities has not led to a corresponding increase in the level of cultural awareness and international

⁴ “Open entry” policy is a unique feature of New Zealand Universities which acknowledged and upheld the universal right of the individual to acquire university education irrespective of ones’ financial situation. The policy provided subsidised education for both scholarship and privately funded international students in New Zealand prior to the reform in Education Act in 1989.

interest among domestic students. Ward's (2001) literature review shows that the attitudes of New Zealanders toward international students in this country remain, ironically, one of apathy and indifference. Has New Zealand higher education, therefore, failed in its task to promote international understanding and develop "worldmindedness" (Hansen, 2002, p.1) in students for the 21st century?

2.2 The Impact Of Ethnic Enclaves

The phenomenon of ethnic enclaves in many migrant-based societies such as New Zealand is not new. Putnam (2000, p.22) argues that in a culturally diverse community or society, ethnic networks "provide crucial social and psychological support for the less fortunate members of the community". In the wake of the "new wave" of Asian immigrants into this country, the concurrent increase in the number of Asian international students (ISANA, 2004)⁵ enrolled in New Zealand higher education (between 1998 and 2003) has undoubtedly contributed to the visibility of Asians, in particular within Auckland (Philip, 2001). The corollary of this is the growth of social enclaves representing a multiplicity of Asian ethnicities throughout the largest city in New Zealand.

Ward (2001) discovers that, by and large, international students want to develop meaningful contact with domestic students since they view cross-national friendships as a vital component of their sojourning experience. Nonetheless, the apathy and indifference of many New Zealand students have accentuated the social difficulties already experienced by most Asian international students due to culture shock (Ward, 2001). In earlier research, James and Watts (1992, p.8) also hint at the shallowness of the interpersonal exchanges that took place between New Zealand and overseas students in the local universities. These New Zealand researchers reveal that many overseas students have expressed concerns over their lack of acceptance, beyond a superficial level, by their New Zealand peers. Other

⁵ In 2003, the number of international students in New Zealand totalled to 118,684. The People's Republic of China (54,837), South Korea (21,198) and Japan (16,376) represented the top three countries on New Zealand international student roll. Other sending countries include Hong Kong (1,529), Indonesia (702), Malaysia (1,160), Thailand (4,413), India (1,902), United States of America (1,355), Singapore (144) and others (15,068). For more information on the latest NZ international student statistics, see "Tertiary Statistics" in the Ministry of Education website [On-line] www.minedu.govt.nz

New Zealand researchers also endorse the findings of James and Watts' study (Beaver & Bhat, 2002; Beaver & Tuck, 1998; Butcher et al, 2002; Mills, 1997; Ward & Masgoret, 2004). They have further highlighted cultural differences, language barriers and racial stereotypes as the major obstacles undermining interaction between New Zealand and international students.

It is, therefore, not surprising to see the proliferation of ethnic enclaves on New Zealand tertiary campuses. Many Asian international students choose to withdraw into the safety and comfort of their co-ethnic networks when overwhelmed by the demands of cross-cultural transition and interaction. This is not, however, the sole reason why many Asian international students stick to themselves. Anecdotal evidence (Kan, 2002; Misa, 2002; *Dominion*, 9 August 1995, "Racist views on Asian settlers", p.8) suggests that ethnic segregation is also linked to the heightened xenophobia and racist reactions of New Zealanders towards newcomers from Asia. Whilst bonding with co-ethnics was vital to enable some Asian international students to survive in a hostile and unfriendly foreign environment, Putnam (2000:23) notes that ethnic enclaves can also produce anti-social consequences, such as sectarianism or ethnocentrism. The presence of ethnic enclaves in New Zealand universities has undoubtedly shielded some Asian international students from having to confront and deal with the stark reality of cross-cultural adjustments. Simultaneously, all these "small world" networks (Spoonley et al, 2005, p.15) have also elicited negative reactions and antagonism from some New Zealanders. A question to be considered here is this – how does ethnic segregation amongst students affect race relations within New Zealand academic communities and the society at large in the long term?

2.3 "Unrealised Potential" Of International Students' Presence

In a report documenting the growth of New Zealand export education (Ministry of Education, 2001), local education providers are strongly encouraged to develop linkages with counterpart institutions overseas and send more New Zealand students on study exchange schemes as part of the institutional efforts toward internationalisation. The report minimises the importance of the presence of international students in New Zealand who might act as immediate catalysts for the internationalisation of New Zealand higher

education. Anecdotally, not every New Zealand student will have the opportunity in his or her lifetime to participate in a study abroad programme or travel around the world. The influx of international students into New Zealand universities, however, provides the opportunity for local students to experience the colourful cultural diversity and to grasp global perspectives on various academic issues without even having to cross physical borders or geographical boundaries of the world.

As Hansen (2002, p.6) succinctly notes, “the personal contact with people from other cultures forces [the local students] to react immediately in real time. These meetings are more likely to have an impact in a personal way than if the same facts had been learned in a classroom.” The presence of Asian international students in New Zealand higher education institutions offers local students a unique opportunity to acquire intercultural experiences in real life situations rather than confining intercultural learning to the realm of academic knowledge. This is consistent with the ethos of international education which is predicated upon the belief that there are potential educational benefits underlying the interaction of domestic and international students who converged in the same learning environment. For instance, Bowry (2002, p.5) refers to various literature (e.g. Canadian Bureau of International Education, 1986; Holdaway, Bryan & Allan, 1988; Symons & Page, 1984) which claim that exposing domestic students to the perspectives and experiences of their international peers will foster, among many other things, a greater awareness of world affairs and global issues plus a greater sensitivity of domestic students’ cultural awareness. Likewise, Vertesi (1999 as cited in Bowry, 2002, p.17) reinforces the view that foreign students “unquestionably contributed to a more sophisticated worldview in those Canadians who came to know them.”

New Zealand’s social and cultural landscapes have shifted drastically over time (Statistics New Zealand, 2001).⁶ There is now an even greater need for New Zealanders to foster positive inter-group and inter-ethnic relations. Putnam (2000, p.408) coins the term,

⁶ According to 2001 NZ Census figures, there are nearly a quarter of a million Asian and Pacific peoples respectively, half a million Maori and just over two million people are of European descent and other ethnicities. [On-line] www.stats.govt.nz

“bridging” social capital, to refer to social networks that are created to “bridge the racial, social and geographical cleavages” in the larger society. The growing presence of international students in the universities, if properly utilised, is potentially a resource to help enhance the “bridging” social capital of both New Zealanders as well as the sojourning students themselves. An internationally mixed academic community provides a unique context for local students to come to grips with the multicultural realities of their society. It is also an ideal place to encourage the larger student body to grapple with issues of global diversity and cultural pluralism. Through ongoing interaction with one another, both New Zealand and international students can develop socio-cultural skills and competencies (Mak et al, 1999; Mak & Tran, 2001). In short, the presence of Asian international students in New Zealand universities ought to provide some impetus for internationalisation of higher education to take place locally (Altbach & Peterson, 1998; Hansen, 2002; Pickert, 1992).

There have been debates (Bowry, 2002) concerning the validity of the internationalist claims which espouse the real and potential benefits associated with the presence of international students in Western higher education. For instance, Bowry (2002) arguing from within the Canadian university context states that these claims, plausible as they sound, are more supposition than facts grounded in research. British researchers (De Vita & Case, 2003; Fenwick, 1987) too claim that international students remain as a case of “unrealised potential” in many higher education communities within United Kingdom. There is a paucity of research in the New Zealand context to verify the above claim. Hence, the extent to which New Zealand higher education institutions acknowledge and seek out the potential contributions of the Asian international students in their effort towards internationalisation is unknown.

2.4 Challenges in the Context of International Education

In this chapter, I have identified three key issues surrounding the phenomenon of intercultural interaction among students in New Zealand higher education communities. The first issue is to do with how the official stance on promoting “international exchange” among tertiary students has invariably been subsumed under the notion of foreign aid in the past or overshadowed by marketisation discourse in relation to international students in

contemporary times (Tarling, 2004). The feverish recruitment of Asian international students into New Zealand higher education institutions has not been matched by corresponding institutional efforts to increase cross-cultural interaction between domestic and international students. New Zealand students remain apathetic and indifferent towards international students whilst overseas students in this country continue to experience disappointment and dissatisfaction with the amount of contact they have had with local students (Ward, 2001). In short, the crucial aspect of intercultural contact is missing in New Zealand international education context.

Secondly, the influx of Asian international students into Auckland has made ethnic segregation more visible, both institutionally and citywide (White, 2002). While co-ethnic networks are necessary for some Asian international students, who need to seek respite from the harsh demands of cross-cultural transition or shield themselves from the hostile foreign environment, these exclusive ethnic enclaves have simultaneously produced anti-social consequences for the wider academic community (Putnam, 2000). Spoonley et al (2005, p.15) has already shown that the host community perceive “small world” networks for migrants negatively. Ethnic segregation, therefore, does not contribute to social cohesion in the academic communities or wider society. In fact, it works against the ethos of internationalism that international education seeks to uphold.

Finally, the challenge for New Zealand higher education communities is to acknowledge the extent to which international students can genuinely contribute to the internationalisation of New Zealand universities, and to seek to realise the potential contributions of the foreign students (De Vita & Case, 2003; Fenwick, 1987; Welch, 2002). New Zealand as a society is fraught with many tensions and issues relating to biculturalism and multiculturalism (Spoonley et al, 1999). To a large extent, the ethnic and cultural mix in the public tertiary institutions presents a unique opportunity for both domestic and international students to grapple with issues of global diversity and cultural pluralism together. Tertiary education also serves as an ideal platform for students to acquire the necessary intercultural experiences and develop socio-cultural skills (Mak & Tran, 2001) to relate competently in the global environment of the 21st century. However, evidence from

research (Bowry, 2002, p.27) suggests that most Western higher education institutions tend to see international students as an economic resource before a learning resource. The educational or socio-cultural impact that international students have on domestic students and host institutions therefore becomes secondary to the rationale for recruiting international students into Western higher education.

In conclusion, the present study aims to explore in greater depth these challenges in New Zealand tertiary education context from the perspectives of both Pakeha and Asian international students. The goal of this research is to provide some sociological explications of the current phenomenon of intercultural contact in a New Zealand university through the eyes of the research subjects, interfaced with the researcher's views based on the evidence of the research findings.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 An Overview

A survey of past and current literature on international education reveals three interrelated themes pertinent to the current research topic. For analytical purposes, I will classify them under the following headings:

- (a) Internationalisation of higher education
- (b) Intercultural contact issues
- (c) Intervention strategies

Briefly, the majority of written discourses on international education in the last decade have centred around the relationship between market theory in relation to international students and internationalisation of universities. While many Western policymakers and entrepreneurs welcome a reform of the higher education (Berg, 2005; *The Economist*, 2005) and view the change in positive terms, educators, social researchers and other stakeholders within the academic community (De Vita & Case, 2003; Fenwick, 1987; Welch, 2002; Yang, 2002) have begun to question the integrity of an international education policy which is informed and driven predominantly by economics.

Emerging from the debates and discussions is a key question of whether genuine “internationalisation” as opposed to economic “globalisation” (Welch, 2002, p.434-437) is taking place in the Western higher education in the light of its changing demography and socio-cultural landscapes. Welch (2002, p.438) argues that the prime indicator of the genuine internationalisation of the universities is seen in the “mutuality and reciprocal cultural relations within university internationalisation activities”. One example of this is the effort to integrate international and local students and other non-commercial activities within the institutions. By contrast, economic globalisation of education is concerned with the commercialisation of international programs and activities (Welch, 2002, p.439).

Welch's question about the genuine internationalisation of the antipodean universities is notably shared by De Vita and Case (2003, p.384) who argue that the international marketisation of higher education in the UK, in effect, "militates against a type of internationalisation that would make [British] university culture more multicultural, more open to the other and more conducive to the development of a critical stance vis-à-vis [our] own cultural conditioning and national prejudice". Academic communities throughout the Western world remain polarised over their understanding of what it means to become "internationalised", especially in view of the growing prominence of the marketisation discourses on international education worldwide (De Vita & Case, 2003, p.386).

The literature also highlights concerns about the ad hoc nature and disjointed approach towards internationalisation of the universities. Various studies advocate the need to reform academic curricula, teaching practices and delivery of student services so as to encourage across-the-board internationalisation of higher education in the Western institutions. Some social researchers (De Vita & Case, 2003; Hansen, 2002) also argue that personal connections are a vital aspect of intercultural learning and also a key to unlocking classroom knowledge on international education, thus making the concept of internationalisation less abstract.

Several studies (Arthur, 2004; Barker et al, 1991; Beaver & Bhat, 2002; Beaver & Tuck, 1998; Heggins & Jackson, 2003; Ward & Masgoret, 2004) of the friendship pattern between domestic and overseas students in a few Western universities reveal that language barriers, perceived or real cultural differences as well as the lack of confidence and intercultural relational skills, are the main obstacles that prevent international students from having satisfactory and meaningful contact with the host students. As for students of the dominant host culture, apathy or indifference, racial/ethnic stereotypes, xenophobia and racism are the main blockages which inhibit them from initiating contact with people from ethnically or culturally diverse backgrounds (Baldwin et al, 2000; Spencer-Rodgers, 2001; Ward, 2001).

Researchers in the field of psychology (Barker et al, 1991; Bochner & Furnham, 1985; Chen, 1993; Hechanova-Alampay et al, 2002; Hsu, et al, 2001; Leung, 2001) underscore the critical link between friendships with host students and the cultural, emotional psychological well-being of sojourning students. Most of the studies correlate the academic success rate of international students with the positive relationships they enjoy with host nationals. However, not many international students have had positive experiences with the host students, as Ward (2001) uncovers in her literature review on the impact of international students on domestic students and host institutions. Overall, her findings suggest that domestic students are largely uninterested in initiating contact with their international peers despite the desire of the latter for more cross-national interaction (Ward 2001, p.3). The paucity of intercultural contact among tertiary students has provided an impetus for some researchers (Klak & Martin, 2003; Lin & Yi, 1997; Nesdale & Todd, 1993, 2000; Sachdev, 1997; Taylor, 1994; Volet & Tan-Quigley, 1999) to begin exploring and assessing effective intervention strategies to actively facilitate cross-cultural contact in an international academic environment.

In sum, the marketisation discourses in relation to international students which emerged in the last decade have significant ramifications on the “internationalisation” of higher education in the West. Academic communities throughout the Western world are polarised over the definitive outworking of the internationalisation agenda for their respective institutions. Effects resulting from the confusion over what it means to go “international” have spilled over onto the level of intercultural contact and exchange among students in many Western tertiary institutions, including New Zealand. The rest of this chapter will unravel the relationship between internationalisation of the universities and intercultural contact issues among students in Western higher education based on current review of discourses on international education.

3.2 Internationalisation of Higher Education

“Internationalisation” has become a buzzword in contemporary Western higher education (Altbach & Peterson, 1998, p.36; Yang, 2002, p.81). There is little consensus on its exact definition, however, within academic communities. Researchers, educationalists,

policymakers and those representing the entrepreneurial interests of the academic institutions appear to be divided over their understanding of the phenomenon. One definition of “internationalisation” focuses on the implementation of a series of internationally related activities such as learning about other cultures in the classroom, participating in a study exchange program or providing technical assistance to another culture (Hansen, 2002; Welch, 2002). An alternative understanding of “internationalisation” is linked to a whole range of processes aimed at helping individuals and institutions develop a mindset for “global citizenship” or “worldmindedness” (De Vita & Case, 2003; Hansen, 2002; Knight & de Wit, 1999; Yang, 2002). The activity-centred approach in internationalising the universities tends to emphasise the crucial role of study abroad programme, scholar and faculty exchange, joint research initiatives and investments in overseas marketing as a means to increasing international student presence institutionally. On the contrary, a more process-oriented view of internationalisation underscores the importance of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution. Clearly, the wrangle over what the term “internationalisation” actually entails implies that there is a lot of confusion surrounding what it means for higher education to “go international”.

Some researchers (Altbach & Peterson, 1998; De Vita & Case, 2003; Fenwick, 1987; Welch, 2002) are sceptical about the genuine internationalisation of Western higher education. These researchers argue that internationalisation of the universities does not take place unless there is evidence to demonstrate the “mutuality and reciprocal cultural relations within university internationalisation activities” (Welch, 2002, p.438). They also concur on the fact that the internationalisation agenda in Western higher education is basically driven by financial stringency that many Western institutions face due to reduced government funding.

For instance, in the United Kingdom, Fenwick (1987, p.126) argued that the educational case for overseas students was brought back on to the higher education agenda due to cutbacks in government funding. Nearly two decades later, De Vita and Case (2003, p.383) observes that the commercial agenda continues to drive the internationalisation of UK

higher education due to ongoing reduction in federal funding. The British researchers note that rather than being self-sufficient financially as a condition of existence, universities in the UK have turned to marketing education as a commodity in the open national and international market as a means to sustain institutional operations. The corollary of the ideological paradigm shift in higher education, which embraces the understanding of “student-as-customer” (De Vita & Case, 2003, p.384), is that universities become more focused on making profits and/or acting as a business enterprise. Inevitably, this focus undermines any attempt towards “internationalisation”, which is aimed at preparing students to live and work in a multicultural society through cultivating in them greater understanding and respect for other cultures (De Vita & Case 2003).

Altbach and Peterson (1998, p.36) share similar concerns over the effects of the diminishing funds from the U.S. government earmarked for international education in the American context. They concur with their UK counterparts that in the light of budget constraints, most American tertiary institutions lack the financial resources to promote major international initiatives that would bring about genuine internationalisation of their institutions. These researchers point out that academic communities in the U.S. are no longer certain about how they should view the presence of international students on their campuses. The American higher education communities are polarised over their views of the role that international students play in their institutions. Some individuals and/or institutions have bought into the mentality that international students are there to fill empty seats and help balance budgets, while others continue to view them as a source of intellectual labour or resources in international expertise (Altbach & Peterson, 1998, p.37). The notion of international education as a branch of foreign aid from the U.S. to the developing world remains in the American psyche even though it is now the minority view (Marginson, 2002, p.36).

In Australia, Welch (2002, p.444) recognises that the Australian vice-chancellors and the vast majority of the academic and administrative staff actively support the idea of internationalising the universities. Nonetheless, he maintains that it is “the forces of global economic restructuring” that invariably drive the internationalisation agenda within the

Australian higher education. As the internationalisation of the antipodean universities occurs increasingly within the overall context of the extension of global capitalism, the institutions also face more pressure to adopt a business ethic and “customer-focused” approach in their delivery of international education (Welch, 2002, p.440). Marginson (2002, p.41) notes that as Australian universities become increasingly dependent on the international student market as their main source of discretionary revenues to replace the shortage in government funding, the same dollar generated by the education of international students is ploughed back into the costs of doing the export education business in order to attract even larger number of international students to sustain the ongoing institutional operations. Consequently, there are very few resources left for the promotion of the genuine internationalisation of the Australian universities, such as preparing faculty, staff and students to function in international and intercultural contexts (Yang, 2002, p.86). This is why Welch (2002, p.470) firmly believes that the educational objectives and commercial aspirations of the antipodean institutions are simply irreconcilable. His (and other research: De Vita & Case, 2003; Fenwick, 1987; Marginson, 2002) have shown that it is extremely difficult for the universities to operate as a business enterprise whilst seeking to preserve the intellectual and moral welfare above profitability (De Vita & Case, 2003, p.387).

Berg (2005, p.30) sparks a re-evaluation of the capitalist reform of higher education from the perspectives of “for-profit” universities.⁷ He challenges the traditional belief that universities cannot fulfil a social agenda and maintain their profit-driven aspiration simultaneously. He argues that many proprietary higher educational institutions in the U.S. have been able to hold their business interests and academic concerns in tandem because they are openly grappling with the tensions raised by the interplay of the dual objectives of the universities (Berg, 2005, p.30-34). By contrast, traditional universities who are interested in making a “profit” for survival but fear it would conflict with their core mission actually sweep the question under the carpet. In the final analysis, Welch (2002, p.471) concludes that government, educators and entrepreneurs representing the academic

⁷ “For-profit” universities refer to the privately owned higher educational institutions in the U.S. Some examples of the proprietary higher education in the United States are the University of Phoenix, DeVry University, Argosy University.

communities in the West must be prepared to enter into comprehensive dialogues to address the problem of serious shortages in funding for higher education. It is by carefully defining the role and partnership between the government and higher education community that academic capitalism and internationalisation of higher education can co-exist peacefully in the public sector of tertiary education (Altbach & Peterson, 1998, p.38; Berg, 2005, p.34).

On a practical level, researchers Altbach and Peterson (1998, p.37) question the effectiveness of the study abroad programme in internationalising American higher education since sixty-five percent of students studying abroad choose Europe as their ultimate destination. The findings of Marginson (2002, p.42) also reveal that the majority of the Australian students who go abroad for study exchange usually pick Europe, America or other geographical regions as their country destinations. Only a minority of the American and Australian students would opt for study exchange in Asia, Latin America or other non-Western parts of the world. According to Hawley (2002), most New Zealand students involved in study exchange programme also prefer to go to northwestern Europe, North America or Australia. There are very few who choose to go to countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The literature further underscores the insularity and parochialism of Western higher education. Altbach and Peterson (1998) notice how American students seem to show a remarkable lack of familiarity with world issues, geography and cultures. This is despite the growing emphasis on the study abroad programme and the visible influx of international students from Asia and other non-Western nations into the American universities. These researchers argue that the majority of American professors also lack international consciousness and involvement, and are largely uncommitted to internationalism (Altbach & Peterson, 1998, p.38). Moreover, the American universities fail to create incentives to encourage and reward greater internationalism among faculty. It is largely a case of how an under-resourced faculty can effectively meet the academic demands of a globally oriented study body. Marginson (2002, p.42) points out that Australian higher education remains essentially monocultural in form and Anglo-American

in content. Likewise, De Vita and Case (2003) draw attention to the academic staff profile in most British universities. They claim that the typical British faculty is “anything but diverse and hardly reflects the highly culturally heterogeneous student population [we] currently serve” (De Vita & Case, 2003, p.394). Even though the highly homogeneous group of academia is often sensitive to issues of diversity, it does not necessarily translate into any form of systematic, self-reflexive and critique of themselves, their professional values and established norms as well as their pedagogic practices. Arguably, the task of internationalising Western higher education must effectively counter the deeply rooted Euro-centric cultural assumptions and pedagogies of the main institutions and their key players.

Thus far, most research has highlighted the poverty of the “student-as-customer” discourse in bringing about genuine educational reform in the academic, social and cultural dimensions in Western higher learning. There little research has assessed the nature of New Zealand higher education and the extent to which it has embraced “internationalisation” in its curricula reform, pedagogies and service delivery functions. Suffice to say, there are important lessons that New Zealanders can glean from previous studies conducted in other Western universities. New Zealand educators and researchers (Beaver & Tuck, 1998; Holmes & Bird, 2002; James & Watt, 1992; Mills, 1997; Ward, 2001) share similar concerns over the paucity of intercultural contact or exchange in an international academic environment. In the next section of this chapter, a series of discourses focussing on the phenomenon of contact between domestic and international students in Western higher education continues to show up the inadequacies of the market analogy on international education to elicit genuine across-the-board internationalisation of Western academy.

