LUND UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Social Sciences

How Do International Students Perceive Social Integration? An Ethnographic Study.

Author: Marie Therese Shayne

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

The study examined how international students perceive social integration. The University of Houston, Texas was used as a case study.

The study was based on a symbolic interactionism. Goffman's theoretical concepts of "othering," spoiled identities, stigma, labelling and impression management in a pluralistic/multicultural society are explored, as well as Putnam's concepts of social capital sharing. The findings of the study discover adopted coping strategies by international students to reduce culture shock and heighten social integration. The study employed a thematic analysis to examine factors that may influence how students perceive social integration. The study seeks to illustrate how social capital sharing, knowledge sharing and acquisition and impression management interact with preconceived stereotypes and prejudice, impacting social interaction, adjustment and social integration.

The case study consisted of five subjects with diverse backgrounds. They were asked to illustrate their notion of America through their perspectives in interviews and visual communication in the medium of imagery. The methodology was based on Goffman's concept of "Dramaturgy." The purpose of this study is to explore international students' perceptions of the host societies.

Although the study used international university students, the findings and results indicate future research opportunities and knowledge applicability in areas such as education, immigration and citizenship and, social policy.

Acronyms:

U of H: University of Houston, SC/SI: Stereotype Consistent/Stereotype Inconsistent, P1/P2/P3/P4/P5: Participant 1/2/3/4/5.

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Problem

International students entering a new environment and situation are inevitably subjected to culture shock, which precipitates necessary adaptations to their social integration with the host society (Zhai, 2002). University of Houston (U of H) international students expect obstacles like culture shock to influence adjustment, social interaction and integration.

Culture shock, according to Oberg (1960) is an anxiety that results from an individual's placement into a foreign unknown environment, devoid of familiar cultural symbols and social practices. Culture shock can result in frustration and anxiety at being in a foreign environment that's strange and uncomfortable.

This causes the individual to display: (1) a rejection of the host society, (2) regression from socially interacting with the host society, due to high value and importance being paid to home society (3) reconciliation of their situation in a new environment leading to (4) adjustment (Oberg, 1960). The path to social integration from culture shock is discussed further in the thesis.

The study used photography and imagery as exploratory tools to engage participants in a perception exercise on what constitutes "American." This approach was used to (1) identify perceptions of "American" stereotypes international students had, coming to the host society and (2) explore how social integration and adjustment are engaged by international students using the Goffmanian concept of "dramaturgy." Dramaturgy conjectures that elements of human interaction are premised on time, place and audience. Goffman infers that a person engages in a theatrical production of self-presentation based on cultural norms and values. The goal is to gain acceptance by the audience (society), through a carefully managed performance that, if successful, will project the image the person wants to present to the audience (society). A dramaturgical action is a social action formed to be viewed by others and to improve a person's self-image through impression management. (Goffman, 1959). In short, a dramaturgical perspective analyses context, not the cause of human behaviour.

The theoretical point of departure takes a symbolic interactionism perspective by Goffman and Putnam to discuss culture shock and social integration challenges faced by international students at U of H.

Goffmanian concepts of "othering" and "impression management" are central to the thesis. They shall provide the framework for the discussion and analysis on how adjustment and social integration are perceived by international students. These concepts are salient when approached through an "us versus them" perspective, which underlines the study.

Perceptions on an outsider's situation in a host society can heighten awareness of everyday social practices such as food culture, education and learning culture, car culture and dress culture in the host society. As a result, this may inform coping strategies to alleviate culture shock and enable their social integration. (Goffman, 1959, Goffman, 1983).

Goffman's framework on the presentation of self and impression management provides an invaluable tool to understand the manners and ways in which international students present themselves and the manners in which they cope with culture shock and adjust into the host society (Goffman, 1959, Goffman, 1983).

The study also adopted Putnamanian perspectives on social capital to complement Goffman's position. Putnam provides an understanding of how social capital enables social interactions and social integration. He illustrates how sharing of positive social capitals enables social adjustment, social integration and interaction. Conversely, it will also explore how negative perceptions may hinder social capital sharing that may result in maladjustment and interrupted social interaction and integration (Goffman, 1959, Putnam, 1993).

The study employed a thematic analysis to examine factors that may influence how international students perceive social integration. In addition, the study illustrates how social capital sharing, knowledge sharing and acquisition and impression management help dispel preconceived stereotypes and prejudice, which consequently aid social interaction, adjustment and social integration.

These themes are further explored in the body of the thesis.

1.2   Objective of Study

The objective of the study was to understand the following:

- The intersection of international students, social integration and culture.
- How international students perceive adjustment and social integration.
- Coping strategies employed by international students to adjust and socially integrate.

The study did not focus on identity formation or development (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998, Komives and Woodard, 2003), but on how international students navigate