3.3 Intercultural Contact Issues

De Vita and Case (2003, p.388) argue that intercultural learning “[entails] the discovery and transcendence of difference through authentic experiences of cross-cultural interaction that involve real tasks, and emotional as well as intellectual participation.” Intercultural learning, therefore, is not just about knowing, thinking or talking about cultures but it is

essentially about caring, acting and connecting. Hansen (2002, p.6) supports the same notion of “personal connection” inherent within the ethos of international education. According to this researcher, meeting people from other cultures are more likely to have an impact in a personal way than if the same facts had been learned in the classroom. Bennett (1993, p.46) theorises that intercultural sensitivity is a form of “phenomenological knowledge” acquired through personal experiences. It is not something that could be gained simply by studying a particular culture. It is fair to conclude therefore that the level of social and cultural engagement between local and international students is a key determinant of how “internationalised” the institutions are. It indicates the degree in which intercultural learning is actually taking place among students and staff on campus.

A study by Smart, Volet and Ang (2000) in Murdoch University, which has a high proportion of overseas students from Southeast Asia, identifies fairly strong segregation between Australian and international students in the university. Cultural engagement between the ethnically diverse groups of students in that Australian university is mostly unidirectional because the host students expect their foreign counterparts to adjust to them and not vice versa. Small wonder then that many international students are deeply disappointed and hugely dissatisfied with the nature of contact they have with their Australian counterparts since they anticipate a more mutual relationship.

Previous studies in New Zealand (Beaver & Tuck, 1998; Holmes & Bird, 2004; James & Watt, 1992; Mills, 1997) suggest that most international students are keen to interact with local students even though many of them cannot speak English fluently. They find it hard to understand New Zealand students due to the strong kiwi accent and the speed at which the local students communicate (Mills, 1997, p.59). Their domestic counterparts frequently revert to slang and colloquialisms in daily conversations but this does not discourage international students from making overtures of friendship to host students. By contrast, New Zealand Pakeha students are reluctant and reticent about initiating contact with overseas students who are less proficient in English and look different from them (Beaver & Tuck, 1998, p.177). This seems to suggest the possibility of elements of xenophobia or racism on the part of Pakeha students. Ward (2001, p.9) also finds New Zealand Pakeha

students to be generally uninformed and disinterested in other cultures. Their ignorance of other cultures and lack of interest in cultural minority students usually manifest itself in the form of apathy or indifference toward the 'other'.

In the wake of a "new wave" of Asian immigration into New Zealand in the late 1980s, Williams (1998) conducted a survey to assess changes in New Zealanders' attitudes towards immigrants from non-Western countries. Findings from his study underscore widespread racism in New Zealand society albeit in its covert and subtle expressions. Williams (1998, p.70) concludes that few New Zealanders go out and perpetrate aggressive racist acts against members of other racial groups but his analysis on New Zealanders' view of immigration and immigrants shows that many do carry racist attitudes or exhibit passive forms of racism.⁸ Williams' (1998, p.71) study underlines a striking similarity in the way New Zealanders view immigrants and international students in this country. They are both perceived as commodities who bring capital and skills that New Zealand eagerly seeks. Immigrants and international students are seen to be good for New Zealand economy. Whilst Kiwis also acknowledge the benefits of a variety of cultures and new ideas introduced by these newcomers from overseas, most prefer not to have them as neighbours. The results from Williams' research are telling especially in terms of New Zealanders' propensity to racial prejudice and discrimination of the 'other'.

Ward (2001, p.10-11) in her extensive literature search on interactions between international and domestic students suggests that most New Zealand students hold relatively favourable perceptions of international students but are largely uninterested in initiating contact with their international peers. Hence, the Pakeha students' belief about international students does not square with their behaviour towards the latter. Research into the American students' consensual and stereotypic beliefs about international students by Spencer-Rodgers (2001) shed some light on the incoherence between belief and behaviour of New Zealand students. This researcher argues that the American host students tend to view international students as a homogeneous out-group. They often fail to recognise the

⁸ See Williams, 1998:70-85 for detailed analysis of Williams' findings on New Zealanders' attitudes associated with immigration.

heterogeneous character of the international student population on the basis of their multiple ethnic/cultural identities, languages and countries of origin. International students are often lumped together into one basket designated as being “foreign” by virtue of their “non-American” status (Spencer-Rodgers, 2001, p.650).

Spencer-Rodgers’ (2001, p.642) study also identifies some of the stereotypes that American students generally associate with international students. They attribute positive traits such as intelligent, hardworking, determined, eager to learn, study a lot, interested and disciplined to their international counterparts. They also perceive international students negatively in terms of being serious, pressured, handicapped, deficient, bewildered, psychologically distressed, socially and culturally maladjusted, lonely, anxious and frightened, naïve, confused, “out of place”, “don’t fit in”, “clueless”, et cetera. There is some anecdotal evidence to show that New Zealanders’ perceptions of Asian students in this country are generally negative. Asian students are perceived as those who have wealthy parents and, drive flash and expensive cars without proper license or experience (Stirling, 2003). Asian students are blamed for imposing additional pressure on institutional infrastructure and propped up rents in the low-to-mid price property market (Corbett, 2002). Asian students have turned Queen Street in Auckland city into a “destitute hub of cheap and tacky Asian crap” (*New Zealand Herald*, 23 February 2004, “Auckland’s change face”; Perrott, 2003). Asian students are also associated with gambling problems and crimes such as extortion and kidnapping in this country (*New Zealand Herald*, 10 May 2003, “Kidnapping cases hit one a week”). Spoonley and Trlin (2004, p.23-24) agree that the mass media in New Zealand is responsible for reinforcing the negative stereotypes of Asian students although they are not necessarily original perpetrators of the undesirable image of Asian ethnicity. By problematising *Asians* or over-generalising their behaviour, the mass media essentially perpetuated a form of indirect racism. New Zealand media as such is culpable for the apathy and xenophobia exhibited by New Zealanders toward Asian people in this country.

The cluster of discourses on intercultural contact issues (Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Sam, 2001; Wright & Lander, 2003; Zhang, 2002; Ward, 2001; Zimmerman, 1995) has also focused

exclusively from the international students' perspectives on the social, cultural and educational benefits that they derived from interacting with domestic students. Zimmermann's study (1995, p.329-330) in the U.S. context postulates that positive communication experience with host students is a vital ingredient for international students' adaptation within the host culture. The mere fact that they can talk and interact frequently with American students helps international students to perceive themselves positively in terms of their communication competence and ability to adapt to the host culture.

Researchers in the field of cross-cultural psychology (Leung, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1993b; Ward & Searle, 1991) also concur that international students who have greater contact with their domestic peers appear to "fit in" better. They are likely to encounter fewer psychological problems and experience lesser social difficulties. By contrast, sojourners who have trouble meeting and developing friendships with local students generally experience the least satisfaction with their social lives and academic studies (Lewthwaite, 1996; McCrae, Costa & Yik, 1996). Hence, the research evidence widely endorses the inextricable link between the quality of contact that international students have with host students and the sojourners' psychological, social and academic well-being. Despite the evidence, numerous discourses (Burns, 1991; James & Watt, 1992; Nesdale & Todd, 1993; Volet & Pears, 1994) have underscored the difficulties international students experience in initiating and maintaining contact with host students even though many desire or expect to have more interactions with the latter. Moreover, study by Mak and Tran (2001) also reveals that the individual students' capacity to handle the dynamics of intercultural friendships is determined by their personality, ethnic identification, fluency in host language and length of stay in the host country.

Far less is known about how domestic students view the benefits of interaction with their international peers. A study attempted by Bowry (2002) to examine the impact of foreign students on the educational experience of Canadian students in Queens' University concludes that the enriching effect of foreign students on domestic students' education is highly variable. Bowry (2002, p.20-21) supports his thesis by arguing that foreign students had the tendency to "cluster in their national groups". The heavy academic workload

coupled with pressure to complete their studies within a short time limit due to financial constraints inevitably force many foreign students to spend more time on studying and leave little room for socialising especially with local students. The author notes that in principle the university acknowledged foreign students as valuable resource through whom domestic students can gain intercultural insights, new perspectives or fresh approaches in their academic experience. Yet in practice, there is little or no priority assigned to drawing out the experience and knowledge of international students in the classroom for the benefit of domestic students' learning (Bowry, 2002, p.24).

There is little research evidence to suggest there is widespread spontaneous socialising between host and international students in most Western higher education communities. I refer to spontaneous socialising as intercultural interaction that happens voluntarily and without specific institutional intervention. The low incidence of intercultural friendships as revealed in the literature review suggests that the potential benefits of cross-cultural interaction as propounded in the rationale for internationalisation of the higher education have not yet been fully tapped into by the students and institution at large. It is the goal of this study to identify how Pakeha and Asian international students have benefited from one another's presence in the university.

3.4 Intervention Strategies

A final set of related discourses in the current literature looks at the implementation of intervention strategies that would facilitate cross-cultural interactions between domestic and international students. Based on the evidence from previous studies, Nesdale and Todd (1993) believe that internationalisation of the universities do not simply happen by increasing the number of international students. Deliberate intervention strategies must be introduced to counter the insularity of the institutions and assist both international and domestic students to relate competently and confidently with one another. The same pair of researchers (Nesdale & Todd, 2000) conducted a field study that sought to encourage contact between Australian and international students living in a hall of residence. Results from their field research show that the proactive intervention has had more impact on Australian students than the internationals because the host students were lacking more in

intercultural knowledge and openness. The outcome of such an intervention, according to these Australian researchers (Nesdale & Todd, 2000, p.357), has also increased the likelihood of the host students to seek out contact with students from other cultural groups in the larger campus community and not only within their hall of residence.

Past research has documented some positive outcomes on international students' academic achievement and social adjustment through the intervention of an international peer programme on campus (Quintrell & Westwood, 1994; Westwood & Barker, 1990). Geelhoed et al (2003) are keen to analyse the effects of such a peer programme on American host students who participated in the experience. They discover that American students generally want to have intercultural interactions but are not necessarily prepared to take risks without guidance (Geelhoed et al, 2003, p.15). These researchers endorse the positive benefits and challenges of an international peer programme for host students as well as internationals. There are two-fold implications for the institutions emerging from their study. Firstly, institutions must take into account both the needs of the international and host students when implementing any intervention strategy to promote cross-cultural interactions on campus. Secondly, for any form of intervention to be effective, it must necessarily include these three components of intercultural training – motivation, knowledge and skills.

Klak and Martin (2003) focus their research on how large-scale university-sponsored international cultural events actually help students to appreciate cultural difference and diversity. Their results indicate that such events have been instrumental in the attitudinal shift among students towards greater intercultural sensitivity. They maintain that celebration of the diversity in global cultures within the university often generate their own momentum leading to impromptu discussions and opening up opportunities for engaging other types of differences. Whilst cultural celebrations do not necessarily produce fully "intercultural global citizens", they believe that a combination of special cultural events, related courses of study and a supportive campus environment can invariably enhance students' progress towards greater intercultural understanding and acceptance of cultural difference (Klak & Martin 2003, p.462).

Several studies have highlighted the positive gains and value of studying abroad for local students. They mention the acquisition of foreign language proficiency (Pickert, 1992), the development of cultural knowledge and cultural sensitivity (McCabe, 1994; Sachdev, 1997), the cultivation of interpersonal maturity (Stitsworth, 1989) and finally the growing interest and concern over international affairs (Carlson & Widaman, 1988). However, some researchers (Altbach & Peterson, 1998; Marginson, 2002) question the effectiveness of the study abroad scheme in countering the insularity of Western students since they notice that the majority of them undertake their study exchange programme in countries such as northwestern Europe, North America or Australia. The researchers argue that the extent and nature of intercultural learning and experiences for these students are limited by virtue of the “Western orientation” in their choice of country destinations.

Extensive research has been done to assess the effectiveness of “collaborative learning” as a strategic means of bringing together students of different ethnic backgrounds (Holmes & Bird, 2004; Wright & Lander, 2003). As working together with students from differing cultures are both socially and emotionally demanding, students generally shy away from such collaborative encounters (Gerlach, 1994). A study by Holmes (2000) finds that most ethnic Chinese undergraduates express a preference for working with those from their own culture. In fact, many students regard group work in the universities as offering little value to their intercultural learning since the faculty is only interested in the expected learning outcomes of the group assignments (Volet, 2001). To support their case for genuine internationalisation of Australian universities, Smart, Volet and Ang (2000, p.9) state that, “if our central mission is to prepare Australian and international students for a global workforce, then it [is] crucial that they better understand each other’s cultures, learn to communicate, socialise and work together and to network.” Hence for collaborative learning to be effective in promoting intercultural cooperation, it must emphasise the relational aspect of group work and simultaneously underscore its inextricable link to the learning outcomes of the course. This is because “cultural-emotional connectedness” is a key consideration for students in determining whom they would like to work with in the context of the group assignments. Faculty needs to possess the necessary skills to effectively implement and facilitate the experience of collaborative learning where students

are unwilling to participate. Chang's (2001) approach is helpful in this instance by suggesting that students should be encouraged to develop their values and ethical standards through thoughtful reflection of arguments and facts as a means of reducing levels of racial prejudice in a culturally diverse educational environment. In essence, the process of intervention is about enhancing students' ability to adapt successfully to the demographic and cultural shifts within the higher education setting and in the society at large.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is naive to assume that an international mix of students on campus will lead to spontaneous or inevitable cross-cultural interaction and intercultural learning (Bowry, 2002; Nesdale & Todd, 2000). There is sufficient evidence from the literature review to show that having more international students on campus does not necessarily mean that the universities are becoming internationalised. One of the prime indicators of genuine internationalisation of the universities lies in the evidence of mutuality and reciprocal cultural relations (Welch, 2002) shared among students and staff within the academic community. Institutions must undertake a critical and proactive role in encouraging positive inter-group contact amongst students and staff in order to build community and reduce racial stereotypes in an ethnically diverse higher education environment (Ross, 1999).

Some of the intervention strategies have produced successful outcomes evidenced in the increased cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity exhibited by host students who participated in those intervention programs (Nesdale & Todd, 2000; Sachdev, 1997). Cultural knowledge and self-awareness alone are insufficient to bring about in-depth interpersonal exchange across cultures as the continual pattern of low incidence of intercultural friendship suggested. The intervention must also encompass the motivational aspect and incorporate training to equip students with micro-social skills to relate cross-culturally (Mak et al, 1999).

At present, there is little research undertaken to explore the role and extent of institutional involvement in promoting intercultural interactions on New Zealand tertiary campuses.

The goal of my study is to provide some insights to the existing pool of literature which explores the social phenomenon of intercultural contact among students in Western higher education. The present research ultimately aims to make the voices of both the host (Pakeha) and international students (Asian) heard while also incorporate the researcher's views based on evidence generated from this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Methodological Considerations

Past research focusing on intercultural contact issues between domestic and international students underscore two striking features which affect methodological considerations in this present study. The first relates to numerous instances whereby the positivist paradigm is invariably or unquestionably adopted as the principal tool for the research investigation. Contemporary scholars and social scientists (Davis et al, 2000; Orbe, 2000; Spoonley, 1999) have questioned and reassessed the value and adequacy of a framework governed solely by traditional science epistemologies and methodologies, especially in the field of intercultural research. They recognise that no research is value free. The question of human agency in research activity, whether it is quantitative or qualitative research, cannot be overlooked. Stanfield (1993, p.25) argues that as individuals who embody different life histories, cultural assumptions, social values and political aspirations, researchers must begin to acknowledge and become aware of the significant ramifications of their own subjectivity imposed on the entire research process and outcomes, i.e. from the initial design phase to the interpretation/analysis of data.

Methodological challenges for study into racial/ethnicity issues are huge indeed. It is, however, not within the scope of this research to question the efficacy and validity of the methodology used in past research. The positivist framework used in previous studies (Bochner & Furnham, 1985; Heaven & Quintin, 2003; Hsu et al, 2001; Leung, 2001; Nesdale & Todd, 1993, 2000) is largely concerned with gathering quantifiable data or evidence to support certain hypothetical constructs on the nature of human relations across racial, ethnic or cultural divides. Instead, the purpose of this research aims to examine intercultural dynamics between Pakeha and Asian international students by adopting a qualitative approach using both focus group and in-depth interview as key research methods. The research questions for current study are therefore designed to be broad, open-ended and flexible so as to subjectively derive understanding from the participants'

own experiences and journeys in seeking to cultivate and develop friendships on campus with students of other ethnicities.

One of the key features of qualitative study is that it offers strong incentives for direct personal engagement with research participants. It also provides opportunities for both researcher and research participants in this context to clarify intentions and responses where circumstances arise. The qualitative method of inquiry, in this case, gives the researcher a platform to go back to research participants to prompt or probe for more information if or when initial responses appear to be unclear. Through two-way communication, the researcher has been able to seek elaboration on answers offered by respondents earlier on. Similarly, research participants have had the chance to qualify their statements in instances where they have been misunderstood or misinterpreted by the researcher.

This leads us to the second factor influencing methodological consideration. The aim of the research is to provide a more balanced understanding on the nature of the intercultural relations between New Zealand Pakeha students and Asian international students in New Zealand higher education setting. Previous discourses (Beaver & Tuck, 1998; James & Watts, 1992; Mills, 1997; Ward, 2001) on relationship between host and international students were conducted predominantly from the latter point of view. The goal of this research, however, is to allow both Pakeha and Asian international students to speak for themselves concurrently by sharing their individual experiences, concerns and challenges of getting to know students from culturally diverse backgrounds in their own words. Rather than imposing a singular and dominant perspective on the understanding of current issues affecting inter-ethnic relations in New Zealand universities, the research seeks to incorporate cross-cultural perspectives on the social phenomenon of intercultural interaction. The objective of which is to add a different texture of understanding to the complexities of racial/ethnic relation in the higher education scene. It is with these two assumptions in mind that a qualitative methodology took precedence throughout the investigative process of this research.

4.3 Research Participants

Recruitment of research participants was carried out informally and randomly through the researcher's social contacts and student networks in the university. Research sample consists of twenty-one students in total. Of the thirteen students who participated in focus groups, five were Pakeha and eight Asians. Concurrently, in-depth interviews were conducted individually with the remaining eight research participants, four Pakeha and four Asians. The study has adopted Michael King's definition of *Pakeha* (King, 1991, p.7) specifically to identify and refer to New Zealand students who are of European descent, genetically and culturally, and whose identities are primarily derived from their location and experiences within New Zealand. The term 'domestic students' or 'host students' is used when referring to all New Zealand students who are citizens and permanent residents. My study has focused on Pakeha rather than Maori or other ethnic categories of domestic students for two reasons. Firstly, Pakeha students constitute the largest group of domestic students in New Zealand public tertiary institutions (Ministry of Education, 2004).⁹ Secondly, previous research (Arthur, 2004; Furnham, 1997; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Leung, 2001) has underlined the fact that most of the social difficulties that international students have across the Western world are with host students of European descent.

The use of the label 'Asian students' is also problematic. One of the key criteria for selecting Asian students is that they must be 'international students', i.e. students who are in New Zealand on study permits, and not permanent residents or children of immigrants to New Zealand. That said, I recognise that many recent Asian immigrant students in New Zealand encounter similar social difficulties with domestic students as their international counterparts do. For analytical purposes in this study, it is important to make a distinction between these two groups of Asian students. Furthermore, overseas students from Asia represent a multiplicity of ethnicities, cultures and nationalities. Hence, a larger sample of Asian international students was deliberately built into my study to detect differences, if any, in terms of quality of interactions with host students. In this instance, international

⁹ Of all domestic students enrolled in tertiary education at 31 July 2004, 55.8% identified themselves as NZ European/Pakeha, 21.2% as Maori, 5.8% as Pacific, 12.1% as Asian and 4.0% as other ethnicities. A further 1.1% did not state their ethnicity.

research participants were randomly recruited and represented five Asian countries, namely, The People's Republic of China (PRC), South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. The research sample contains the largest number of PRC students mainly to highlight the dominant presence of the Chinese nationalities in New Zealand higher education. Nationality, rather than ethnicity of the Asian research subjects, is a key consideration in this study because all of them except for the student from South Korea are Chinese in terms of ethnic origin. One thing that this group of Asian international students have in common is that they are from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB). However, I have separated them into two categories based on the following criteria. Firstly, the Asian participants were grouped on the basis of whether English was their main medium of instruction in schools as opposed to those who were educated in native languages in their country of origin. Secondly, they were distinguished by the frequency in which they speak English (other than their mother tongues) prior to coming to New Zealand. A third and final factor that differentiated these two groups of Asian research subjects was based on the mono-ethnic or multi-racial character of society in which they grew up.

The first Asian research sample comprised six international students from Malaysia (2), Indonesia (3) and the Philippines (1). They represented overseas students from Asia who were educated mainly in English in their respective home countries. In daily communication with people at home, these students switched from English to the use of their mother tongues frequently. They were, therefore, more fluent English speakers. The societies in which these students grew up were characteristically more multiracial. Incidentally, most of these research participants considered themselves to be ethnic minorities in their country of origin. By contrast, the second research sample was made up of five international students from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and one from South Korea. Technically speaking, these students had learned to read and write in English at school even prior to coming to New Zealand. However, most of their education, including English language learning, was conducted in their native tongues. Unlike Indonesians, Malaysians and Filipinos, PRC and Korean students hardly used English as a medium of communication in their home countries. Thus, not many of the latter were

proficient in oral and written English. Compared to those who have grown up in multiracial environments, these PRC and Korean students exhibited more monocultural tendencies.

In terms of gender ratio, I have originally anticipated equal representation of male and female students participating in the study sample. However in the actual research sample, only two of the nine Pakeha student participants were male, and only three out of twelve Asian international students were male. The uneven distribution of gender was due to unforeseen circumstances and constraints within the recruitment contexts. It is not certain as to how the imbalance in gender representation has significantly impacted the outcome of this study. Further research is needed to verify the effect, if any, of different gender perspectives on intercultural interaction.

Another noteworthy point about the current sample is that Pakeha students represent a cross-section of domestic students in the university in terms of (a) year of study, and (b) the variety of academic disciplines pursued by these students, namely, Bachelor of Arts (Linguistics), Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Commerce and Masters in Health Psychology. Nonetheless, they all belonged to the same religious club in the university. Arguably, the religious beliefs and values of this particular group of Pakeha students seem to shape their perceptions of people from culturally diverse backgrounds and provide positive motivations for them to associate with cultural minorities. The evidence in my study seems to support the argument that membership to a particular religious club on campus does increase the motivation of these Pakeha students to relate more with overseas students. However, it does not necessarily challenge their stereotypical perceptions of Asian people shared by the majority of New Zealanders.

The pool of Asian international students, on the other hand, was drawn from an ongoing support programme for Asian students in the Business School of the university.¹⁰ Except for one student who was completing her Bachelor of Arts degree in Politics and

¹⁰ The Business School of the main institution from which the research participants were recruited has the highest enrolment of Asian students in the entire university.

Psychology, the rest of the Asian research participants were pursuing undergraduate degree in Commerce. Interestingly, the findings in my study reveal that the sole international research participant from the faculty of Arts (which has fewer Asian international students) encounters as much difficulty in her interaction with Pakeha as her cohorts do in the Business School environment where Asian students are the majority. This is indicative of the fact that across-the-board, Asian international students in this particular university have had difficulties relating to Pakeha.

Other criteria that were used to determine the research sample include the age range and prior cross-cultural experience of the students. The age group of both Pakeha and Asian international student participants was deliberately fixed at the range of 19 to 22 years old. Apparently the low incidence of intercultural contact appears to be more rampant at the undergraduate level. Hence this study concentrated on younger age groups rather than mature students in the university. There was no specific requirement for the research participants to have prior cross-cultural experience in order to participate in the study. However, information related to their previous exposure to other cultures was helpful in the overall data analysis. While all of the Asian international students had lived in another country such as New Zealand for a lengthy period of time, only a couple of Pakeha students had visited an Asian country or lived in another country outside of New Zealand for an extended period of time. However, the majority of the Pakeha students appeared to have had contact already with people from other cultures/ethnicities within New Zealand even prior to entering the university. Only one Pakeha student had little to do with Asian international students until he came to Auckland to pursue his tertiary education.

4.4 Data Collection

Focus groups and in-depth personal interviews were employed as two key methods for data collection. The triangulation of data derived from two sets of research participants through different methodical approaches enabled me to analyse and understand the current phenomenon from different angles, namely, from an 'east-west' perspective and 'individual-group' perceptions. At the initial phase of the data collection, three focus groups were conducted on separate occasions and facilitated by the researcher. The first

focus groups comprised five Pakeha students. The second group consisted of international participants from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. The final focus group was made up of entirely PRC students. A loosely structured question guide, centred round a list of topics or issues to be explored, was designed by the researcher for use first in the focus groups and subsequently at the one-on-one interviews with students. Research participants were basically asked to:

- (a) describe the frequency and nature of their contact with members of the cultural majority or minority group
- (b) underline their attitudes and expectations on friendship with members of the cultural majority or minority group
- (c) enumerate the benefits of developing intercultural friendships and the role of the latter as a form of social and emotional support for home students and sojourners
- (d) identify some of their underlying racial perceptions or stereotypes about members of the other cultural majority/minority group
- (e) reflect on the intervention role of the university and discuss possible intervention strategies that the institution could adopt to facilitate and enhance cross-cultural exchanges between domestic and international students in the university

A “topic guide” approach (Krueger, 1998, p.9) was used as a key questioning strategy to allow discussions in the focus group to happen conversationally. This took away the mechanical aspect of asking questions and allowed the researcher to skilfully weave or reweave previous comments into subsequent or future questions to maintain a smooth flow of the conversation and continually draw the participants out. Spontaneity is, therefore, the key to this questioning technique. Focus group is in itself a social experience (Krueger, 1998, p.20-25). Hence, it is vital to create an informal and relaxed environment whereby a climate of trust and confidence can be established among participants and with the

facilitator (researcher). In fact, this was easily achieved because most of the students in all the respective focus groups knew each other already and had developed significant rapport with other members in the same group even prior to the meeting. Thus, it took little effort on the part of the facilitator (researcher) to encourage participants to be open and candid in their responses throughout the interaction times. Consent from focus group members was sought to record the discussion sessions on tape.

Following the focus groups, one-on-one interviews were conducted on separate occasions with a different set of research participants consisting of four Pakeha students and four international students from Malaysia, Indonesia, Korea and the People's Republic of China (PRC) respectively. A similar question guide and questioning technique was adopted for in-depth interviews. Consent was also sought from interviewees at the outset to audiotape the interview conversations. Thereafter, I transcribed all the taped sessions from the focus groups and interviews verbatim. The main reason for undertaking this task personally is to avoid the risk of involving a third party interpreter who might impose his or her own interpretation or alter the cultural nuances of the original research findings in the course of transcribing the data (Adamson & Donovan, 2002, p.821). After transcribing the data, an analysis of each of the verbatim accounts from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were carried out manually. In chapters 5-7, I have provided a detailed analysis of the data generated by the two key research methods and grouped them under five subheadings – “interest and motivation”, “attitudes and expectations”, “benefits of intercultural interaction”, “perceptions and stereotypes” and “institutional intervention”. Chapter 5 highlights the perspectives of Pakeha focus group on each of the above subheadings. Chapter 6 collates the views of two Asian focus groups ran on separate occasion. Chapter 7 interfaces the analysis of in-depth interviews with a different group of Pakeha and Asian research participants on individual basis.

4.5 Limitations

The nature of the current study sample poses significant limitations to the outcome of this research. First and foremost, the term ‘domestic students’ captures a wider category of local students other than Pakeha. Maori students as *tangata whenua* might argue that they,

and not just Pakeha, represent the dominant host culture. There are two reasons why Maori students are excluded from the scope of this study. First of all, there are very few Maori students in this university by comparison to Pakeha. Furthermore, previous research (Ward, 2001; Ward & Masgoret, 2004) has underlined that international students in general have more difficulties establishing meaningful contact with Pakeha rather than with other ethnicities representing the host category, such as Maori, Pacific or Asian peoples.

Secondly, the present study is limited by the fact that all the Pakeha research participants were members of a particular religious club on campus. Therefore, I acknowledge at this juncture that the results of my study may not reveal the views of Pakeha students per se. Moreover, random recruitment of research participants for the current study has resulted in a very narrow sample of Asian international students whose views and experiences are not necessarily representative of all overseas students from Asia studying here. Hence, I caution against making generalisations about the phenomenon of intercultural interactions within New Zealand higher education based solely on the outcomes of this research. The findings here need to be supplemented by further research on members of other cultural minorities in New Zealand universities to gain a fuller picture. I hope that my research will elicit further interests in the study of the social and cultural phenomenon of intercultural friendships in New Zealand higher education.

Thirdly, the geographical focal point of the present research is noteworthy. This study is confined only to Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand. It provides a unique context for my study because the majority of Asian tertiary international students in New Zealand reside and study in Auckland (Ministry of Education, 2004). Furthermore, Auckland receives the highest number of Asian immigrants in the country. The visible Asian minority has had significant ramifications on the way Pakeha New Zealanders perceive the presence of Asian students in this city. In short, the overall analysis basically reflects what is going on in Auckland tertiary education scene but not necessarily what is happening in tertiary institutions outside of this region.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

Two ethical issues that could potentially affect the outcome of my study were drawn to my attention as I embarked on the research. Both related to my cultural identity or ethnicity as the sole researcher in this project. The first concern was to do with the ramifications of my ethnic identity on the candidness of responses. By virtue of my identity as a fellow Asian and sojourner in New Zealand, it was not difficult for Asian international students to talk with me openly about their feelings and perceptions in relation to Pakeha students. However, with Pakeha students, there was the possibility that my Asian identity would inhibit their willingness to candidly express their views on their Asian peers.

One plausible solution is to recruit a Pakeha person to facilitate the focus group discussion and conduct the in-depth interviews among Pakeha students. However, involving a third party in the data collection creates an inherent risk of adding an unsolicited layer of interpretation onto the data as noted in a previous study conducted by Adamson & Donovan (2002). This has the potential to affect the overall accuracy and reliability of the original data. Hence, I decided to undertake the focus group discussions and interviews with Pakeha students personally. To address the issue of candidness, I explained to the student participants at the outset of the focus group that it was not my task to represent or defend the interests of either Asian students or Pakeha students in this research. I made it very clear to them that the ultimate purpose of the research was to allow the voices of the participants to be heard through the present research. My role was to initiate and facilitate the process. I also explained to the research participants that the methodology I had adopted in the present study essentially allowed them to shape the final outcomes of the research findings.

Secondly is the unusual scenario of a researcher from the visible ethnic minority group (Asian) attempting research with students from the dominant host culture (Pakeha). The issue of the positional superiority of Western researchers vis-à-vis non-Western research subjects was a key ethical concern in most cross-cultural research. In this case, however,

the researcher is a non-Western person so the roles and issues are reversed.¹¹ The question concerning my positional superiority in relation to the Western research subject under study becomes irrelevant. Nevertheless, the issue of “insider-outsider” positionality applies to all cross-cultural researchers whether they represent the dominant or minority culture because of the “baggage” – worldviews, cultural assumptions, and life histories – that they bring to the discovery process (Orbe, 2000, p.606). It is constantly a challenge to interface my perspectives as an insider researcher (in relation to Asian students) with my views as an outsider (in relation to Pakeha students) during the entire analytical process of my research. This in itself is a self-reflexive and soul-searching exercise as I sought to attain a more balanced understanding on the existing phenomenon of intercultural contact in New Zealand higher education.

¹¹ Due to the political nature of intercultural research, debates on the “insider-outsider” positionality of the researcher in relation to the research participants have become a pertinent issue especially for those who are working with indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities. [See Adamson & Donovan, 2002; Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000; Serrant-Green, 2002]

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS – PAKEHA FOCUS GROUP

This was the first in a series of focus group discussions conducted during data collection. Five Pakeha students representing a cross-section of year stages and faculties of study participated in this focus group. All the participants, however, belong to a particular religious club in the university. To some extent, their religious affiliation will have impact on the way these Pakeha students perceive people from culturally diverse backgrounds which in turn affects their motivation to interact with Asian internationals. Another important point of consideration in the current analysis is that these participants have had some forms of cross-cultural exposure within or outside New Zealand even prior to coming to the university. The reader therefore needs to bear in mind that the responses of this particular research sample may not necessarily reflect the views of Pakeha students per se.

5.1 Interest and Motivation

Findings indicate that the majority of focus group members study in courses which have fewer Asian international students. Hence, interaction with Asian students happens mostly in the context of university student clubs, halls of residence or through church activities. All of their responses point to the fact that there are more opportunities to interact with their Asian counterpart in social settings than in classrooms.

I don't have much contact with Asian international students through academic situation due to the nature of my course which requires high English proficiency. But I do meet them once a week through social events in the student club.

I have contact with Asian students through my classes and the university student club. But they are mostly Kiwi Asians. I think there are very few international students doing the Arts degree.

I do have contact with Asian international students through my church and the university hall of residence.

Whilst there is no apparent lack of opportunity to meet with Asian international students in the university, these domestic participants express discomfort over the idea of initiating contact with “strangers”. Notably, the notion of a “stranger”, according to these Pakeha students’ understanding, entails two distinctive characteristics. Firstly, they regard “stranger” as someone who is unknown to them and/or their particular communities (Pohl, 1999, p.86). Secondly, they define “stranger” in terms of a foreign person whose ethnic identification and cultural origin is non-European. Overall, these focus group participants link difficulty in initiating contact with Asian newcomers to low motivation and a lack of felt need among home students to seek friendship outside their established social niche.

It seems like we don't want to get to know them at all. But the truth is for us to go out and say 'hi' to strangers is a huge thing – we are not trying to be distant but there's something about being in our home turf. We need to make a conscious effort to get out of our comfort zone in order to interact with people who are very different from us ethnically and culturally.

The focus group also highlights the relationship between the lack of interest of Pakeha to seek acquaintance with Asians and their self-sufficiency (in particular Auckland-born Pakeha students). They generally rely on established social networks in their communities for personal support. Hence, there is no need for them to seek out new friends in the university since their families and friends are readily available to them (Putnam, 2000). By contrast, Pakeha students from out of Auckland seem to understand better the predicament of overseas students by virtue of being away from their community of support. They are likely to be friendlier and open to interacting with people whom they hardly know or are foreign to New Zealand. In sum, the focus group agrees that the interest and motivation of Pakeha students to seek intercultural friendship is location-specific. The further away Pakeha students are from home, the more open they are towards befriending students who came from overseas.

It is irrelevant whether they are Asians or not. The point is that we don't come to university to meet with random strangers. Well, maybe those who had moved city to

study in Auckland might think otherwise, and are probably more open to talking with outsiders.

The focus group also underlines the impact of the proliferation of ethnic enclaves on Pakeha students' attitudes Asian students. Some Pakeha students react to the cliquishness of Asian students and are therefore reluctant to make overtures of friendship to the latter. Reactions of the domestic participants underscore Putnam's (2000, p.23) view that ethnic enclaves can have negative effects on those outside the exclusive social networks and produce anti-social consequences.

I wouldn't say Pakeha students are not keen to have contact with Asian international students but we need extra effort to do that. I noticed Asian international students don't approach us too. They tend to stick among themselves a lot and speak in their own languages.

According to the focus group, the university environment is also an undermining factor. They find it hard to develop meaningful relationships with other students in a huge and often impersonal campus environment unless they belong to a student club or participate in some campus activities. Hence, the size and locality of the main institutions has affected the level of intercultural friendships forged among students. Participants also underline the constraint of time and energy they have to broaden their friendship networks due to academic demands. It is easier to stick to their compatriots who already share something in common with them. In sum, both spatial reasons and the culture of busyness which characterises the lifestyles of many tertiary students bear some culpability for low motivation amongst these Pakeha respondents to cross the intercultural friendship barrier.

The university is so big and there are only a certain number of people you can get to know and usually they are the ones I prefer to hang out with. You have to join a student club to meet people one-on-one.

5.2 Attitudes and Expectations

The host participants were tentative about playing host to newcomers in New Zealand. For these students the onus is invariably on visitors to make themselves known to host nationals. It is unfair from their point of view to impose host responsibility on home students since they never ask for it. Their responses suggest that any unsolicited role to play host to international students is likely to lead to resentment among Pakeha students.

We don't think in this way, 'this is my country I should play host' but rather 'oh, they are visitors and they would come up and meet us' because this what visitors normally do in our culture.

If most Pakeha students were told we had to play host, we would be very resentful because the Asian students had forced it upon us; it was not something we asked for but we've been forced into...by all these Asians coming into our university...

That said, respondents acknowledge the difficulties that many overseas students encounter relationally due to culture shock and homesickness. Moreover, the demands of learning a new language and living in a new culture are often energy draining. As one Pakeha respondent observes from her own experience in India, the reason why Asian students prefer to stay inside their ethnic enclaves is due to inhospitality of host nationals plus the daunting demands of cross-cultural transition. Ethnic enclave is a “haven” as such for these weary sojourners seeking the much needed social and emotional respite (Putnam 2000, p.22).

We always assume that if people come to our country, they should be the ones to take initiative to get to know us if they want to learn about kiwi culture and improve their English. In reality, that's quite difficult because people from new countries are homesick, missing families and friends, struggling with the different language and culture.

Most Kiwis won't be welcoming unless they know how it feels to be in a foreign country or culture. I've been to India and I knew perfectly well how it felt to be in a totally foreign culture where I could not speak their language...we stuck together and didn't really mix with the local culture just because it was so much easier to stay with what we knew. Besides it was so hard to learn another language.

The focus group concurs that most Pakeha students are unable to empathise with the social and emotional needs of their overseas counterparts because they have never lived as outsiders in another culture. Having grown up in a predominantly Eurocentric environment, many domestic students have very little appreciation of the difficulties involved in learning to speak another language and adapting to a foreign culture. Bennett (1993, p.46) theorises that intercultural sensitivity is a form of "phenomenological knowledge" acquired through personal experiences and not simply by studying a particular culture. This explains why most Pakeha have difficulty in identifying with the sojourners' sense of disorientation and dislocation in a new culture. Furthermore, many Auckland-born Pakeha students are less inclined to make friends with strangers in the university because they already have families and friends in the local community. To borrow Putnam's (2000) conceptual arguments, Pakeha students can rely comfortably on their existing stock of social capital within their local communities to get by while they are still at university. Their level of association with people outside of the established social networks has no effect whatsoever on their individual well-being.

Participants also underline the negative effects of the growing visibility of Asian community in Auckland on Pakeha students' behaviour towards Asian international students. In their opinions, New Zealanders are unprepared for the dramatic increase in the number of Asian people Auckland wide within such a short span of time. Hence, apathy and indifference amongst Auckland-born Pakeha is but a reaction against the drastic demographical shift. Findings from the focus group basically confirm anecdotal observations on the impact of the vast influx of Asians on New Zealanders' attitude towards the latter (O'Hare, 2004).

Apathy is more obvious in Auckland since there are so many Asians in the community.

The focus group believes that the sharp increase in Asian international student population has made ethnic segregation much more visible on campus. Nevertheless, these host students concede that ethnic segregation is possibly linked to xenophobia among Pakeha students caused by their ignorance of other cultures. This underscores even more critically the need to inculcate within Pakeha students a greater sense of intercultural awareness and sensitivity as a measure to counteract their xenophobic tendencies.

What you don't know you are fearful of, and so because people don't know their culture, we are fearful of the others and therefore segregated.

5.3 Benefits of Intercultural Interaction

Despite some negative implications associated with the influx of Asian international students, there is a general recognition among the respondents that interaction with Asian students on campus help Pakeha to realise that they share a common set of human experiences along with people of all cultures and ethnicities. They have the same need for love, acceptance and belonging as well as experiencing common frustrations and stresses of student life. This perspective aligns with Yang (2002, p.85) who argues that the bond of humanity provides opportunity to experience solidarity and cohesion among people of widely divergent worldviews.

Just learning about another culture...learning that even though there are differences, we are still basically the same.

Cross-cultural exchanges have also expanded the worldviews of domestic students, according to some Pakeha participants in the focus group. They are able to see life through different cultural lenses. Interactions with people from culturally diverse backgrounds enable them to identify better with the struggles and difficulties that Asian students face living on foreign soil (Hansen, 2002; Holmes & Bird, 2004).

To learn another culture and another language is to learn to see the world with different eyes. And it's quite true. I feel that I'm able to understand people or get to know people a lot better simply because I've been in the same place and I've been an outsider in a different country.

By and large, the presence of Asian international students on campus exposes some of these domestic participants who have never been overseas to Asian communities and their cultures. As for host respondents who have travelled or lived overseas, they discover that their experiences outside New Zealand have reinforced their 'Kiwi' identity. One of them, in particular, becomes much more aware of the things he has inherited from his Pakeha upbringing. This has made him culturally more sensitive when interacting with other nationalities.

I benefit from knowing Asian international students. I haven't been to any Asian country but I can get to know all the wonderful things about Asians, like the wonderful food and mannerisms.

When I lived in Belgium, I had to learn about what it was to be a Kiwi...I was able to see the flaws and positive sides of being Kiwi. I can now describe my own culture better and when I meet with people not from my culture, I can get to see what aspects of my culture I can let go or hold on to in order to make it easier for other people.

In many respects, the international experiences offer the Pakeha students in my study a glimpse of what it feels like to be a foreigner in a country. Living abroad, whether it is a brief or lengthy stay, enables them to see New Zealand from outside and thereby allows them to make some keen observations about their home country that they would not have made otherwise. As Hansen (2002, p.6-7) succinctly puts it, overseas experience causes domestic students to rethink their identity outside their own country and realise that it is different from their identity inside the country. Cross-cultural interactions heighten cultural awareness among these Pakeha respondents. They learn to appreciate and accept cultural

differences in neutral terms and avoid the tendency to judge their own culture or others based solely on the notion of differences.

When you find out about another culture, you also discover that things specific to your culture aren't actually right or wrong. They are just different.

Academically, many domestic students express frustrations about learning in the same classroom as international students from non-English speaking backgrounds (Holmes & Bird, 2004; Volet & Ang, 1998; Ward, 2001). Communication glitches and conflicting styles of learning are key reasons why both host and international students dislike collaborative group work (Holmes & Bird, 2004, p.12-13). Nonetheless, the host students in my study acknowledge that Asian international students add a different dimension to the Eurocentric tertiary learning environment (Holmes & Bird 2004, p.10-11). As these students pointed out, having Asian international students in the same classroom expose Kiwi minds to a conglomeration of diverse ideas and cultural knowledge which otherwise are inaccessible to them in a mono-ethnic or monocultural learning context. Effective collaborative learning takes place therefore when local students experience similar struggles in the subject of study as their international peers. This highlights the importance of “cultural-emotional connectedness” in collaborative learning experience for these students (Holmes & Bird, 2004; Volet & Ang, 2000; Wright & Lander, 2003).

I really like being surrounded by people who are so different and they bring home a new flavour to it. If it was all the same culture learning and studying, then I'd learn things the New Zealand way...but I just like knowing other ideas.

We had a Management tutorial and we had to do a presentation. And we weren't allowed two people from the same country in the group. So it was really good as the ideas that came up in the group was totally different from what I would have come up by myself.

I think we interact better with Asian students when we are put in the same boat, like learning Japanese... we interact really well as we are there learning together...

Lastly, the Pakeha focus group members clearly echo the essence and benefit of international education (Hansen, 2002; Pickert, 1992) when they allude to the long-term benefits of cross-cultural interactions in the immediate context on their career and life after university.

I really like having lots of different cultures here, especially because I know when I graduate, I probably won't stay in New Zealand.

5.4 Perceptions and Stereotypes

The lack of desire among Pakeha students to pursue social connection with Asians is linked to two factors. Firstly, the focus group attributes the problem to a rapid growth of Asians in Auckland. This has resulted in a proliferation of ethnic enclaves which leads to heightened xenophobia among Pakeha and thereby increases racist reactions against Asian students. Baldwin et al (2000, p.556-558) conceptualises this kind of racial attitude as a form of "target-based" racism whereby the spheres of racial tolerance or intolerance is based on the perceived identity of the 'other'. It is obvious from the responses of the Pakeha participants that many local students perceive cliquishness amongst Asian students as being disrespectful and dismissive of the host culture. Secondly, language is cited by the focus group as a major obstacle that undermines interaction between Asians and Pakeha. According to Holmes and Bird (2004, p.17-18), the negative perceptions of Asians amongst Pakeha are often based on initial or early experiences from which the latter generalise and/or stereotype. The findings in this case suggest that Pakeha students appear to be less tolerant of international students from an Asian background who have poor command of English.

When there were fewer Asian students in my class, I don't mind talking to them. But as the number grew bigger the following year, I found Koreans were talking among themselves in their own language, and Chinese students were doing the

same thing too. So I tend to shy away from them when they are speaking in their own languages among themselves. The whole language thing has become a block or barrier to interaction. I think it needs to change.

This is my country and we speak English here. But when you get this whole group of students speaking their own languages...I can understand their need to speak in their own languages but it still feels like they don't want to be part of this country. It seems to me like it's a kind of an attack on my culture and therefore instinctively I would defend my own culture more and retreat into it. It's the whole comfort zone thing.

Anecdotal evidence (*New Zealand Herald*, 29 August 2000, "Bigoted students a waste of their university space") which suggests Pakeha students invariably blame Asian international students for infrastructural problems such as the shortage of space in the university library or laboratory and crowded public buses is supported by the data in this study. The focus group also concurs that many Pakeha students accuse Asians of hiking competition in the local job market. As a consequence, Pakeha expresses their angst and frustrations through their hostile reactions toward Asians.

Some people are quite rude to them. My Asian friends were walking down the road and had people yell at them from the cars. It made them so scared and they thought if all the local people hate them.

Racism is also linked to the pride of Pakeha, as one Pakeha participant suggests. In her opinion, Pakeha New Zealanders who take pride in their "do-it-yourself" attitude often perceive Asians as coming to take over the country which they have built with their own hands. It is not surprising that their antagonisms against Asian newcomers grow continually. The data here supports observations made by Misa Tapu (*New Zealand Herald*, 17 July 2002, "Don't fret: Our xenophobia goes a long way back") that New Zealanders' fear of the 'other' has had its origin elsewhere. The recent influx of Asian

immigrants and international students only serves to draw out the intensity of the xenophobia amongst Pakeha.

Apathy is only one part of New Zealand culture that makes it difficult. Kiwis are kind of proud people, like proud of their accomplishments and their “do-it-yourself” attitude. The impact I see in that is that New Zealanders think this is our country and we’ve made it what it is...and so when internationals come in and impose pressure on infrastructure in the city like cars can’t travel and other traffic problems...stereotypes grow out from that...and also internationals take over our jobs...this is quite a widespread perception that needs to be addressed before anything else will change on a large scale.

The same Pakeha respondent points out too that Asian perception of Pakeha as “superficial” people is valid. The word, “superficial”, implies that Pakeha seldom express deep feelings or genuine emotions in their relationships. Their interpersonal exchanges with others tend to reflect a serious lack according to the quality of depth. She believes that Pakeha and Asian students attach very different value to their friendships. Hence, it is difficult for them to become close friends.

Something I notice too is how superficial a lot of relationships are, like here’s what you’re getting out of the friendship, and so I’ll be your friend until it is not convenient anymore.

Despite negative comments about Pakeha superficiality made by Asian students, the host participants are keen to continue encouraging interaction between the two groups. They highlight the need to help their own cohorts realise that they share a common bond of humanity with all students regardless of ethnicities. They argue that it is possible to preserve their own cultural values and lifestyles whilst simultaneously enjoy the richness that a culturally diverse academic community can offer. In sum, these Pakeha participants perceive the ideal of ‘unity in diversity’ on campus as something attainable, if only there is more emphasis on the common bond of humanity that Pakeha share with Asians and less focus on cultural differences that divide humanity as a whole.

More contact would be good...for people who haven't had many cross-cultural interactions, we need to let them know that these students are from different countries but they are still all part of humanity. Yes, they have their own cultures and we do too, and it's ok for us to preserve our own cultures...I think people often mistake cultural differences for being totally different.

On the question of how Pakeha view the assimilation of international students into New Zealand society, none of the focus group members want Asian international students to become like Kiwis. Nevertheless, they emphasise the need for Asian international students to learn to observe some Kiwi social norms or at least show sensitivity to the host culture, such as not spitting in public places.

They shouldn't become like us...they can keep their own cultures but still go along with our social norms, like at least speaking our language and knowing what is acceptable or unacceptable here in New Zealand...things like not spitting which we consider as offensive but they don't seem to know or don't care about it.

The focus group expresses concern too over the segregation of Asian students from the host communities. They would rather see their Asian counterparts making effort to learn more about the host culture and seek integration into host culture instead of staying inside their ethnic enclaves.

I think Asian internationals need to be culturally sensitive because they stand out a lot. They paid so much money to come here for their study, and when they are here, they recreate their country in this place instead of finding out more about us. It's not that they have to become like us but they should at least learn about the country they are in.

However, one of the host participants seems to appreciate and endorse pluralistic expressions of social and cultural norms in an ethnically mixed academic community. She

argues that cultural pluralism allow her to become more open and tolerant of cultural differences without compromising her own cultural identity and values.

I like the fact that they are living in their cultures and not taking on the host culture. When I walk around the university now, I feel like I'm the only white person but I actually feel more comfortable. I know where I am and I know it's different culture...it's interesting to look at and I don't have to blend in, and I know they don't expect me to. We are different but that's cool.

Overall, the data findings in this section indicate that there is correlation between racial attitudes and the level of intercultural interactions among students in the main institutions. Whilst majority of the Pakeha do not expect Asian students to assimilate into host culture, they are simultaneously not prepared to endorse cultural pluralism in an ethnically diverse academic community, especially if it is culturally offensive to the hosts.

5.5 Institutional Intervention

The Pakeha participants lament the fact that very few initiatives have been introduced by the university to facilitate cross-cultural exchange among students. In their understanding, university tends to give precedence to its academic affairs rather than the relational aspects of institutional life.

This university has the idea of itself being an academic entity and anything else is not important...what we do here is to study and we're not here to make sure people meet.

The size and geography of the main institution is also a problem for these research participants. They believe there are significant causal connections between spatiality of the campus and low incidence of intercultural friendships among students. The environmental issue is further aggravated by segregation of local and international students in the halls of residence. One Pakeha respondent expresses disappointment over the segregation policy adopted by the university accommodation office. She maintains that the segregationist

approach has, in effect, accentuated the social distance between the domestic and international students. According to her observations, the university accommodation policy has ironically worked against the ethos of the formation of intercultural friendships. Further research is needed to verify whether the university actually adopts a segregationist stance in its accommodation policy in the halls of residence.

University is a good place to interact with other cultures but this university is too big for anything good to happen.

If I haven't been staying in the hall, I wouldn't meet anybody...the fact that you have to live with 350 other people...but now I noticed almost all of Asian international students are located in another hall...I think it's actually being made that way by the university. It's kind of disappointing in a way that they feel they have to segregate us.

If you are living with other nationalities, that would be the best way to break down the barriers.

The focus group members are in favour of university organising campus-wide events to celebrate the diversity of global cultures as a form of institutional intervention. They concur that such large-scale promotional activities can offer local students who have no direct contact with people of other ethnicities a firsthand cross-cultural experience through food, music, arts, performances and various cultural forums.

If I hadn't met any Asian student, I would never have tasted any chicken feet.

Klak and Martin (2003, p.445) conclude that university-sponsored cultural events have the potential to deepen students' intercultural appreciation and elicit positive changes in their attitudes toward people from culturally diverse backgrounds. They are careful to point out that such large-scale events alone do not produce "intercultural global citizens" (Klak & Martin, 2003, p.447). They must be accompanied by other multi-faceted interventions such

as a forum for addressing and discussing cultural issues and global concerns. Nevertheless, these institutional cultural events could act as the initial springboard in generating globally minded students. As Dey (1997 as cited in Klak & Martin, 2003, p.447) argues, “the process of socialisation in higher education utilises the broader social contexts to influence the attitudes and values of particular students.”

Whilst university-sponsored initiatives are important, the focus group also stresses individual responsibility of the students to capitalise on such campus activities to help enlarge their social contact with students from other cultures. These Pakeha participants concur that it is difficult to learn cultural sensitivity via classroom teaching. Rather, intercultural sensitivity is acquired only through direct contact and interpersonal exchange with people of other cultures. As the data reveals earlier, it is usually those who have had previous contact with people from other cultures or those who have lived outside their own communities who are more likely to make overtures of friendship and extend hospitality to strangers with or without intervention by the university. This underlines a significant fact that intercultural learning is a form of “phenomenological knowledge” and not simply “objective knowledge” (Klak & Martin, 2003, p.463).

I think it'll be really hard to teach someone to be sensitive though, like I mean you might be able to educate them on some differences in culture, but I think a lot of that people can get on their own initiatives by talking to internationals.

If there's a person who is most likely to meet international student wherever they needed to be met in order to make them feel welcome, this is someone who has already gone outside of their culture. But for the average Kiwi who's only got their culture...it's a bit too much.

The focus group maintains that the average Pakeha are unlikely to step out of their monocultural context and reach out to the foreign visitors. In the light of these observations, they suggest that early intervention is necessary to help Pakeha students open up to other cultures. By early intervention, they refer to the possibility of encouraging New

Zealand students to go on study exchange programs overseas at least for a year in between their high school and university days. Hansen (2002) concurs that a year abroad in a non-English speaking country enables host students to become more patient with people who are less proficient in English and also more open-minded about cultural differences.

For those Pakeha who do not have the opportunity to participate in overseas study exchange, the focus group suggested that even a small thing like a cross-island experience within New Zealand would offer Pakeha students a foretaste of subtle cultural differences and the experiences of living as an outsider in the local community. Their suggestion aligns with Merryfield's (1995) view that American students should have exposure to foreign peoples and cultures prior to beginning their university education, via study abroad schemes or crossing the border into a neighbouring state within the U.S.

One of the very useful thing I think is to do an exchange year in between high school and university where you stretch yourself like that, even a small thing like Kiwis from the north island go to the south island, even then you get a cultural difference and you can get a chance to be an outsider....something like that is far more effective than trying to educate people how to be culturally sensitive in a classroom.

The focus group agrees that early intervention is far more effective than trying to change the Pakeha racial attitudes towards the 'other' when they arrive in the university. Invariably, efforts to spark interest and promote exposure of local students to people of other cultures earlier on is an effective means by which "to plant the seed, so to speak" (Merryfield, 1995, p.7) for intercultural friendships to flourish in the university.

I think university has a big role to play but I think in some ways you need earlier intervention especially since we are becoming more multicultural, there are now more people from other cultures around in primary schools...even something at an earlier age will probably be more effective than trying to change their view of

cultures by the time they get to university...they have their stress and their busyness...and everything that's going on.

5.6 Summary

Overall, the analysis of the focus group indicates that Pakeha contact with Asian international students is intermittent or infrequent. Occasional interactions between Pakeha and Asians take place mostly in non-academic settings. The low incidence of intercultural friendships is linked to the reluctance of Pakeha students to approach or initiate contact with strangers. The notion of a “stranger” lies firstly in the unknown quantity and secondly in the foreign characteristics of the individual, physically and culturally, vis-à-vis the dominant host culture (Pohl, 1999, p.86). Even though there is desire among Pakeha to develop cross-cultural friendship, the degree of their motivation does not commensurate with the level of risks they are prepared to take to seek acquaintance with people who are unknown and foreign to them.

Some of the research participants deny that Pakeha ambivalence towards Asians is invariably linked to racial prejudice. They argue that the indifference or apathy shown by Pakeha students is due to the fact that many Auckland-born Pakeha students have no need to rely on the social networks in the university for support. The Auckland-born Pakeha students have sufficient “bonding” social capital (Putnam, 2000, p.22) in the local communities to help them get through varsity. In this respect, they are unlike overseas students or Pakeha who come from outside of Auckland. The latter group of students are more dependent on social networks established within the main institution to get by.

The low incidence of intercultural contact between Pakeha and Asians is further undermined by the absence of the “host-and-guest” kind of relation in New Zealand (Pohl, 1999). The focus group endorses the cultural norm that New Zealanders expect their visitors to take the initiative to make themselves known to the local people and not vice versa. Moreover, the participants also argue that many Pakeha students are genuinely ignorant about the nature of the sojourners’ struggles since they have no experience of living outside of the dominant host culture. The size and geography of the university which

hinder the fostering of interpersonal connections on campus is also highlighted by the focus group. The spatial issue seems to be a peculiar problem to this university by virtue of its locality and geographical layout.

The focus group attributes blame to the proliferation of ethnic enclaves for declining interest among Pakeha students to befriend Asians. These participants argue that the cliquishness of Asian international students signals the latter's disinterest in associating with host nationals and in seeking integration into the host community. This underscores Putnam's (2000) argument that the dense networks of ethnic enclaves are likely to elicit negative reactions and produce anti-social consequences as evidenced in the responses of the focus group.

Ironically, the Pakeha participants did not downplay the benefits associated with cross-cultural interactions despite their concerns over the influx of Asians in their university. Most of the Pakeha respondents agree that interacting with Asian international students helps enlarge their worldviews and heighten their cultural awareness. It also helps them to experience human solidarity with students from other cultures and simultaneously reinforces their understanding of the distinctive 'Kiwi' identity (Hansen, 2002). As such some have learned to genuinely embrace intercultural sensitivity.

Notwithstanding the challenges of learning in a culturally diverse classroom, the presence of Asian students has opened up the Kiwi minds to other forms of cultural knowledge (Holmes & Bird, 2004; Ward, 2001). The participants endorse the positive long-term impact of their immediate interaction with Asian international students in the university. They regard intercultural friendship experience as essential preparation for them in terms of living and working in a global environment in the near future (Pickert, 2002). That said, the focus group also unearths some anxieties among Pakeha New Zealanders over the possibility of the "Asian invasion" as portrayed by the mass media (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004). These Pakeha students genuinely believe that Asian people are coming to take over their employment, infrastructures, education and other things. Inevitably, this has led to some degree of "target-based" racism (Baldwin et al, 2000) against Asian students.

Finally, there is recognition that university can serve as an effective training ground for Pakeha students to acquire intercultural skills and experiences. However, there is currently a lack of institutional initiatives to propel students to pursue friendship across cultures. Despite the fact, research participants still regard institutional intervention as crucial especially for Pakeha students who do not have any direct contact with people from other cultures (Hansen, 2002). They stress the need for early interventions to spark interest and promote cultural awareness in local students prior to starting their university careers. They consider such interventions as far more effective ways of “planting the seed” (Merryfield, 1995) for intercultural friendships to eventually grow and flourish. Last but not least, the focus group underlines the importance of individual responsibility and willingness to overcome their inertia of the culturally diverse strangers so that they can genuinely embrace cultural pluralism (Klak & Martin, 2003). Whilst university can employ all kinds of intervention strategies to increase intercultural interactions, but without willing participation from students, the efforts will be in vain.

CHAPTER 6: DATA ANALYSIS - ASIAN FOCUS GROUPS

This chapter contains research data derived from two focus groups run on separate occasions for Asian international students. Focus group one comprises of international research participants from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Focus group two (FG2) is made up of entirely PRC students. For purpose of comparison, I will refer to the focus group that consists of non-PRC students as FG1 and PRC students as FG2. The aim of this chapter is to interface the analytical findings from FG1 and FG2.

6.1 Interest and Motivation

Overall, the results show that the Indonesians have more frequent contact with their Pakeha peers in class in comparison to the other Asian participants in FG1 and FG2. The reason as seen in the responses of the Indonesians is linked to the way they view interaction with Pakeha as with non-Pakeha students. Ethnic identity does not appear to be the issue to these Indonesians where friendship is concerned.

Yes, I had contact with Pakeha students on campus almost everyday...it's no difference like I talk to any other international friend of mine. (Indonesians)

In contrast, the Filipino student found communication with Pakeha quite difficult. She struggled with understanding Kiwi accents and keeping up with the pace at which New Zealanders talk. This was because she has just arrived in the country recently. On the other hand, the Malaysian student, who used to have a lot more contact with his Pakeha peers when he was studying in another university, discovered that his interaction with Pakeha had reduced significantly since he enrolled to study in the present institution. He blamed it on the fact that there were too many Asian students in his classes.

I can relate to Asians more than New Zealanders. They speak too fast and probably their accent is hard to understand. (Filipino)

I was studying in another university and there were lots of Pakeha students there. We get to know each other in class and through group assignments...but when I came to this university, there are so many Asians in my classes, I'd say I have less contact with Pakeha students now. (Malaysian)

The PRC students claimed that most of their interaction with Pakeha happened through group assignments or projects. Only a handful of these Chinese students had some form of social contact with Pakeha through their part-time job. On the whole, PRC students have had sporadic contact with Pakeha students throughout their entire university career, whether the interaction took place out of necessity or happened spontaneously.

Before my third year, I don't interact much with Pakeha students...and when I came to the third year, I work in the university and had a lot of group assignments to do, that's why I interacted more with Pakeha students.

I have some Kiwi friends in my first year and got to know them outside of lab and group assignment. We quite like each other and become good friends. We still keep in touch and go out for shopping and dinner...they probably are my only Pakeha friends.

A student in FGI noted the impact of the influx of Asian international students on the level of intercultural mixing in his classes. He observed that a proliferation of ethnic enclaves amongst his own ethnic cohorts which correspondingly led to the withdrawal of Pakeha into their own social niche. His observation clearly underscores Putnam's (2000, p.19) theory on the effects of changing character of [the main institutions] on social connections. Putnam (2000, p.23) suggests that ethnic networks have the power to mobilise solidarity amongst their members while at the same time produce anti-social consequences as seen in this instance.

In most of my classes since a year or two ago, there are a bunch of Kiwi students who sit at the back of the lecture and don't communicate with everyone else. Very few will sit in the front where most international students are and mingle with us.

A Chinese respondent in FG2 indicated that it was hard for her to break out of the ethnic enclave because of its exclusiveness and the strong sense of belonging she felt when she was with her own ethnic cohorts. It dawned on her that it was even more difficult for Pakeha students to penetrate Asian social circles if they did not have sufficient determination to overcome the cultural and language barriers. The result here reiterates Putnam's (2002, p.23) view on the powerful effects of the "bonding" social networks.

My second year Accounting lecture is really big and most of them are Asian students, I mean at least seventy percent of them...and Asian students tend to stick in their small groups... it's very hard to break into the group and join in...and the local students, they like to stay with their local friends.

The impact of the rising number of Asian international students in the university is not the only factor that affects the motivation of these Asian participants to seek contact with their Pakeha peers. According to some PRC students, cultural differences and the lack of common interests are to be blamed for the lack of meaningful intercultural exchange. Contrary to what Ward and Masgoret (2004) have found in their survey, the PRC students in this research hardly allude to language impediment as an obstacle in their relationship with Pakeha. A possible explanation here is that these Chinese participants have lived in New Zealand for several years. Hence, they have overcome some of the communication difficulties that they experienced with local students when they first arrived in New Zealand. Hence, language barrier is no longer an overriding factor that accounts for the low incidence of contact between Pakeha and PRC students. Instead, the findings in this study highlight cultural differences and the lack of common interests as pertinent factors that have accentuated the social distance between Pakeha and Chinese students.

The reason is because of different cultural background, no common interest and topic to discuss...

There is no consensus amongst PRC research participants about the effects of cultural difference and lack of common interest on intercultural friendship. One PRC student argues that the cultural origin of the person is seldom a deciding factor in friendship for young people. Instead, she likens befriending a Pakeha student to making friend with a fellow international student. The depth of interpersonal exchange depends on the personality factor which ultimately determines whether two people enjoy being in each other's company. As Arthur (2004, p.41) discovers, international students do not naturally gravitate towards people of the same nationality. It is usually the temperament, personality and interests of the parties that draw them together.

Young people generally care about what kind of person you are and not where you come from.

There are some Kiwi students who are open to other people and I find it easier to communicate with them but it depends on the person...some are friendly, some are not...just the same like other international students...

The Asian participants unequivocally stated their preference for group interaction rather than individual contact, especially if they were meeting someone new. The group approach provided these Asian students a 'safety net' for them in the event where they ran out of conversation topics with the other person. It allowed them to avoid or minimise situations where they were likely to experience social awkwardness. The group orientation of Asians is inextricably linked to their value of "saving face" (Jao, 1998). Jao (1998, p.76) emphasises that in Asian cultures the appearance of dignity of the person closely intertwines with the substance of dignity. Hence, to make someone lose face is to put someone on the spot or in a precarious position, which is tantamount to causing them to lose dignity. This explains why many Asian international students prefer group interaction. Essentially, it is a device to keep themselves or others from losing face. These Asian

international students also said that they felt more comfortable with the idea of getting to know someone new in the context of a group rather than individually. They valued group identity and were socialised into a collectivist pattern of relationships inherent in many Asian societies (Arthur, 2004, p.41; Barker et al, 1991 p.83).

I think it's easier to interact in group...one-on-one is very awkward. We should form a group first and then get to know them one by one.

6.2 Attitudes and Expectations

As the results suggest, none of the Asians has unrealistic expectations of the role of the host students. One of the PRC students remarked that the stories she read about past international students' experiences in New Zealand cautioned her against making any presupposition about the guest-and-host type of relationship based on her own cultural upbringing.

I read about international students' experiences overseas before coming to New Zealand. Therefore I had no expectation that local students would be interested to want to know us unless they have reasons to...

Another PRC student thought it was unfair to impose any expectation on the domestic students to give more than what they would receive from Asian international students in return. Hence, he did not lay any expectation on host students to initiate contact with Asian newcomers. The findings in this study seem to contradict Ward and Masgoret's (2004, p.53) survey results that suggest Chinese students are more likely to see New Zealanders as being responsible for initiating friendships. The data here reveals otherwise. The contrasting outcome from my study may be due to the limitation of my research sample. Nonetheless, it is a caution against making generalisations about the attitudes of PRC students towards the role of host students in initiating cross-cultural friendship.

The Asian respondents endorse the importance of two-way interaction in cross-national friendship. Invariably, their views align with Ward and Masgoret's (2004, p.52) findings

that there is generally a lower expectation among non-PRC students on host students to initiate contact with their international visitors. Instead of waiting for Pakeha students to initiate contact with them all the time, most students in FG1 have learned to make the first move because they consider mutuality to be the key to successful friendships.

We are all the same even though different backgrounds. We don't expect others to do something for us, but if they do we appreciate that.

It's not the responsibility of either, but mutual, we have to learn to initiate communication first and they can reciprocate.

Mutuality is crucial in most Asian international students' understanding of friendship (Ward & Masgoret, 2004, p.53). Asians generally express mutuality in friendships by anticipating needs or desires and assuming that others will provide help without being asked directly (Jao, 1998, p.77). There is an element of reciprocity inherent in mutual friendships. Hence, despite the language obstacle she faced, the Filipino student acknowledged that she needed to reach out to her Pakeha classmates. However, she also expected the host students to reciprocate so that they could take their friendship further.

I don't really think it's their responsibility to initiate contact with us...I hope they will be more open though...that they will talk to me when I initiate conversation with them.

Mutuality in friendships is also seen in the sharing of common interest in activities such as sports. For instance, the Malaysian student found it easier to initiate contact with his Pakeha friends in the local community, rather than in university, because they enjoyed playing badminton together.

I don't often initiate contact with Pakeha students in the university but outside the community I do because of our common interest in badminton.

I'm lucky to have Pakeha friends who are open and helpful...if you don't understand them, you can feel free to ask them to repeat what they say...and you're going to learn more...

I'm lucky too, my Pakeha friends are open about their personal feelings which encourage me to share mine...if something is wrong, it is not only with Pakeha students but also other Asian international students too.

On the contrary, many PRC students expect to develop deeper friendship with their Pakeha counterparts than what they have experienced thus far. They find the shallow nature of interaction with Pakeha in the university quite meaningless. In fact, some of these Chinese students question the genuineness of friendship with Pakeha. Experiences of these PRC students cast doubts on whether in-depth communication across cultures, which have very different normative discourses, is possible at all (Fox, 1997). Needless to say, these Chinese students resort to their ethnic cohorts to satisfy their earnest quests for meaningful conversations and deeper relational experiences.

I don't because I think the interaction is so superficial.

Nobody wants to communicate with the other unless they see some value in that. They don't want to know you if there's no value or benefit they could get out of the interaction.

6.3 Benefits of Intercultural Interaction

Despite the challenges of making friend with Pakeha, the Asian respondents recognise the immediate and future relevance of the intercultural experiences they acquire through developing friendship with host students. The Indonesian student who intends to stay in New Zealand permanently is convinced that the intercultural skills she learns in the university will enhance her communication with New Zealanders and thereby smooth her transition into the host society.

I'm planning to stay in New Zealand, it will benefit me more if I have communication with the locals...it helps me to develop skills for the future...

Another Indonesian student who plans to return to his home country after graduation recognises that interactions with his Pakeha classmates have broadened his life experiences and helped him develop practical life skills which the textbooks or course materials cannot offer. This student also highlights the educational benefits he has personally derived from interacting with Pakeha. The data in this case supports Ward and Masgoret (2004, p.55) who correlate academic well-being of international students with positive experience of friendship with host students.

You won't get a life just by studying, so you need to socialise...I'm in New Zealand for studying and learning English. I'm not planning to stay here but it's still important for me to learn interaction with the locals.

Regular communication with Pakeha students enables these Asian participants to transcend the language obstacles which previously impede their relationship with host students. In general, these Asian international students have difficulty with Kiwi accents. Through ongoing exposure to Pakeha English, they learn to decipher the tones and expressions of New Zealanders. Results from FG1 and FG2 highlight that the more understanding international students achieve in conversation with host students, the more willing they are to take risks to associate with people from the host culture. As they become more open to the host nationals, they also find Pakeha more receptive towards them. My findings therefore support Zimmermann's (1995, p.322) conclusion that positive communicative experiences with host students is central to the process cultural adaptation of international students.

If you talk much with Pakeha students, you get used to Kiwi accent and language...I can understand more now and I feel more confident when going out with my Pakeha friends.

When I first came to university, I could hardly understand what they were saying...but now the Pakeha students who are more open somehow teach me to communicate with the others...

According to these Asians, their presence in the university has, in effect, enriched the cultural experiences of Pakeha students. They believe that host students are able to gain some insights into the way in which they and their cohorts learn as well as the communitarian aspects of Asian community. The responses here inevitably support conclusion by Holmes and Bird (2004, p.10) that the presence of Asian international students has added value to the cultural learning of New Zealand students. This is consistent with what international education is about (Hansen, 2002). Not only that, both FG1 and FG2 view the stark increase in the number of Asian international students as positive contributions to the host community not only in monetary terms but also in the embodiment of Asian work ethics, which encompass both the pursuit of excellence and hard work. This is line with Fenwick's (1987, p.133) observations that many overseas students bring with them "above average motivation to study which can raise standards among home students."

We enrich their cultures...they are exposed to Asians and our food...

It's mutual gain for both parties, academic and social wise. Academically, they see how we learn and our ability in study.

We bring money...we also bring the Asian work ethics, such as hard work and high grade, to the university.

6.4 Perceptions and Stereotypes

The Asian participants in these focus groups concur that some Pakeha students are genuinely interested in learning about other cultures and mixing with ethnic minorities. Like the Pakeha students in my study, the host students that the Asian respondents refer to have had previous exposure cross-culturally which made them more open to interact with non-westerners.

Not all Pakeha students are indifferent to us, it depends...some show interest to want to learn more and gain more knowledge.

All the Pakeha students I met were interested to learn greetings in Chinese...

Another quality that these Asian students like about Pakeha is their inquiring mind and analytical skill. This is not surprising because Asian educational philosophy does not encourage critical thinking (Ching, 1992, p.9-10). Hence, the opportunity to study in the same classroom with Pakeha has inspired some among the Asian respondents to emulate the Western style of learning.

Pakeha students are good at asking questions, so they are models for us and motivate us to ask questions too in class as a way of learning.

The Malaysian student, in particular, appreciates the innovative skill and ability of his Pakeha friends. He too envies the pioneering spirit of most Pakeha students which seems to keep them from succumbing to any obstacle or difficulty too easily. His response echoes the view of one of the Pakeha respondents in chapter five who refers to Kiwis as a “do-it-yourself” people.

Pakeha students are good with their hands...their “do-it-yourself” and “can do” attitudes...

Where education is concerned, the Asian participants commonly perceive Pakeha students to attach little value to university education because the latter do not need to rely on family financial assistance for their university education. In these Asians’ minds, financial independence implies that Pakeha students do not have to contend with any parental pressure to excel academically. By contrast, most Asian students have to incur huge expenses in order to study in New Zealand. Unlike Pakeha students, they are totally dependent on family financial support to see them through their overseas education. In

return for the huge financial investments their parents made on their overseas education, they are expected to succeed academically.

Asian students value good education due to our family upbringing...most Pakeha students don't take study seriously...

Pakeha students' attitude towards study is very different from us because we have to pay lots of money to pursue education unlike local students...our parents expect us to do well.

The point regarding financial independence is noteworthy. In Asian culture, children are expected to “show gratitude” to their parents in return for the family investments on their education (Tokunaga, 1998, p.23). Hence, there is incredible pressure on Asian students to do well at university since academic success is associated with honouring their parents. This explains why these Asian participants perceive Pakeha differently in terms of the value that home students accorded to higher education. Whilst this may be a common perception of Pakeha students among many Asians, anecdotal evidence (Press, 7 May 2005, “Dire Debts”) suggests that many domestic students have to contend with the financial consequences of studying in the light of the reform in Tertiary Education Act (LaRocque, 2005). Educational subsidies for domestic students have been reduced. Like their overseas counterparts, Pakeha face huge challenges in terms of their mounting student debts and other difficulties in academic life (Barker et al, 1991, p.79).

Pakeha students do not depend on their parents financially to support their education even when their parents could afford to pay. They usually take on student loans, and have student allowances and part-time jobs to see them through their education unlike us Asian students...

Another underlying belief that these Asians have is that Pakeha generally get by with the bare minimum amount of study. They perceive local students as under-achievers who are content with mediocre academic achievement. However, they admit that Pakeha are better at public presentations in class even though they might have little knowledge on the subject

area. They also believe that Pakeha students often portray themselves confidently which helps them to get through the academic systems.

Pakeha students are happy to aim for a lower grade, like 'B', whereas Asians aim for better results in our assignments.

Pakeha students are good at selling themselves even though they had little knowledge on the subject of study, whereas Asian students are quite polite...we might know more than them but don't usually like to put ourselves forward.

The Asian stereotypes of Pakeha create some setbacks in the context of collaborative learning. The difficulties are most apparent amongst PRC students who find working with Pakeha in groups unfulfilling and dissatisfying (Holmes & Bird, 2004, p.15). Most of them complain that their Pakeha group mates often like to pursue other social conversations instead of engaging in serious group discussion. The frustrations previously felt by these PRC students in collaborative learning situation have tainted their perceptions of Pakeha and reduced their desire to do group work with the latter.

They come to group discussion unprepared, or just chit-chat or socialise and offer little contribution...

Pakeha students appeared confident in class presentations but they do very little work or know little...

Wright and Lander (2003, p.240) note that students of Chinese background are more achievement oriented than their Western peers. These researchers discover that Chinese students find it hard to assert their opinions and challenge their Western peers, especially if they believe that the latter do not share a similar attitude to their studies. Hence, they prefer to work with students of like cultural background because of the element of "cultural-emotional connectedness", as Volet and Ang (1998) argue. "Cultural-emotional connectedness" refers to "students' perceptions of feeling more comfortable, thinking along the same wavelength, and sharing similar communication style and sense of humour when

interacting with others from the same cultural backgrounds” (Volet & Ang, 1998, p.10). The non-PRC respondents express more openness in their approach to collaborative group learning with Pakeha students. Whilst they acknowledge that local students have the tendency to contribute little to the process of group work, they consider the ability of Pakeha students to do good public presentation as an asset to the entire group.

Pakeha students are good at presentation. I like to have them when doing group assignments.

Despite the common perception that Pakeha assign less priority to university education than they do, these Asian students envy the freedom that local students have to pursue wider scope of interests and experiences in life, besides studying. Ironically, this is the factor that accentuates the feeling that there is very little in common between Pakeha and themselves since their ambitions and concerns in life differ markedly. There is therefore no impetus to bring them together.

My contact with a Kiwi girlfriend from high school was ok initially but it gets harder to develop the friendship when we came to university...she doesn't stay in uni to do assignments, and like to talk about her boyfriend and life outside uni...she is not interested to talk about studies...

They are encouraged by their parents to pursue other experiences apart from study...like travelling overseas for a year or two...they can take a break from study to travel and work overseas...their experiences of the outside world helps them to know what they want and need to have for life.

Most Asian respondents observe that Pakeha students mostly enjoy drinking in the pubs or partying during weekends. They also allude to the fact that Pakeha students often get very drunk at certain social events. This is antithetical to the form of enjoyment and entertainment most of these Asian students are used to. The Asians in my study perceive drunkenness as unacceptable due to their strict family upbringing. Thus, there is less

reason for them to want to socialise with Pakeha students since they are encouraged to avoid company of friends who are likely to influence them in a negative way and distract them from study.

Kiwi students like going to the pubs and parties...this is not what we care about...

My Kiwi colleagues like partying and drinking every weekend and just get by with their study...

Most Pakeha students do several jobs besides studying... they like to go drinking and often get drunk...

6.5 Institutional Intervention

In general, the Asian participants agree that university has a critical role to play to help bridge the gulf between Pakeha and Asian students. They recognise the need for main institution to foster a culture whereby staff and students consider intercultural exchange as a vital aspect of life within the university. However, they have not yet seen much evidence of the promotion of intercultural exchange on campus. Instead, they point out that activities organised by the university tend to veer towards segregation of local and international students. They highlight, for example, that the university does not usually encourage deliberate mixing and mingling of first year host and international students during orientation week. Even recreational activities are either centred round the interests of local students (such as pub crawl) or focused specifically on international students (such as city tour).

I haven't seen many examples so far...I won't say uni has not been working on it, but the news we received so far is quite limited...

There are some activities specifically addressed to New Zealanders or Asian students, but not both...

Organising large-scale events that seek to promote or celebrate cultural festivals observed by New Zealanders and people of other cultures is being suggested by some of the participants. However, members of FG1 greet the idea with little enthusiasm. They are sceptical about their own involvement in university-sponsored events due to their busy academic schedule. This reiterates the high priority that these Asian students assign to education vis-à-vis socialising.

University can organise some campus activities to celebrate festivals of foreign nationalities and serve traditional food from that country, or even local festivals...many of us have studied in New Zealand for a few years but still do not know much about the country.

I wish I have the time to go to those events but I've got too many assignments to do.

In uni, everything is stressful and so we have less time to socialise...

Moreover, FG1 is careful to point out that forced interactions are not always helpful. Such activity can be counterproductive at times. They reiterate the individual responsibility of the students to ensure they are connecting with people from other cultures for their own sake. They are convinced that even with institutional intervention, some students can still choose to avoid contact with others for reasons such as the lack of motivation, or difficulty in balancing an active social with busy study schedule. Invariably, financial consideration is a key issue for many Asian international students. The monetary factor is inextricably linked to their educational pursuits, which in turn undermines their desire to develop a socially active life during their academic sojourn.

It's a bit tricky...given the amount of tuition fees that we are paying, we need to give more attention to our studies and sacrifice our social life...

Cultural events seem to have more of an appeal therefore to PRC students rather than non-PRC students in this research. This consistently highlights that cultural difference is more

of an issue for PRC students. According to Klak and Martin (2003, p.464), the non-PRC students represent a group of overseas students who requires different types of institutional intervention, other than campus-wide activities, to propel their intercultural understanding and spur them on towards increased interaction with host nationals. Overall, the participants believe that there should be active intervention at every level of the university if there were to be genuine endorsement of cultural diversity by the main institution.

We need a top-down and bottom-up approach...like starting from Vice-Chancellor downwards to staff members that they all know there is a need to do something...and find student reps who like to promote cross-cultural communication...use them as opinion influencer to spread the message among students.

6.6 Summary

To sum up, PRC and non-PRC from the Asian contingent do not seem to differ very much in their level of enthusiasm for friendship contact with Pakeha students in the university. All except one of the Asian research participants hardly mention language impediment as a problem because they have lived in New Zealand for several years. The student who has problem communicating with Pakeha students is a recent arrival in the country. Hence, she is still getting acquainted with Kiwi accents and colloquialisms (Ward & Masgoret, 2004). The findings underline that language barrier can be overcome with time and experience. However, there are other factors such as cultural differences, the lack of common interests and personalities that still need to be addressed in order to increase the incidence of intercultural friendships. The data here also uncovers Asians' preference for a group-centred approach in their interaction with Pakeha students. The Asian group orientation closely aligns with their value of "saving face" (Jao, 1998). It highlights the collectivist tendency among Asians that shape the way they interact with one another (Barker et al, 1991) even in a foreign environment.

Contrary to Ward and Masgoret's (2004) findings, the results in my study seem to point to the fact that Chinese students place little or no expectation on host students to initiate

friendship contact. However, it is difficult to make generalisation about the attitudes and expectations of the Chinese students based solely on the research sample in this study. Further research is needed to see if the position of this particular group of PRC students represents the minority or the majority view. Research evidence in this chapter also highlights that mutuality is an important ethos that governs friendships among Asian international students, regardless of which country they come from (Jao, 1998; Ward & Masgoret, 2004). These Asian students quest for deeper experience of friendship with Pakeha but find interaction with host students to be shallow in nature. Consequently, many turn to their own ethnic cohorts to satisfy their desire for more meaningful relationships.

Results show that Asian participants view interaction with Pakeha students as necessary for cultural adaptation in a foreign country. They maintain also that intercultural experiences acquired in the university equip them with relevant skills for the global workforce in the near future. The immediate benefits that these Asian students reap are healthy integration into host culture and development of intercultural communication competency (Zimmermann, 1995). Research participants highlight too that both the academic community and Pakeha students have benefited from the presence of Asian international students in several ways. Firstly, the increased number of international students from Asia has yielded huge financial returns for the main institutions (Ministry of Education, 2001b). Secondly, it has added value to the cultural learning of Pakeha students via their exposure to the colourful diversity of Asian cultures (Holmes & Bird, 2004). Lastly, many Asian international students have brought with them above average motivation to study and embody the pursuit of excellence, which motivate Pakeha students to keep up the standard academically (Fenwick, 1987).

In terms of academic aspirations, the Asian participants perceive huge gaps between Pakeha students and themselves. These Asian students face incredible pressure from their families to do well at university because of the family investments in their overseas education. When comparing their own circumstances with those of Pakeha, it appears that the latter attach less significance to university education since they do not rely on parental support financially. As such, there is less pressure on Pakeha students to succeed or excel

academically. Whether the difference is perceived or real (Barker et al, 1991), these Asian international students see a real contrast between their attitudes towards education or academic achievement vis-à-vis their Pakeha counterparts. Moreover, the Asians note that many Pakeha students enjoy partying and drinking. This kind of socialising does not appeal to most of these Asian respondents who consider drinking and partying as antithetical to their strict family upbringing. There is, therefore, even less reason for them to mix and mingle with Pakeha student on campus.

Finally, these participants agree that in principle institutional intervention is critical to encourage more interaction between Pakeha and Asian international students on campus. In practice, however, they observe that their main institution has done very little to actively promote cross-cultural exchange between domestic and international students. Organising campus-wide activities that seeks to promote understanding and appreciation of New Zealand and other cultural festivals is one way to counter the low level of intercultural exchange on campus (Klak & Martin, 2003). However, most prefer to see changes made to the prevailing institutional culture by instilling the importance of international awareness and intercultural acceptance among students and staff across the board. Like the Pakeha respondents, the Asians concur that the students themselves must ultimately assume personal responsibility for the outcomes of intercultural friendships on campus.

CHAPTER 7: DATA ANALYSIS - IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH PAKEHA AND ASIANS

A series of one-on-one interviews were conducted with a set of Pakeha and Asian research participants independent from the focus groups. Data from these interviews adds different textures to the understanding of current phenomenon under study. Four Pakeha students and four Asians participated in the interview process. All of the Auckland-born Pakeha interviewees except for one have had significant contact with people from culturally diverse backgrounds prior to studying in the university. This is noteworthy as it has significant bearing on Pakeha perspectives on interaction with Asian international students. On the other hand, the Asian interviewees were drawn from four different nationalities – Malaysian, Indonesian, Korean and Chinese from the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC). Three of these overseas participants came from the Business school where Asians are the majority whereas the Korean student is the only Asian student in most of her classes in Arts faculty. A significant finding from the interviews reveals there is very little difference in the amount of contact that the Asian respondents in Business school has with Pakeha and that of their Korean counterpart who belongs to academic department with fewer Asians. This suggests that there are other factors which are accountable for the lack of intercultural interaction in the main institution.

7.1 Interest and Motivation

The interviews continue to underscore the phenomenon of the lack of interaction between Pakeha and Asians in the main institution. One argument is that the over-representation of Asian international students vis-à-vis the ratio of Pakeha in some academic departments has discouraged rather than strengthened cross-national interaction between these two groups of students. The demographical imbalance has in fact accentuated problems of ethnic segregation in the main institution. The reason why Pakeha choose to distance themselves from Asian students is because they dislike the fact that their international counterparts often stick to themselves and speak their native languages even in the presence of domestic students. The Pakeha interviewees consider such behaviour as being culturally exclusive and insensitive. Putnam (2000) is right therefore to suggest that ethnic networks can

produce anti-social consequence. The Pakeha interviewees also underline the fact that avoiding contact with Asian students is one way in which they register their discomfort and feeling of being marginalized because Asians have outnumbered them. Pohl's (1999) concept of "relative strangers" best describes how Pakeha students feel in this instance.

Nearly half of the students are Asians in my class...the Chinese students tend to stick to themselves because they don't speak English...in some ways I feel bad when I interrupt their culture bonding when I'm the only white person talking to my Chinese friend.

Most of the Asian interviewees are painfully aware of how Pakeha react towards the apparent cliquishness of Asian students. In defence of their own, the Asian interviewees attribute the emergence of ethnic enclaves to difficulties that many international students experience in befriending Pakeha. They reveal that Pakeha students in general are not very responsive towards people who do not look like them or speak English the way they do. These Asian students also find it hard to get to know Pakeha on a personal level. Conversations with their Pakeha peers remain quite superficial or shallow in nature. Small wonder why they turn to their ethnic cohorts for more meaningful interaction. The Asian interviewees essentially underline Putnam's (2000, p.22) arguments that ethnic enclaves are crucial to provide "social and psychological support for less fortunate members of the community". However, their external effects are by no means always positive evidenced in the reactions of the Pakeha respondents.

I think Pakeha students got sick of seeing so many Asian faces.

Pakeha students don't want contact with us because we look strange or something like that...

"I think Pakeha students don't want to interact with us because they are afraid and uncomfortable...our style of interaction is different..."

Our interactions are quite superficial most of the time. We don't go deeper than 'what are you studying?' or 'how's your weekend?' kind of thing...socially I like friendships to be at deeper level...

Throughout the interviews, both Pakeha and Asian interviewees repeatedly highlight the following de-motivating factors in cross-cultural friendships – cultural differences, racial prejudices, language and communication problems, the hectic nature of university life and institutional environment, and the personality issues. This seems to suggest that the lack of intercultural interaction in this particular New Zealand University is a result of the interplay of various forces within the cultural, environmental, language and personal elements.

English is not a problem for me but I feel more comfortable with my co-nationals or similar cultural backgrounds... (Indonesian)

Asians as a whole find it difficult to interact with Pakeha students because of their prejudices against us, like they think we don't speak proper English or Asians are all bad drivers... (Korean)

I had a group project for one of my papers...communication was difficult at times...tensions in understanding where things were and how the group was thinking... (Pakeha)

It's hard to make contact with Pakeha students at uni because of the way tertiary life is...rushing here and there for classes, etc. (Korean)

I think there may be a bit of shyness in the social context...(Pakeha)

The Asians' preference for a collectivist approach in friendship building as opposed to the individualistic tendency of Pakeha students has again surfaced in these interviews. Inevitably, it reinforces my arguments in chapter six that Asians in general value group identity. The Asian group orientation is a form of "face-saving" device to avoid putting themselves or others on the spot (Jao, 1998). Pakeha, on the other hand, are more open to

individual exchange. There are two-fold reasons why Pakeha students generally prefer individual interaction. Firstly, talking with their Asian peers on a singular basis encourages greater openness and minimises potential miscommunication between the two parties. Secondly, individual interaction keeps Pakeha students from the feeling of marginalisation especially when Asians outnumber them. These observations fit in with Tuan-MacLean's (1996) conclusion that Western students, in contrast with Asians, value more the individual interaction and expression between friends.

It's easier to relate with Pakeha students in a group...when we meet one-to-one, we just say hello and not talk too much. Maybe we don't know each other very well and shy...but in a group everybody share and say something... (PRC)

When you interact with Asian students as a group, you're more on the outer circle...it's much easier to have one-on-one conversation...easier for Asian students to be open and ask questions...also you can actually find out if people are understanding you or if someone is following you, unlike in big group. (Pakeha)

7.2 Attitudes and Expectations

The interviews identify three key expectations that Asian participants hold in relation to friendships with Pakeha. Firstly, befriending Pakeha students is instrumental¹² to their advancement both linguistically and academically (Beaver & Bhat, 2002; Beaver & Tuck, 1998; Ward & Masgoret, 2004). Secondly, friendship with Pakeha students is a means by which they can learn to adapt and function effectively in the host culture (Butcher et al, 2002; Ward, 2001). Finally, these Asian interviewees expect friendships with Pakeha to give them a sense of personal validation in a foreign environment (Arthur, 2004, p.39).

I expect to blend into the local culture...one of the reasons I came here is that not many Indonesians are here so I could improve my English... (Indonesian)

¹² See Jones 2003:74. The concept of instrumentalism within the realm of Social Theory conveys the idea of seeing things as means to ends rather than as having value in themselves.

Yes I planned to stay here for several years. I do want to make friends with them.
(PRC)

I have to learn to integrate into the host culture because I want to be respected and seen within the host community...that I'm valued or important. In order to succeed, I need to have some impact on people around me... (Korean)

Unlike overseas students, Pakeha do not have to wrestle with the problems of language, cultural adjustment or self-validation. The interviews highlight that Pakeha students generally assume that the main institutions and/or community agencies are responsible for taking care of overseas students. Furthermore, they find it hard to think of themselves as hosts since Asian students have outnumbered them. Pohl's (1999) concept of the "relative strangers" aptly characterises the response of these Pakeha students. As Pakeha students begin to feel like relative strangers in their own society, they become unsure of how to offer a welcome or to whom it should be offered (Pohl, 1999, p.86).

Most of us assumed there are support services to welcome the international students, so we don't need to do anything...I guess it's also the idea that it's not my responsibility...

So many cultures are coming in so it makes you feel like one of them...Europeans are under numbered so you feel like you're one of those rather than the host...

One Pakeha interviewee alludes to the age factor that has made her uneasy about playing host to Asian students who are older than her. This appears to be the only instance where generational difference is a consideration in the "guest-and-host" type of relationship.

I think there's more happening in high schools but in uni, Asian students are older and you see them as older people...

There is also reluctance among Asian interviewees to impose any expectation on Pakeha students to play host to them. Despite the fact, these Asian students think it is appropriate to let the host students initiate contact with them since they are guests in this country. They argue too that it is in the favour of Pakeha students to learn how to initiate contact with people from other cultures since Auckland is becoming more cosmopolitan.

I don't think we should ask too much...they are students, young and human like us...I don't expect all of them to be nice and perfect...

Well, I imagine if I were in my country and if there's a foreigner in my school, I will greet them...

I can't say they should but it's better for them to do because Auckland is more international...it's better for their living if they know foreigners.

It's good for them to be aware of differences, be patient and show a bit of interest towards those who are different but not overdoing it...

The only non-Auckland born Pakeha interviewee also expresses concern over the inhospitality of New Zealand students. Like his Asian counterparts, this Pakeha student regards university as a crucial avenue for developing new friendship networks while he is away from home. He discovers, however, that it is much easier to meet new people and make new friends through a student club. This is why he joins the religious club to which the other Pakeha research participants also belong.

It took me a while to be welcomed by the local students...I think the biggest problem is that a lot of Pakeha students in my class have gone to the same schools, and knew other people and do the same activities with them...I think maybe being in a club makes it slightly easier for me to make friends... (non-Auckland born Pakeha)

A lot of the people in my classes I don't make friends with...we know each other but don't hang out outside of class very often. I developed most of my friendships through the student club in university... (Auckland-born Pakeha)

7.3 Benefits of Intercultural Interaction

Like the focus groups, the interviewees in my study find interaction with members of the other cultural group beneficial. Through her Asian friends, one of the Pakeha interviewees becomes more aware of language difficulties that many non-Western internationals have to contend with. She also acquires a better understanding of the dynamics of cross-cultural communication (Hansen, 2002). Another Pakeha interviewee claims that her study abroad experience in Singapore has offered some insights into the struggles of many non-Western students in a Eurocentric environment (Sachdev, 1997).

Since I came back from being an international student in a different culture to Auckland, I was more aware of the different side to life at the university and what it's like to be someone who is different from the outside.

This same Pakeha student also discovers that Asians have the tendency to homogenise Westerners as a group of people irrespective of where they come from. New Zealanders are doing the same thing too when they lump all Asians together and fail to recognise the multiplicity of languages, cultures, ethnic identities and nationalities that characterises Asia as a continent (*Otago Daily Times*, 20 July 1998, "Study challenges stereotype of Asian students", p.7). It is through personal interactions with Asian international students in the university that the non-Auckland born Pakeha interviewee learns to distinguish his Asian friends by their country of origin and cultural heritage.

It annoyed me that they (Singaporeans) perceived all White people to be same in culture, and it annoyed me to be classified the same as an American or European...I suppose it applies vice-versa here to Asian students...

I used to group Asians into one category. That's the way the media used to present them...one of the big things I've learnt is that people who come from Japan are very different from say China, I guess I really hadn't expected that...and Koreans are very different from Cambodians. In that regard, it really is very helpful...just the opportunity to be with people who are from very different backgrounds...

Ironically, not all the Asian interviewees feel they have benefited from the social contact with Pakeha students. One student is annoyed with the shallow relationship she has with some of her Pakeha peers. The other finds it difficult to break into the inner circle of the Pakeha especially in group settings. However, the experience of the other two Asian interviewees seem to suggest that friendships with Pakeha has helped them to acquire some level of understanding about the host culture and facilitated their integration into the host community (Butcher et al, 2002; Hayes et al, 1994).

I have Pakeha friends but I wouldn't say I benefit from our friendship. I always feel like an outsider when I'm with them...

My Pakeha friends helped me to learn more about them but not integrate into the host culture...

In terms of linguistic and educational benefits, the Asian interviewees find the ability of Pakeha students to think critically and analytically has added a different dimension to their learning experiences. This is because these Asian students grow up in a hierarchical society whereby submission to authority (the emphasis on teacher-student relationship) and the acceptance of rules and propriety are highly valued (Ng, 1985). Hence, they are gradually discovering for themselves new ways of learning as they watch their Pakeha counterparts freely articulate ideas and offer critiques in class. These overseas students are challenged to embrace a different cultural style of learning (Ching, 1992).

Pakeha students have the ability to think critically of issues. They analyse more and not so narrow-minded. They have broad viewpoints, they argue well and very good to discuss issues and we get different perspectives.

7.4 Stereotypes and Perceptions

Notwithstanding all the benefits inherent in friendships across cultures, the incidence of intercultural interaction between Asian and Pakeha is still considerably low. The interviews highlight that racial stereotyping is a key obstruction to the formation of cross-cultural friendship. The data also suggests that New Zealanders in general possess racist attitudes toward people who look different from them. Hence, many Pakeha students who have little or no contact with people from non-European backgrounds want less to do with Asian students in the university. Furthermore, there is a prevailing belief among Pakeha students that Asians speak English poorly. As a result, some local students prefer not to work with Asians in class projects or group assignments for fear that they will be disadvantaged in terms of the academic outcomes. The participants' responses are consistent with Holmes and Bird (2004, p.15) who suggest that the lack of participation on the part of international students in group work can be provoked by New Zealand student behaviour. On the contrary, some Pakeha interviewees concede that the hardworking demeanour of many Asian students has, in fact, motivated them to compete against the latter for better grades (Fenwick, 1987, p.133).

Sometimes in group projects, people are reticent about wanting someone from different country who may think differently or has no perfect English to be part of the group.

There is more competition for grades...it motivated Pakeha students to work harder...

The perception that Asians like to stay in their ethnic enclaves resurfaced in the interviews with Pakeha. To Pakeha students, these "small world" networks (Spoonley et al, 2005, p.15) are problematic in the eyes of the local New Zealanders as they accentuate the social distance between the hosts and foreign nationals. Furthermore, Pakeha interviewees note that a huge number of Asian retail shops have sprung up in a short span of time around the central city area and in the suburbs where there are large Asian communities. Many Pakeha

New Zealanders see this as a convincing evidence of what the mass media described as the “Asian invasion” (Gordon, 1988).

*In our mall we see all the Asian shops, Chinese made stuff like two-dollar shops...
There are lots of Asian shops on the North Shore...some Kiwis think there are too
many and they are taking over...*

The mass media is responsible for reinforcing the stereotypical images of Asian peoples among New Zealanders as these Pakeha interviewees point out (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004). While they recognise that not all of the media representations of Asians are true and accurate, they concede that the television and print media are immensely influential in shaping Pakeha conception of Asians, especially in the absence of direct contact with the latter. To be fair, not all media releases highlight the negative aspects of Asians in the Pakeha minds. As one interviewee pointed out, some media releases (*New Zealand Herald*, 1 November 2001, “We can learn a great deal from our Asian migrants; Multiculturalism vital for society’s evolution”) wrote against racism and simultaneously endorsed cultural diversity in the local community.

I think it's the media...they talk about the country being overrun by Asians, etc.

I guess my perception is basically what has trickled down from the media, like they are quite rich and have rich parents overseas. They buy flash cars; they are bad drivers. They are taking over the country...I think that's the implication coming through the media...it's not necessarily that they are the true position but that's the way the media reported it. And a lot of people are concerned with the numbers and NZ is losing its origin, so I guess that's the impression I got...

Some local newspapers featured cultural festivals and reported some positive aspects of migrants...racism is viewed negatively...

Across the board, Asian international students have encountered indirect racism as a result of the homogenisation of “Asian” communities perpetuated by the mass media (*Sunday Star Times*, 29 September 2002, “Accidental tourists”). For instance, some negative criticisms were directed at the Indonesian student when Pakeha mistook her for being Japanese. The PRC student received less amicable treatment from Pakeha customers in the Post shop where she was working there part-time. The Malaysian student also shared her experience of subtle racial discrimination when a staff member in the university talked down at her because she spoke with Asian accent.

The Asian interviewees also highlight some incidents of overt racism. The PRC participant has had her bag destroyed by her Pakeha schoolmates previously in high school. She was also a target of verbal abuse by some local students in her class. On another occasion, she worked in the school canteen but was offered no payment in return for her day’s work. The Korean research participant alluded to her experience of racial discrimination by a waitress in the local Kiwi restaurant that she patronised. Her Asian friends too were intimidated by public outbursts and antagonisms shown by some Pakeha New Zealanders. She described an incident in the university where some international students submitted articles written in Korean and Chinese language for publication for the student magazine. Their attempts elicited some adverse reactions from Pakeha who reprimanded them for not using English when they knew full well that they were in an Anglo-speaking environment.

For these Asian students, their encounter with racism in New Zealand inevitably affects the way they view Pakeha and friendship with local students. Undoubtedly, New Zealanders’ racial prejudice has undermined the morale of many of these sojourners. The latter internalise the negative reactions they perceive from local people which eventually leads to the loss of self-confidence in social situations. Consequently, they are reluctant to initiate contact with Pakeha students for fear of further rejection from the host students. The Korean student, in particular, has become so discouraged in her attempts at befriending Pakeha that she decided to turn her attention to other things in her life instead. By contrast, the Indonesian student has accepted the status quo of inter-ethnic relations in the university

and insisted that the lack of shared interests, rather than difference in ethnic identities, is a key reason for the low incidence of contact between Pakeha and Asians.

I feel that they looked down on us, and we internalise it and we look down on ourselves and become afraid to approach them.

"I don't want to try anymore...this has been for long enough. When I was sixteen, I tried my best even though I was an introvert...I'm kind of really tired. There are many other stuff going on in my life besides study...this is not my issue anymore... I asked my Indonesian friends why they haven't had any Pakeha friends, and they answered, 'it's just the way it is'..."

I don't think in terms of ethnicity but whoever I could talk to or relate with, I'll hang out with them. Well, I haven't clicked with any Pakeha student yet.

7.5 Institutional Intervention

There is general consensus among the interviewees that the university can do more to enhance cross-cultural exchange within the academic community. However, the participants note that the university promotes a very limited version of "multiculturalism" which encompasses only Maori and Pacific students and excludes Asians and other ethnic minorities. The participants are aware that the university actively encourages international students to learn about the Kiwi culture. There is little attempt concurrently to spur New Zealand students to learn about other cultures and interact with other ethnic groups that co-exist in the academic community. In short, New Zealanders expect international students to learn about the host culture but not necessarily vice versa. It is fair to conclude therefore that cultural engagement between Pakeha and Asians is predominantly unidirectional (Smart et al, 2000). According to the interviewees, the main institution renders little or no practical assistance to help international students integrate into the host community.

University definitely supports multiculturalism...but their emphasis is on Maori and Pacific students...

Notwithstanding the fact, there is agreement among these interviewees that university is a safe environment with fewer incidents of racial harassment or antagonism against Asian students vis-à-vis the wider community.

In some ways how it is now isn't necessarily bad...it does divide people up a lot but I don't feel antagonism on campus...there is no dominating culture or you have to be like certain cultures to be popular...(Pakeha)

Generally ok. I don't feel harassed or anything. (Indonesian)

That said, results from the interviews reveal desire on the part of the interviewees to see university encourage deliberate mixing of Pakeha and Asians through activities, such as university orientation programmes. In principle, most interviewees agree that university orientation the start of the semester is an ideal place to get students to interact since they all start out afresh and new. However, in practice, the Orientation week does not feature in the Asians' lists of academic priority.

I missed the orientation but perhaps that could be a good platform for interaction since we have something in common...we are all new and starting out fresh at uni...that will help us blend with each other...

In regard to intervention strategy, one of the Pakeha interviewees alludes to a peer-pairing scheme (Abe et al, 1998) that is aimed at encouraging interaction between Pakeha and Asian who are in their first year of study. Apparently, the peer-pairing programme is not well received by first year Pakeha students because they too are new in the university. Results indicate that the institution must find ways of encouraging students to cross the social and cultural divide without painstaking efforts if they wish to see more interaction among students.

On our first day there was an international advisor at nursing school who asked if we would like to pair up with someone as buddy. But I was new and had to find

myself around before I could lead anyone round when I was myself completely lost. We need avenues where students can become easily involve without expending too much energy.

Another form of institutional intervention suggested by some interviewees involves organising departmental social activities and food events to draw together Pakeha and Asian for purposeful interaction. Having workshops and forums that act as platforms for Pakeha and Asian international students to exchange their views on cultural issues is another idea. Most interviewees agree that these forums for promoting intercultural understanding can help challenge negative racial stereotypes and minimise homogenisation of Asian communities. They can also act as an effective means of countering racism and xenophobia among Pakeha students. In essence, they concur with Klak and Martin (2003, p.463) that “growth in intercultural sensitivity is an incremental, individual and phenomenological process.”

If only university could list down the stereotypes and explain that not all are like that and clarify what is true...

7.6 Summary

In summary, both Asian and Pakeha interviewees repeatedly cite cultural differences, language obstacles, communication barriers, academic demands, personal busyness and individual differences as major reasons for the low incidence of cross-cultural connections between Pakeha and Asians in their main institution. The drastic shift in the social and cultural demography of the main institution has also left many Pakeha students feeling like “relative strangers” in their own society (Pohl, 1999, p.86). The more they feel outnumbered by Asians, the less receptive they are towards the latter. The data in my study suggests that most Pakeha students are ambivalent towards the growing presence of Asian international students in the university.

In fact, the local students react negatively against the emergence of exclusive ethnic networks among Asians in the main institution. They argue that the “small world” networks

have made it less desirable for Pakeha students to pursue personal connection with the Asian newcomers (Spoonley et al, 2005, p.15). Paradoxically, most of the Asian interviewees claim that the proliferation of ethnic enclaves is a direct result of racism and xenophobia that they encounter from Pakeha New Zealanders. As a result, they turn to their own ethnic cohorts for moral support. In short, the data here supports Putnam's (2000, p.14-15) theory that ethnic enclaves can produce different consequences for those inside and outside the exclusive social networks. Findings from the interviews with Pakeha and Asians also indicate that their different preference in terms of the style of social interaction have contributed to the infrequent contact between the host and foreign nationals. Results from the study reiterate earlier findings from the focus groups which highlight the Asian group-oriented approach and Pakeha individualistic tendency in social interaction.

The evidence in this research endorses the findings in previous research (Arthur, 2004; Beaver & Tuck, 1998; Burns, 1991; Ward, 2001) that clearly underscore instrumentalism of friendship with host students. Most of the Asian participants see interaction with domestic students as the means to improve their English that is pertinent to their academic advancement. Friendships with host students help facilitate the Asian students' acculturation into the host community (Butcher et al, 2002; Hayes et al, 1994; Hsu et al, 2001; Leung, 2001). Others who aspire to join the global transnational networks after completing their tertiary education in New Zealand view the opportunity to develop meaningful contact with Pakeha students as a form of capital accumulation (Ong 1999, p.92-93).¹³ Last but not least, these Asian participants believe that friendship with host students offer them a sense of self-validation which has implications on their psychological and emotional well-being (Arthur, 2004; Leung, 2001; Lewthwaite, 1996; Ward, 2001).

By contrast, the lack of social connectedness with students of other cultures or nationalities in the university has no significant ramification on the well-being of Pakeha students. Most

¹³ In her book, "Flexible Citizenship", Ong (1999, p.68) argues that many Chinese transnationals choose to fabricate their cultural persona and demonstrate competence in the host society solely to reproduce their wealth or privileged class status in the transnational setting. In short, the cultural logic of capital accumulation is aimed at enhancing their negotiating power in a globalised economy.

of these Auckland-born students have established social networks in the local communities which they can readily turn to. A further aggravating factor is that many Pakeha students felt they are becoming “relative strangers” (Pohl, 1999) in the university. As such, they become quite ambivalent to the needs of the sojourners and feel little or no responsibility to play host to foreign students in their midst. While Asian international students do not expect their Pakeha peers to make the first approach, they possess the mindset that it is appropriate for the host to initiate contact with them since they are guests in this country. Furthermore, they consider it beneficial for Pakeha students to learn to initiate cross-cultural friendship since Auckland is becoming quite cosmopolitan. The latter response of the Asian interviewees suggest that these students know how important it is for them to acquire intercultural skills and experiences to boost their status and negotiating power in the global village of the 21st century world (Ong, 1999).

As the data in this study suggests, the non-Auckland born Pakeha students experience a greater sense of solidarity with overseas students by virtue of being sojourners in their own country. Hence, they look to the academic community as a crucial avenue to bond with fellow students, regardless of ethnicity or cultural affiliations. Pakeha students, on the whole, find it easier to establish friendship with new people through their involvement in a student club. All but one of the Asian interviewees has hardly participated in any student society on campus.

Both Pakeha and Asian interviewees acknowledge that they have derived substantial cultural benefits mostly from non-classroom interactions with Asians and/or other international students on campus (Bowry, 2002). The Asian participants underline more of the linguistic and educational benefits that they reap from constant contact with Pakeha in class (Ward, 2001). Despite having highlighted the benefits of cross-cultural friendships, the data here suggests that a majority of these Asian students who have experienced prejudices from Pakeha New Zealanders show less enthusiasm to cross the cultural divide even though they might still express a desire for friendship with host students. The Asian perception of Pakeha students as being cold and superficial people has deterred them from making further attempts in their friendship with host nationals. It is only the minority

among these sojourners who would persevere until they make headway into the host culture. The majority are content to stay inside their ethnic enclaves for fear of more rejection from the host students. On the other hand, negative stereotypes of Asians that Pakeha acquired through the mass media stopped the latter from mixing and mingling freely with their international counterparts on campus (Baldwin et al, 2000; Spencer-Rodgers, 2001). Pakeha students also reacted to the proliferation of ethnic enclaves which they claimed were responsible for accentuating the social distance between domestic and international students.

In an academic environment where there is evidently strong ethnic segregation, both Pakeha and Asian interviewees agree that institutional intervention is necessary and critical (Nesdale & Todd, 1993). Most of the interviewees would like to see more active and intentional efforts on the part of the university to encourage deliberate mixing of local and overseas students through various avenues, such as the university orientation programme (Klak & Martin, 2003). According to some interviewees, any form of institutional intervention ought to challenge or counteract negative racial stereotypes perpetuated by both the mass media and other influences in the larger society. The intervention strategies ought also to inject positive attitudes and behaviours toward people from culturally diverse backgrounds (Chang, 2001). Ultimately, these research participants would like to see the practical outworking of an international education ethos that seeks to promote international understanding and intercultural acceptance among students and staff in their main institution.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

8.1 Interest and Motivation

The data analyses in the preceding three chapters identify eight factors that have contributed to the [low] motivation and [lack of] interest amongst Pakeha and Asian international students to pursue friendships with one another. They are as follows:

8.1.1 Proliferation of Ethnic Enclaves

The evidence in this study agrees with Ward (2001, p.6) that most international students rely on co-nationals or other internationals to form their primary network of friendships. This comes through clearly in the responses of the majority of Asian research participants who highlight that they have the least acquaintance amongst Pakeha students. The findings here also suggest that the lack of contact between these Asian students and their Pakeha counterparts is accentuated by the fact that all but one of the Asians is studying in the Business School which has the largest number of their own ethnic cohorts in the main institution. Where there is a huge concentration of Asian students in a single academic department, the situation allows the sojourners to turn immediately to their co-nationals or co-ethnic friends for moral support rather than to depend on local students to meet their social and emotional needs (Ward & Masgoret, 2004).

However, this is not the sole reason for the proliferation of ethnic enclaves in the university. The international research participants claim that many Asian students rely on friendships within their ethnic networks because Pakeha students are not responsive to their friendly overtures. Ward (2001, p.9) alludes to the non-responsiveness of Pakeha students in her literature review and characterises the Pakeha attitude as one of apathy and indifference towards international students. Arguably, apathy and indifference towards people of colour are covert forms of racism, according to Baldwin et al (2000, p.558-559). The Asian students' encounter with direct and indirect racism from Pakeha New Zealanders has, therefore, kept the former from making further attempts at forging cross-national friendships with the latter. At least, this was the experience of the Korean participant who discovered that her Pakeha course mates showed very little or no interest at all to engage

with her purposefully even though she was one of the very few Asian students in the Arts Faculty. In sum, ethnic clustering in the university is a direct result of placing a concentrated number of students representing particular [a] subculture[s] within specific academic department or spatial location in the main institution. It is also a result of the Asians' response to racism and xenophobia among Pakeha New Zealanders. As Baldwin et al (2000) notes, the structure of racial attitudes among Western students is to some extent culpable for the low incidence of interracial friendships in the university.

8.1.2 Study versus Socialising

From the perspective of the majority of Pakeha research participants, their limited contact with Asian international students is due to their courses of study which generally attract fewer non-Western students. Hence, most of their interactions with Asian students from overseas take place outside the classrooms, such as in the religious club on campus which most of these local students belong to or through church related activities. A few of the Pakeha students also have Asian friends in the university halls of residence where they reside. One noteworthy point is the significant contrast between the local and international research participants with respect to the context in which they interact with members of the other culture. My study shows that most Asian international students mainly confine their interaction with Pakeha students to compulsory academic situations, whereas the majority of the Pakeha students in my research have most of their contacts with Asians through voluntary social activities outside the classrooms.

The limited contact with Asians in the classrooms is an obvious reason for Pakeha students to seek friendship with their international peers outside their academic context. With the internationals, however, it is difficult to ascertain why the majority of them have little or no contact with Pakeha students in the social settings even though they claimed that they had no lack of opportunity. One plausible explanation, based on research evidence in this study, is that most Asian international students devote a large proportion of their time to study (due to parental and self-imposed expectations). Hence, very few of them would give priority to socialising or participating in student societies or club activities on campus (Bowry, 2002, p.24). A second possible reason, as my data suggests, is that Asians

perceive Pakeha to have very different ways of socialising, such as drinking in the pub or partying. The Asian majority in this study considers the Pakeha form of socialising as unacceptable due to their strict family upbringing. Hence, there is less reason for them to pursue interaction with local students in social situations.

8.1.3 Instrumental Orientation to Friendship

According to the Asian research participants, befriending Pakeha students is integral for getting by and getting ahead in their academic sojourn. Hence, they stress the instrumentalism of intercultural friendships. The instrumental orientation conveys a significant fact that most Asian international students see friendships with Pakeha “as means to ends rather than as having value in themselves” (Jones, 2003, p.74). Developing friendships with home students is vital because of the implications on how successfully they can adapt to the host culture and perform academically (Ward, 2001; Zimmermann, 1995). Meaningful engagement with Pakeha students is also linked to the sojourners’ need for self-validation in a foreign environment (Arthur, 2004, p.39). Most Asian international students need to know that their acceptance by the host nationals is genuine and not just a token gesture. To be accorded the appropriate level of respect by students representing the host culture despite their non-resemblance (in terms of phenotype) to the dominant host nationals is a sign of genuine acceptance for the Asian research participants. In short, Asian international students need friendship with Pakeha students to help them get by culturally and academically (Putnam, 2000). Social connectedness with Pakeha has also enabled some of these Asian sojourners who are transnational capitalists at heart to get ahead (Ong, 1999). It is a form of capital accumulation for these Asian students who aspire to join the transnational networks (Ong, 1999, p.6). Putnam (2000, p.23) who coins the terms “bonding” and “bridging” social capital provides us with some useful conceptual frameworks to explain why many Asian international students have the need to stick to their own ethnic cohorts whilst, at the same time, want to engage in purposeful interaction with Pakeha students.

8.1.4 Location-Specific Factor

In contrast, Pakeha students' interest in pursuing cross-cultural friendship is location-specific as evidenced in my findings. As already noted, the Auckland-born Pakeha students do not feel a sense of urgency to make new friends in the university since they can readily access their established social and familial networks in the local communities. By comparison, the non-Auckland born Pakeha students who have left home to study in this city are generally more responsive to overseas students in their university since they themselves share, to a certain degree, the predicaments of the sojourners. The contrast between the Auckland-born and non-Auckland born Pakeha students underscores Putnam's (2000, p.27) theory in relation to the varying degree of connection that individuals seek with friends, neighbours and strangers. Putnam (2000) maintains that most individuals and communities are bonding with their own kind while bridging people across social boundaries and cultural divide. Hence, when making comparison between these two forms of social capital, it is necessary to analyse them from the perspective of "more or less" rather than "either or" (Putnam, 2000, p.23).

Putnam's arguments help us to understand that Auckland-born Pakeha students, as opposed to the non-Aucklanders, are less inclined to want association with Asian international students. It is not necessarily because they do not want to befriend people from other cultures. Rather, they do not feel the need for cross-cultural friendship. Furthermore, many Pakeha students who have never lived outside their social norms and cultural frames of reference are unable to empathise with the struggles of overseas students in relation to the host community (Klak & Martin, 2003 p.451). It is important point to highlight at this juncture that the majority of the Auckland-born Pakeha respondents in this study have had exposure to peoples of other cultures at some point in their lives or have lived overseas. Hence, they show some measure of cross-cultural sensitivity and empathy towards their Asian counterparts in the university. They are also much more openness to developing friendship with overseas students, albeit not always with Asians (Carlson & Widaman, 1988; Hansen, 2002; Sachdev, 1997). In sum, the specific location where Pakeha students come from can affect their level of motivation for pursuing friendships with Asian

internationals. The further away from home they are, the more open they will be towards befriending strangers from overseas or other cultures.

8.1.5 “Strangers” and “Relative Strangers”

The concept of “strangers” is an interesting one from the Pakeha perspective. In defence of the lack of motivation among home students to initiate friendly contact with their international peers, the respondents argue that most Pakeha New Zealanders generally do not warm to the idea of having to make the first approach to people whom they consider strangers. Pohl’s (1999, p.86) definition of “stranger” as an unknown quantity and a foreign factor applies to Pakeha understanding in this instance. However, these Pakeha students stress that it is the element of the unknown rather than racial differences that keeps them from actively pursuing contact with their Asian counterparts in the university. They emphasise too that as Asian students gradually outnumber Pakeha, it makes them feel like “relative strangers” in their own society. The corollary of this is that most Pakeha students are unsure of how to offer welcome or to whom it should be offered (Pohl, 1999, p.89). Small wonder then there is ambivalence among Pakeha students towards the Asian newcomers.

8.1.6 Multicultural versus Monocultural Orientation

Another interesting discovery in this study is the lack of consensus between the North Asians (represented by PRC and Korean students) and Southeast Asians (represented by the students from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines) on factors which undermine the development of intercultural friendship, such as the lack of common interests, cultural differences and personality issues. There are several possible explanations for the variations in response among the Asian respondents. Firstly, international students from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines grow up in societies that are multicultural in nature. Their country’s population is often made up of diverse ethnic communities. As such, they are more used to interacting with people from culturally diverse backgrounds. Cultural difference or ethnicity, for Southeast Asians who grew up in multicultural environment, is considerably less of an issue in friendship. By contrast, students from the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and South Korea come from societies that are infinitely more

monocultural. Hence, they are likely to realise and experience greater cultural distance between Pakeha New Zealanders and themselves since the latter is primarily Eurocentric. The evidence in my study, therefore, points to a greater clash of cultures between Pakeha and North Asian students. This accounts for the fact that there is lower incidence of cross-national friendships between two cultures that are essentially monocultural in orientation.

Secondly, Southeast Asian students from English-speaking backgrounds are generally more proficient in their oral English. This puts them in a better position in terms of communication with Pakeha students. Once Southeast Asian students have overcome their problems with Kiwi accents and slang, they are able to communicate with their Pakeha peers at a wider and deeper level (Zimmermann, 1995). Conversely, the Northern Asians from non-English speaking backgrounds are generally less fluent English speakers and usually more limited in their vocabulary. They are therefore disadvantaged by the fewer opportunities that they have to interact at length with Pakeha students. A review of research findings has shown that few Pakeha have the patience to persevere in their conversations with people they perceive to have a poor command of English and speak with a 'funny' accent.

8.1.7 University Life and Environment

The busyness of tertiary study has made it difficult for students to channel more energy into cultivating new friendships, whether it is for "bonding" or "bridging" purposes (Putnam, 2000). Research participants also insist that the problem is due to the size and geographical layout of their main institution. As the university is huge and an impersonal environment, the majority of Pakeha respondents have resorted to joining a student club on campus as the main avenue for developing friendship with people of their own kind or from other cultures. In contrast, not many of the Asians participate in club activities on campus due to heavy academic workload. In this respect, Asian international students are less proactive in creating opportunities of friendship with local students. In short, the findings in my research suggest there is a significant correlation between the prevailing institutional culture and spatiality and the low incidence of intercultural interaction among students on campus.

8.1.8 Preferred Style of Interaction

Finally, my research underscores the Pakeha preference for individual-centred interaction and the Asians' orientation towards the group-centred approach in friendship building. Tuan-MacLean (1996) identifies the same phenomenon in her study on interracial friendships of White Americans and Asian College Students. She concludes that the non-Asian students often look at individual interaction and expression between friends, whereas the Asian students in general value group identity due to their cultural orientation. The individualistic tendency of Pakeha culture and the collectivism of Asian international students probably cause them to define friendship very differently. To a certain degree, the differences in their styles of interpersonal interaction provide an explication for the low incidence of intercultural friendship between Pakeha and Asian international students in the university.

In sum, the [lack of] motivation and interest amongst Pakeha and Asian international students are determined by numerous factors, as the research evidence thus far demonstrates. There is also the aspect of attitudes and expectations that have influenced the state of intercultural friendship formation between Pakeha and Asian in New Zealand tertiary institutions.

8.2 Attitudes and Expectations

8.2.1 How Important is Intercultural Exchange?

Earlier on in this chapter, research evidence highlights that one of the key motivations underlying Asian international students' desire to befriend Pakeha students is linked to the sojourners' academic aspiration and cultural induction into the host society. Friendship with host students, for the Asian research subjects, is also viewed in terms of acquisition of social capital that is relevant to future success. The expectations articulated by these Asian students clearly echo one of the key rationales encapsulated within the internationalisation of higher education across the Western world. Arguably, the principal aim in internationalising higher education is to prepare students to live and work in a multicultural society through cultivating greater understanding and respect for other cultures (De Vita &

Case, 2003, p.385). It is, therefore, not unrealistic for international students to carry those expectations with them as they come to New Zealand for their tertiary education. As the study shows, many of these potential expectations have not yet been met since most of the Asian international students still find themselves intermingling with co-nationals and other internationals primarily throughout their time in the university. They have little to do with Pakeha students apart from the sporadic contact in class. By comparison, Pakeha students do not share the same level of enthusiasm and expectations about intercultural friendships that their international peers do. As my research findings highlight, the main institution to which these research participants belong has done little by way of actively promoting international exchange between domestic and international students. The focus of cultural engagement, if any, tends to be unidirectional, i.e. international students are encouraged to learn about the host culture and not vice versa (Smart et al, 2000). Consequently, there are spin-offs on the expectations of home students where international education is concerned. This is and will continue to be the case when the university places more emphasis on international students “as an economic resource rather than a learning resource” (Bowry, 2002, p.27).

8.2.2 Who Are The Hosts?

The way in which Pakeha and Asians view the “host-and-guest” type of relations is noteworthy. At the outset of my study, I surmised that most if not of all Asian international students would expect Pakeha students to play host to them. My assumption was based on the fact that in most Asian societies, there are distinctive roles that the host and guest assume in their relationship with each other. Invariably, the host is the one who initiates. The role of the guest is to reciprocate in response to the host’s kind gesture of hospitality. The roles of the host and guest are rarely in reverse. Role reversal has the potential to place the host in a precarious position, or cause “loss of face” should the host be unable to acquiesce to the request of the guest (Jao, 1998). To a large degree, the results of this study signal a shift in the Asian students’ thinking in terms of the host-and-guest category. While they do not expect Pakeha students to play host to them, they emphasise the importance of mutuality in friendships. The concept of mutuality in interpersonal relationships closely intertwines with the Asian value of “saving face” (Jao, 1998), which is

also linked to the reason why many Asian international students prefer group interaction. Their group orientation is, apparently, a “face-saving” device to minimise or avoid any form of social awkwardness (Jao, 1998, p.76-77).

For the Pakeha respondents, the notion of “host and guest” is anachronistic and hierarchical in Western understanding (Pohl, 1999, p.90). They concur that in New Zealand the visitors are invariably expected to make themselves known to the hosts and not vice versa. Whether the older generation of Pakeha embraces the similar kind of attitude towards hospitality is a question for future research. To be fair, some of the Pakeha respondents are aware of the difficulties that international students face in cross-cultural transition. Hence, they do not endorse the idea that the onus should be placed solely on the foreign visitors to initiate contact with host nationals. Nonetheless, they feel powerless to alter the complacency amongst their own cohorts since the majority of Pakeha students have very little understanding of the difficulties involved in crossing cultures. The local students are, therefore, unable to identify with the sojourners’ deprivation of social and emotional support while living in a foreign country. In his model of intercultural sensitivity, Bennett (1993, p.46) argues that intercultural competence is a form of “phenomenological knowledge” and not “objective knowledge” that could be gained simply by studying a particular culture. By “phenomenological knowledge”, the cultural theorist essentially points towards individual’s experiences which actually help the students to develop skills for interpreting and understanding direct intercultural interactions.¹⁴ Bennett’s concept helps us to understand why many Pakeha students are unable to empathise with the sojourners’ need for friendship with host students.

Notwithstanding the confusion around who should welcome whom, this research highlights the fact that both Pakeha and Asian students acknowledge they have personally reaped benefits from intercultural friendships.

¹⁴ See Klak & Martin, 2003, p.445-452 for further explication on Bennett’s theoretical framework on developing intercultural sensitivity.

8.3 Benefits of Intercultural Interaction

8.3.1 Acquiring Intercultural Sensitivity

The findings here reveal that relating to people from different cultural backgrounds has had positive impact on the way Pakeha view themselves and understand their world. According to the local participants, befriending their non-Western counterparts has challenged their ethnocentrism and caused them to develop greater intercultural sensitivity (Klak & Martin, 2003; Thomas, 1996). Through cross-cultural interactions, they learn to recognise the heterogeneous character of the Asian communities and to avoid over-generalising the behaviours of Asian students. The Asian gesture of reciprocity has also conveyed to Pakeha students how much their international peers value the friendship and support offered by the host students.

8.3.2 Active Learning and Competence in Communication

From the perspectives of Asian research participants, the rewarding experience of learning in the same class as their Pakeha counterparts is a key benefit. The Western style of learning, in particular the ability of the Pakeha students to be critical and analytical, appeals to many Asian international students who are raised on Confucian-based educational philosophy which encourage passive or rote learning (Ng, 1985). As such, some are keen to emulate or adopt the Pakeha style of learning. The Asian respondents recognise that regular interaction with Pakeha students will help them to become more competent in intercultural communication. This in turn will boost their confidence in a variety of other social situations involving local people. The evidence here supports Zimmermann's (1995) conclusion that positive communicative experience with host students is vital and necessary to enhance the process of cultural adaptation for international students. The relevance of intercultural experiences in the university for these Asian students also extends to their future participation in the global work force. Hence, the ability to communicate competently in a global environment is one of the benefits that many potential transnational capitalists seek after in their tertiary education experience in New Zealand (Arthur, 2004, p.2; De Vita & Case, 2003, p.385).

8.3.3 Impact of Intercultural Interactions

Ironically, most of the Asian participants found their social contact with Pakeha students to be shallow and quite impersonal at times. Hence, only a minority of the Asian respondents claimed that friendship with host students had facilitated their cultural adjustment. Some cross-cultural psychologists (Clement et al, 2001; Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Leung, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1993b; Ward & Searle, 1991) argue that friendship with host nationals is extremely beneficial to the cultural induction of the sojourning students into the host community. I endorse such a proposition but would like to add to the psychological constructs, based on my own findings, that it is ultimately the quality and depth of interpersonal exchange between the hosts and internationals which determine the success of the sojourners' adaptation into the host culture. Furthermore, research (Bowry, 2002; Holmes & Bird, 2004) has shown that the impact of foreign students on domestic students' educational experience is variable. The majority of the Pakeha respondents were unable to identify the impact of Asian international students on their learning experience when I posed the question to them. This was due to the fact that most of them did not have many Asian international students in their courses of study. Moreover, for Pakeha students who had frequent encounter with their Asian counterparts in class, there were differing opinions as to how the presence of Asian international students had added to their higher education.

Despite the various benefits inherent within the prospect of intercultural friendships, both Pakeha and Asians continue to hold on to perceptions and stereotypes that have apparently accentuated the social distance between them.

8.4 Stereotypes and Perceptions

8.4.1 Pakeha Perceptions of Asians

(a) Impact of the "New Wave" of Asian Immigration

Research evidence clearly highlights a consensual stereotype (Spencer-Rodgers, 2001) among Pakeha respondents that Asian students prefer to mix with other Asians and speak in their own native languages. This common perception is reinforced by the proliferation of ethnic clusters they saw happening within the university and citywide. In fact, most of the Pakeha respondents blame the sudden influx of Asian students into Auckland for the

worsening of race relations between Pakeha and Asians in New Zealand. This is not surprising as Williams (1998), in his observations of New Zealanders' attitudes towards immigrants and immigration in the last decade, highlighted the same phenomenon. The results in his study show that the majority of New Zealanders believe that race relations have worsened in the wake of the "new wave" of immigrants from non-European source countries (Williams, 1998, p.106). He argues that as New Zealand immigration policies are increasingly shaped by capitalist need and competitiveness of the global economy, racism and xenophobia in New Zealand also escalates (Williams, 1998, p.107).

(b) Influence of the Mass Media

Research evidence (Spoonley & Trlin, 2004) also underlines the fact that xenophobia and racism among Pakeha New Zealanders is strengthened by the negative portrayals of Asians by the mass media. Both the print media and television continually paint Asian students as owners of expensive and flash cars. The depiction of Asians is associated with bad driving or crime statistics in this country (Stirling, 2003). Some Pakeha research participants have been convinced by the mass media to think that Asian international students are responsible for causing infrastructural problems and hiking the competition within the local job market. As Spoonley & Trlin (2004, p.24) point out, "the [media] stereotypes are explicit, along with the threat that Asian immigration poses to Auckland and Aucklanders." New Zealand mass media has, in effect, erected a wall between Pakeha and Asian international students by problematising and putting a racialised label on Asians for political and media usage. It is important to point out that some Pakeha respondents believe that the media is not the single source of influence that shape their conception of the Asian peoples. There are other societal factors such as parents or families who have instilled within them some forms of racial bias. However, they concede that whatever they see on television or read in the print media has significantly affected the way they choose [not] to associate with Asian international students. Spoonley & Trlin (2004, p.61-62) is right, therefore, to say that the media is "a major contributor in defining the nature of intergroup relations" in this country.

(c) Attitude Towards Assimilation

In earlier research, Williams (1998) concludes that the majority of Pakeha New Zealanders expected immigrants and other non-Pakeha minority to assimilate into their dominant culture. However, the data in my study reveals that not all the Pakeha research subjects expect people who came from outside their country to assimilate into the host culture. Arguably, the position of these Pakeha students does not necessarily represent the majority view because of their previous exposure and experiences with crossing cultures. However, the responses of these Pakeha students indicate that only the minority amongst them would endorse the expression of cultural pluralism on campus. This is illustrated by the fact that a number of the Pakeha respondents express uneasiness over some aspects of Asian etiquettes in public which appear to be culturally offensive to Pakeha. Interestingly, Pakeha students also do not like the idea of Asians segregating themselves from the host communities and staying inside their ethnic enclaves. While these Pakeha students do not expect their overseas visitors to assimilate into the host culture, they also do not want to see their international peers stay inside their exclusive ethnic networks. The Pakeha participants want to allow their international counterparts from Asia to feel free to be themselves in the host environment. At the same time, however, the local students are not always comfortable with some of the socio-cultural norms embodied by the Asian newcomers. This presents real tensions not so much to the host nationals but to the internationals in terms of how the latter should act or behave in the host country.

8.4.2 Asian Perceptions of Pakeha

(a) Inquiring Mind and Innovative Ability

Earlier on, the Asian respondents have identified the benefits of learning in the same classroom as Pakeha. Some of the overseas participants alluded to the ability of Pakeha students to think critically and participate actively in classroom discussions as something that they would like to emulate. These Asians commonly perceive Pakeha New Zealanders as innovative people. Hence, the “do-it-yourself” (DIY) attitude of the Kiwis has had its appeal among some of the Asian respondents.

(b) Apathy, Xenophobia and Racism

While Pakeha students have some qualities that are inspiring for Asians, the latter also wrestle with the “impassivity” and “superficiality” of Pakeha students. Responses from the Asian respondents repeatedly underline the non-responsiveness of Pakeha students towards friendship overtures made by the former. Ward (2001) characterises the non-responsive nature of Pakeha students as apathy and indifference. Based on current findings, it is possible to explain the lack of earnestness amongst Pakeha to engage deeply and meaningfully with sojourning students. As the evidence suggests, the Auckland-born Pakeha students do not share the same degree of intensity and intentionality about forming deep friendship across cultures because they have no need to. They can rely on their established social networks in their local communities to get by (Putnam, 2000). Potentially, it means that some of the Asian international students are going to experience disappointment in their encounter with these Pakeha students. The Asians’ encounter with racial discrimination in its overt and covert forms from the hosts has caused them to believe that Pakeha students are racially biased against them because of their phenotypes and/or poor English. (Ward & Masgoret, 2004, p.58) Hence, they sought refuge from among their own ethnic cohorts. Ethnic clustering, according to the Asian participants, is essentially a by-product of the xenophobia and racism exhibited by Pakeha New Zealanders towards the sojourners.

(c) The Priority of Education

There is a consensual stereotype amongst the Asian respondents that Pakeha do not attach a high value to their university education. The Asians argued that as Pakeha students generally funded themselves through university education, they were under less pressure from their parents or families to perform academically. In contrast, many Asian international students were expected to show gratitude in return for the huge financial investments their parents invested in their overseas education (Tokunaga, 1999, p.23). Hence, these students faced incredible pressure to do well at university because most Asian parents placed a high value on having a good education, as Tokunaga (1999) highlighted. In the Asian students’ minds, financial dependence or independence ultimately determines the level of educational priority for them. Their perception that Pakeha students do not

accord high value to their tertiary education arises solely from the Asian cultural perspective. Many Asian international students envy the freedom that many younger Pakeha have to pursue other experience in life, in addition to study. However, the former are unaware that growing numbers of Pakeha students are struggling with the effects of mounting student debts (LaRocque, 2004) which has led to the continuing exodus of New Zealand graduates into other countries in search of better paying jobs (*Otago Daily Times*, 7 May 2005, "Dire Debts"). On the surface, the different level of educational priority seems to contribute to the parting of way between Pakeha and Asians.

(d) The Way of Socialising

Research evidence also suggests that most Asian research participants perceive Pakeha students to be people who like to drink and party every weekend. Many overseas students view this form of socialising as unacceptable especially if they were brought up in strict family backgrounds. Instead, they enjoy other forms of leisure and entertainment that do not involve drinking or getting drunk. In many respects, the Asian and Pakeha form of socialising appears incompatible in the eyes of the international participants. This explains why there is so little mixing and mingling between these two groups of students in the social situations.

The racial stereotypes of Pakeha and Asians invariably undermine spontaneous interaction between the two groups of students. This implies that some form of deliberate intervention by the university is critical and necessary to generate greater interest in and facilitate more intercultural interactions on campus as part of the ethos of international education (Arthur, 2004; Butcher et al, 2002; Nesdale & Todd, 1993; Smart et al, 2000).

8.5 Institutional Intervention

8.5.1 University-sponsored Cultural Events

Most of Pakeha and Asian respondents agreed on the importance of institutional intervention, albeit in varying degrees. The Asian respondents were more sceptical than Pakeha students about the impact of large-scale university events to alter their current level of interaction among students. The sojourners maintained that the hectic nature of tertiary

education had diverted most of their energy towards academic related concerns. It was unlikely, therefore, that many Asian international students would respond to more activities that were going to take away the time allocated for their studies or compete with the academic demands. Pakeha students, on the other hand, were keen to see more university-sponsored events that promote cultural awareness and generate more inter-ethnic interest among students on campus. The contrast between Pakeha and Asians suggests that the nature of campus-wide cultural celebrations or special events that seek to promote intercultural understanding obviously has limitations. Firstly, if students have no time to participate in these campus-wide cultural activities, it defeats the overall purpose of organising them. Secondly, as noted by Klak and Martin (2003), whilst those who choose to participate in university-sponsored international cultural events might deepen their intercultural appreciation, it does not necessarily lead to greater engagement with and acceptance of cultural differences. Klak and Martin (2003, p.445) conclude that a combination of special events, related courses and a supportive campus environment is necessary to produce “intercultural global citizens”. After all, as these researchers postulate, “growth in intercultural sensitivity is an incremental, individual and phenomenological process.” (Klak & Martin, 2003, p.463)

8.5.2 Supportive Campus Environment

The point about “supportive campus environment” is an important one. Both set of research respondents alluded to the huge and impersonal environment of their main institution which has discouraged them from pursuing friendship with people who are new or from another culture. Invariably, many of these students are on the move all the time due to the requirements of their academic timetables. Moreover, faculties within the university are scattered across vast sections of lands within the city which make it less conducive for students to develop ongoing friendship or maintain regular contact with other students in any particular sphere of the campus. The spatial factor is an obstacle to be overcome when considering institutional intervention.

8.5.3 Impact of Institutional Policy

Finally, the current research reveals that the policies adopted by the university, such as the accommodation policy which segregates local and overseas students in the halls of residence, have significant ramifications on the formation of intercultural friendships. Other examples of the impact of institutional policies on intercultural interaction include the ethos undergirding the university orientation programmes for new students and/or the emphasis on collaborative learning within the culturally diverse classrooms (Wright & Lander, 2003). The respondents in this study stress the need for the main institution to encourage deliberate mixing of Pakeha and Asians via a peer-pairing scheme or international buddy system (Abe et al, 1998) as a key component in orientating new students to life in an internationally mixed university. The making or reform of policy within the realm of international education must take into account the important aspect of personal connection which “involves real tasks, emotional and intellectual participation.” (De Vita & Case, 2003, p.388; Hansen, 2002, p.6)

8.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the cultivation of friendship requires both parties to have something in common, be it a similarity of experiences that complement each other, mutual interests in social or recreational pursuits or even the same aspirations in life. The outcome of my study underscores the reality that the majority of Pakeha and Asian international students have little common grounds in which friendships can take root and flourish. The motivation and starting points in intercultural friendship differ markedly for each group. Moreover, racial stereotypes acquired from the mass media or other societal influences have also contributed to the sporadic interpersonal exchange between these two groups of students. In the final analysis, Pakeha and Asians can co-exist in the university without having to interact with one another. Unless universities implement active and deliberate interventions to facilitate intercultural interaction this will be the case. Such interventions, however, require the cooperation of all students and their willingness to participate in intervention programs. Ultimately, for genuine internationalisation of the university to take place, the institution must seek to establish a culture that endorses cultural pluralism and inculcates within the hearts and minds of staff and students an ethos of internationalism.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

9.1 Multi-disciplinary Research

Research on the issues revolving around the intercultural contact phenomenon has spanned a wide scope of academic disciplines. Many cross-cultural psychologists (Bochner & Furnham, 1985; Hechanova-Alampay et al, 2002; Hsu, et al, 2001; Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Leung, 2001; Nesdale & Todd, 1993) underscore the significant ramifications of friendship with host students on the social, emotional and psychological well-being of international students. Likewise, counselling experts (Arthur, 2004; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Lewthwaite, 1996;) also endorse the importance of assisting international students to access social support in the host culture as a buffer against the effects of stress caused by cross-cultural transition. Educationalists (Barker et al 1991; Beaver & Bhat, 2002; Holmes & Bird, 2002; Mills, 1997; Volet, 2001; Westwood & Barker, 1990; Wright & Lander, 2003) have examined the impact of culturally diverse classrooms on the teaching and learning outcomes in Western higher education. In particular, Wright & Lander (2003, p.240) stress the importance of fostering “cultural-emotional connectedness” among students as a means to encourage more collaborative group interaction in class among students of different ethnic backgrounds. Discourses on intercultural communication (Clement et al, 2001; Fox, 1997; Zimmermann, 1995), too, have deliberated on the mediating role of positive communicative experiences with host students that appear to have enhanced the process of cultural adaptation for many international students.

Against this backdrop, the focus of my study is to contribute to the understanding of the social phenomenon undergirding the nature of intercultural contact among students. In particular, I seek to understand the phenomenon from the perspective of both Pakeha and Asian international students in the New Zealand university context. One of the most effective means of capturing the lived experiences of the research subjects in their own words and reflecting them accurately in the research findings is through the use of phenomenology. Hence, I have kept the content of this research descriptive and sought to

offer the views of the research participants even though I have juxtaposed some of my perspectives (as a researcher) alongside theirs.

9.2 Some Sociological Observations

Briefly, my investigation into the current phenomenon of intercultural contact in a New Zealand university has uncovered three significant sociological aspects that characterise contemporary New Zealand higher education.

Firstly, the current research underlines the fact that despite the changing social and cultural landscapes of New Zealand higher education, universities remains essentially Eurocentric in character. The growing presence of Asian international students has failed to counteract the hegemonic influence of Eurocentrism. Inevitably, this supports the claim made by Fenwick (1987, p.130) that overseas students are often “an unrealised, underutilised and unintegrated resource for relieving the startling lack of knowledge amongst domestic students about international affairs.” The second observation from my study, which is linked to the first, reveals that the trend of New Zealand higher education communities is, in fact, towards globalisation rather than internationalism. My research supports Welch’s (2002, p.438) proposition that “global capitalism has the most to offer in terms of understanding contemporary reforms in higher education” in the antipodean context. In other words, Welch (2002) argues that it is the entrepreneurial spirit of the academic enterprise that drives the momentum for internationalisation of the universities rather than an ethos of internationalism. Lastly, the findings in this research reveals that the arrival of Asian international students has resulted in more “bonding” amongst students of their own kind and correspondingly less “bridging” among students cross-nationally (Putnam, 2000, p.21-22). As the social and cultural demography of universities continue to change resulting in campus environments becoming increasingly less personal, more students are withdrawing into their social enclaves and relying on co-national or co-ethnic friends to shelter them from the buffering effects of the stresses posed by ongoing social changes around them. In the following section, I will deal with each one of these sociological observations in more detail.

9.2.1 Eurocentrism versus Cultural Pluralism

Scholars and researchers (Arthur, 2004; De Vita & Case, 2003; Fenwick, 1987; Hansen, 2002; Welch, 2002; Yang, 2002;) constantly underline the internationalisation of education as a process of “broadening and expanding students’ ideas, attitudes and knowledge from that which is local and regional (possibly, national) to that which is international in outlook and practice” (Nesdale & Todd, 1993, p.191). As Ping (1991) and Worthen (1991) highlight, the aim of international education is to develop in students intercultural awareness, understanding and most importantly, acceptance. Internationalisation, therefore, implies that the international academic community must work towards genuinely embracing cultural diversity and actively encourage the expressions of cultural pluralism both in principle and in practice.

One of the fundamental observations in my study is that the majority of Pakeha research subjects who demonstrate various degrees of intercultural sensitivity and tolerance towards students from culturally diverse backgrounds have already had some form of contact with people from other cultures before coming to university. These Pakeha students represent a specific subset of New Zealand students whose Eurocentric worldviews are undergoing gradual deconstruction as a result of previous exposure to and constant interaction with people from other cultures. This leads to my argument that the mere presence of Asian international students in New Zealand universities, in itself, does not lead to the broadening of perceptions that Pakeha students have of the world. As Holmes and Bird (2004, p.22) argue, New Zealand students need training or preparation for studying collaboratively with international students. Nesdale and Todd (1993) have already alluded to some serious concerns about “the probable success of achieving the broad objectives of internationalisation through simply recruiting an increasing number of international students to Australian universities”. Furthermore, they question the wisdom of the Australian universities in recruiting most of the international students from Asian countries who “belong to ethnic groups which have been the target of long-standing negative attitudes by some Australians” (Nesdale & Todd, 1993, p.191).

This same concern needs to be raised with New Zealand higher education providers. There is sufficient evidence to show that the growing prominence of Asian international students in New Zealand universities, in the last decade or so, has led to a resurgence of xenophobia and racism among Pakeha New Zealanders especially towards the Asian communities. The form of racism in contemporary New Zealand is what Williams (1998) discovers to be much more covert and subtle. The less overt forms of racism can exist in what Baldwin et al (2003) describe as the “target-based” or “function-based” dimension. “Target-based” racism implies that one might be racist toward one group, but be relatively accepting of another group, whereas “function-based” racism is multi-faceted and operates within different spheres of activity (Baldwin et al, 2003, p.555-556). As shown in this research, the racism among Pakeha students appears to be “target-based”, in particular against Asian students.

There appears to be an anomaly in the racial attitudes of the Pakeha respondents toward their Asian peers. On the one hand, these Pakeha students show some signs of accommodating cultural diversity but, on the other hand, they complain about certain aspects of Asian international students’ social etiquette that seem culturally offensive to Pakeha New Zealanders. Whilst they align themselves with a non-assimilationist attitude, ironically Pakeha students also express angst over the idea of Asians segregating themselves from the host communities and staying inside their ethnic enclaves. This highlights a curious gap between the Pakeha assent to cultural pluralism in principle and in practice. The anomalous racial attitude towards Asians also raises the question as to whether Western institutions at large will ever regard Asian international students as “a resource to relieve the startling lack of knowledge amongst domestic students about international affairs.” (Fenwick, 1987, p.130) Hence, the “internationalist” rhetoric on international students being a rich educational resource for propelling the internationalisation of Western universities will remain largely an unrealised potential unless there are institutional commitments and mechanisms in place to challenge the Eurocentric cultural assumptions and the structures of Pakeha racial attitudes that tend to negate the expressions of other cultural realities (De Vita & Case, 2003).

9.2.2 Going Global versus Becoming Internationalised

In light of the above arguments, the question posed by Welch (2002), “Are antipodean universities genuinely internationalised, or are they more globalised?” is worth considering. There have been many debates amongst academics and researchers over what it means for the universities to “go international”. There are two aspects underlying the confusion over the term “internationalisation” in the academic circle. Firstly, the difficulty lies with the way the academic community uses “internationalisation” and “globalisation” interchangeably when, in essence, these two phenomena reflect different rationales, objectives and effects (Yang, 2002, p.81). Welch (2002) and Yang (2002) agree with each other that “globalisation” is fundamentally linked to the rise of global capitalism which has resulted in a contemporary view of international education “as an engine of economic activity and international competitiveness.” (Welch, 2002, p.437) These researchers argue that “internationalisation”, in contrast, is characterised by an understanding that the university plays a critical role, as part of the interconnected global system of knowledge transfer, to disperse an ever more accurate knowledge of the world to its culturally diverse student population (Yang, 2002, p.85).

How universities set out to achieve the broad objective of internationalisation is the second confusing aspect. Some have defined internationalisation of universities in terms of the implementation of a set of international activities, such as curricular development, study abroad programs, faculty exchange, joint research initiatives with overseas institutions, technological assistance or intercultural training (Hansen, 2002; Knight & De Wit, 1995). Others (European Association of International Education, 1992; Knight & De Wit, 1999) prefer to see it as a whole range of processes by which higher education in the West acquires an international character and becomes more internationally oriented.¹⁵ This implies that a university is not considered internationalised unless there is awareness, dialogue and interactions within and between cultures through its teaching, research and service functions, which ultimately achieve mutual understanding across cultural boundaries. I would argue, however, that both the activity-centred approach towards internationalisation and the process-oriented definition are mutually inclusive. The

¹⁵ See Yang, 2002:83 for my quotations on EAIE and Knight & De Wit

international activities, in essence, symbolise some aspects of the practical outworking within the entire process of internationalisation of the institutions.

The vast number of international students in New Zealand representing a wide range of geographical regions of the world, especially Asia, suggests that New Zealand higher education has made its mark on the global international student market. Ironically, the low incidence of intercultural exchange between New Zealand Pakeha and Asian international students points to the fact that the universities are far from becoming internationalised, or 'Asianised' so to speak, since Asians are the largest group on the university's international students roll. It remains uncertain as to what extent Pakeha students are interacting with non-Asian international students, vis-à-vis their Asian counterparts, in the same context. This warrants further research to help gain a bigger and clearer picture in terms of the impact that the presence of non-Asian international students have on the internationalisation of New Zealand higher education. At the least, the evidence in my study supports the conclusion that academic capitalism is essentially driving the rationale for the feverish recruitment of international students in many contemporary Western higher education institutions including New Zealand. The quest to advance more accurate knowledge of the world and increase the awareness and importance of global interdependence among students and faculty members is a peripheral concern (Altbach & Peterson, 1998; Arthur, 2004; Bowry, 2002; De Vita & Case, 2003; Marginson, 2002; Welch, 2002;).

9.2.3 Bonding versus Bridging

Finally, the phenomenon of ethnic enclaves is not new to many in migrant-receiving societies, such as New Zealand. Historically, the emergence of ethnic enclaves is associated with the image of the 'immigrant', who have uprooted from his or her country of origin permanently, seeking respite from the painful process of spatial integration and cultural transformation in their country of adoption. Instead of seeking cultural assimilation as an option for survival in the country they emigrated to, they sought refuge among their own cohorts to escape the painful reality of cross-cultural adjustment (Yoon, 1995). Arguably, in the wake of the "new wave" of Asian immigrants and the vast influx

of international students from the People's Republic of China (PRC) into New Zealand, ethnic enclaves have become more of a salient feature in Auckland. On the student scene within the university, there is definitely more "bonding" amongst co-nationals or co-ethnic groups happening in the past few years. The Asian research respondents attributed the proliferation of ethnic enclaves to their lack of acceptance by the host students evidenced in their experiences of racism in its overt and covert forms. Consequently, they were forced to turn to their ethnic networks to seek personal validation (Arthur, 2004) or social, psychological and cultural support (Nesdale & Todd, 1993; Putnam, 2000) while they were in sojourn. That said, Asian international students in general still want to have an association with Pakeha students because this present generation of Asian sojourners are transnational capitalists at heart (Ong, 1999). The latter view social connectedness with host students as one of the means by which they accumulate symbolic capitals to help boost their educational attainment which is integral to future success in life.

In summary, connecting with co-nationals is pertinent to Asian international students' survival in their country of sojourn whilst building cross-national friendship with the host students is linked to academic and cultural instrumentalism. Putnam (2000, p.306) notes that the diminished stock of social capital has affected the quality of education among American college students. This explains why Asian international students need to acquire both the "bonding" and "bridging" social capital to ensure success in their academic sojourns in New Zealand. However, current evidence shows that Asian international students are spending more time with members inside their ethnic enclaves. Consequently, they have less time to connect with those outside their exclusive social networks. The proliferation of ethnic enclaves in the main institution has actually produced some anti-social consequences for both the host and sojourning students even though it has provided some respite to the latter (Putnam, 2000, p.22-23). In light of this, New Zealand higher education communities need to wrestle with the implications of ethnic segregation on campus, and consider how to maximise the positive effects as well as minimise the negative manifestations of the phenomenon of ethnic enclaves within the main institution. Concurrently, it is important also to encourage more "bridging" among students across social and cultural cleavages in an ethnically mixed higher education community. Putnam

(2000, p.362) alludes to the dilemma that a racially integrated school in America face which applies also to New Zealand higher education¹⁶ – Is it better to have everyone interact and socially connected in an ethnically segregated university rather than having no interaction among students at all when there is no ethnic segregation? The answer to this question requires further investigation into the social phenomenon within an ethnically segregated academic community. As far as current research shows, racial tensions within New Zealand universities are generally more subdued compared to what takes place in the wider community. However, I am convinced by my findings that if the institution or individuals do nothing to encourage more “bridging” of students across ethnic and cultural divides, the “bonding” effects of exclusive social and ethnic enclaves can potentially lead to a more divided campus rather than reinvigorate the academic community in New Zealand. It is not hard to imagine then the kind of impact a racially divided higher education community can have on New Zealand society (Williams, 1998).

9.3 Concluding Comments

In conclusion, the low incidence of intercultural interactions among students in an ethnically mixed New Zealand university seems antithetical to the purpose of international education. After all, a key ethos undergirding internationalisation of Western higher education essentially encompasses the idea of preparing students to live and work in a multicultural society through greater understanding and respect for other cultures (De Vita & Case, 2003). Paradoxically, current research underscores ever more the insularity and ethnocentrism of Pakeha students despite the growing presence of Asian international students in the main institution. Based on current findings, I arrive at the conclusion that the growth in New Zealand export education sector has served to strengthen the local economy fiscally, but it has not necessarily enriched the social and cultural arena of New Zealand higher education. Ethnic segregation has become more apparent institutionally as a result of the strengthening subcultures within the Asian international student communities. Academic entrepreneurialism has also become dominant in the agenda of

¹⁶ Putnam (2000) alluded to the dilemma faced in the busing controversy in one of America’s racially integrated schools. The debates revolving around school integration illustrates sharply the trade-offs between bridging and bonding social capital.

New Zealand higher education. No doubt, New Zealand universities will have to confront and address the tensions created by their commercial aspirations, which are driven by economic globalisation, vis-à-vis the objective of education. If New Zealand higher education community is to continue to serve its historical purpose of helping students “understand what is happening in our lives and in our world rather than simply moving with the tide” (Yang, 2002, p.87), then it must grapple with this question, “how central or peripheral is the interaction between domestic and international students within the institutional ethos in international education?”

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APPENDICES



QUESTION GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

Interest and Motivation

1. How often do you interact with Pakeha/Asian international students in your university?
2. If you have had contact with Pakeha/Asian international students on campus, where do you usually meet and interact with them?
3. Do you usually interact with them on an individual basis or as a group?
4. If you haven't had much contact with Pakeha/Asian international students on campus, what do you think are the contributing factors?
5. Is your lack of contact with Pakeha/Asian international students on the university due to personal choice or preference? If so, what would have prompted you to do so?
6. What do you think can be done to instil greater interest in students for exchange with others on the campus from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds?

Attitudes and Expectations

1. Do you think Pakeha students should assume host responsibility for initiating contact with international students and extending hospitality toward them on campus?
2. In your opinion, how has the growing presence of Asian international students affected your tertiary education experience in this university?
3. How have you benefited from your interaction with Pakeha/Asian international students on your campus?
4. How satisfying is it for you in terms of the level and nature of contact you currently experience with Pakeha/Asian international students on your campus?
5. To what extent would you like to see changes in the pattern of interaction between Pakeha students and Asian international students within your university?

Benefits of Intercultural Interaction

1. How have you benefited from your interactions with Pakeha students academically, socially and culturally? Give specific examples in each area.
2. Do you think Pakeha students will benefit from their interactions with Asian international students? If yes, how? If no, why not?

Perceptions and Stereotypes

1. In your regular or occasional contact with Pakeha/Asian international students on campus, how would you describe your experience with Pakeha/Asian international students?
2. Can you share a specific example or incident of your own encounter with these students on campus?
3. In your opinion, what could have possibly influenced your perception of Pakeha/Asian international students?
4. As the number of Asian international students increased, what impact do you think it had on your tertiary education experience?

Institutional Intervention

1. How would you describe the current atmosphere of ethnic relation in your campus?
2. How has the university play its part in promoting intercultural interaction between host students and international students in your university?
3. If that is lacking, what do you think the university could do to increase cultural understanding and facilitate better communication between students in a multi-ethnic campus environment?
4. What is the role of the university vis-à-vis the responsibility of individual student in cultivating greater interest in and acceptance of students from different cultural backgrounds?

Intercultural Interactions In A New Zealand University:

Pakeha And Asian Perspectives

INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Participants,

I am a postgraduate student at Massey University in Auckland. As part of the fulfillment of the requirements for my Master of Philosophy (Arts) degree, I am undertaking a research project which is aimed at investigating the level and nature of contacts between Pakeha students and Asian international students in a New Zealand university. The goal of the research study is to explore possible intervention strategies that would enhance the quality of intercultural interactions amongst students in New Zealand universities. Below are the contact details of my researcher supervisor and me.

Name of Researcher : Lian-Hong Lim
Designation : Postgraduate student
Phone : 528 5792 or 021 189 3380
Email : lianhong.lim@paradise.net.nz

Name of Supervisor : Professor Paul Spoonley
Designation : Regional Director
Phone : 441 8171
Email : P.Spoonley@massey.ac.nz

Participant Recruitment

I am currently recruiting research participants through personal and informal invitation. Your name was given to me by _____ because you fit all the following criteria of the research sample needed for the proposed study:

- You are aged between 19-21 year old
- You are studying in the University of Auckland
- You are enrolled as a full-time student
- You are either a
 - Pakeha student or
 - Asian international student from English speaking background or
 - Asian international student from non-English speaking background

I need a representative sample of 10-12 Pakeha students and 10-12 Asian international students, half of the latter from English speaking background and the other half from non-English speaking background (NESB). All student participants will receive a small token, by way of free meals or gift vouchers, in appreciation of your time and participation.

It is important for you to note that some participants like yourself might experience a certain degree of emotional and psychological discomfort when discussing students' feelings and attitudes towards others who are racially or ethnically different from them. This can potentially unearth some prevailing tensions in race relations that you or other participants might already be aware of or have personally experienced on campus.

Participant Procedures

Participants will be asked to sign a 'Consent Form' to ensure that their permission is obtained for audio taping discussions at focus groups as well as individual interviews. Transcriptions from the audiotapes will be given to individual participants (where it is relevant to them) for verification and clarification where necessary. Upon completion of the research project, audiotapes will be returned to interviewees. In the event where participants do not wish the audiotape to be returned, researcher will destroy all the audiotapes. At various stages of the research process, draft copies of the project findings will be presented to participants for feedback and further comments.

Participant involvement

Participants will either be involved in focus groups or one-on-one interviews with the researcher. Discussion at focus groups will take about 2-2 1/2 hours while individual interview will usually last for an hour or so. At various stages of the writing process, researcher might need to refer back to participants with transcripts of the audiotapes or draft copies of the project findings where there is need to seek clarification or solicit further comments on related topic.

Participant's Rights

As a participant in this research project, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study within ONE month after the focus group/interview is being carried out;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;

You also understand that you have the right to ask for the audiotape to be turned off at any time during the focus group discussion/interview.

Support Processes

A debriefing process has been put in place to ensure that any personal difficulty encountered by you (or other participants) in the focus groups arising from the group discussions is being addressed. In the event where the personal issues need to be dealt with over a prolonged period of time, researcher will refer to appropriate services where necessary.

Project Contacts

Please feel free to contact my research supervisor, Professor Paul Spoonley, or me if you have any query about the proposed research project. Our contact details are listed in the introductory section of this information sheet.

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, **ALB Protocol 04/021**. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor Kerry P Chamberlain, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Albany, telephone 09 414 0800 x9078, email K.Chamberlain@massey.ac.nz.



**Intercultural Interactions In A New Zealand University:
Pakeha And Asian Perspectives**

CONSENT FORM

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me.

My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to not disclose anything discussed in the Focus Group.

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

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Full Name - printed _____



**Intercultural Interactions In A New Zealand University:
Pakeha And Asian Perspectives**

CONSENT FORM

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS

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

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

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

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

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed



**Intercultural Interactions In A New Zealand University:
Pakeha And Asian Perspectives**

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TAPE TRANSCRIPTS

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

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview/s conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used by the researcher, *Lian-Hong Lim*, in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name – printed



Massey University

AUCKLAND

28 April 2004

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Lian Hong Lim
C/- Professor Paul Spoonley
College of Humanities & Social Science
Massey University
Albany

Dear Lian Hong

HUMAN ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION – MUAHEC 04/021
"Patterns of Intercultural Interaction between Asian International and Pakeha Students"

Thank you for your application. It has been fully considered, and approved by the Massey University, Albany Campus, Human Ethics Committee.

If you make any significant departure from the Application as approved then you should return this project to the Human Ethics Committee, Albany Campus, for further consideration and approval.

Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, a new application must be submitted at that time.

Yours sincerely

Associate-Professor Kerry Chamberlain
Chairperson,
Human Ethics Committee
Albany Campus

cc. Professor Paul Spoonley
College of Humanities & Social Science

27 April 2004

The Registrar
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland

Dear Sir

Re: Seek Permission For Access To Students

I am a postgraduate student at Massey University in Auckland. As part of the fulfilment of the requirements for my Master of Philosophy (Arts) degree, I am undertaking a research project which is aimed at investigating the level and nature of contacts between Pakeha students and Asian international students in a New Zealand university. The goal of the research study is to explore possible intervention strategies that would enhance the quality of intercultural interactions amongst students in New Zealand universities.

As the multi-ethnic character of the University of Auckland and its environmental set provide a unique context for examining the patterns of intercultural interaction amongst tertiary students, I am writing to seek your permission for access to students in your campus for the purpose of my fieldwork for the proposed research project. My research sample will require 10-12 Pakeha students and 10-12 Asian international students (half of the latter from English speaking background and the other half from non-English speaking background) to participate in focus groups and personal interviews which I will personally undertake to facilitate. Research participants will be recruited through informal and personal invitations.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee on the condition that permission is granted for me to access students from your university. Kindly refer to the attached copy of the letter of approval from Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC).

Please feel free to contact my research supervisor, Professor Paul Spoonley, or me if you have any queries about the proposed research project, I would be happy to provide specific details of the research if required. Our contact details are listed as follows:

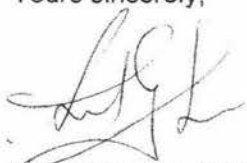
Name of Researcher	: Lian-Hong Lim (Ms)
Designation	: Postgraduate student
Phone	: 528 5792 or 021 189 3380
Email	: lianhong.lim@paradise.net.nz

Name of Supervisor	: Professor Paul Spoonley
Designation	: Regional Director, Massey University (Auckland)
Phone	: 441 8171
Email	: P.Spoonley@massey.ac.nz

Also, if you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor Kerry P Chamberlain, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Albany, telephone 09 414 0800 x9078, email K.Chamberlain@massey.ac.nz.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration of my request. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LHL' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lian-Hong Lim (Ms)



Tim Greville
LLB (Auck) BARRISTER & SOLICITOR
Registrar

The Registry
Alfred Nathan House
24 Princes Street, Auckland
Telephone: 64 9 373 7599 ext 82048
Facsimile: 64 9 373 7407
Email: t.greville@auckland.ac.nz

10 May 2004

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland, New Zealand

Lian-Hong Lim
Postgraduate Student
Massey University
College of Humanities & Social Sciences
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore Mail Centre
AUCKLAND

Dear Ms Lim

PERMISSION FOR ACCESS TO STUDENTS

I refer to your letter of 27 April 2004 seeking permission for access to students on The University of Auckland campus for the purpose of fieldwork for a proposed research project.

Providing the approach to students is made on an informal and personal basis, rather than through the official channels of the University, the University is happy to grant you permission to access students on campus on the basis that your research is conducted strictly in accordance with the approval given by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

If you have any queries or require further assistance please contact the Executive Officer, Grant Wills, whose contact details are as follows:

Email; g.wills@auckland.ac.nz
Telephone: 3737599 ext 87746

Yours sincerely

Tim P Greville
Registrar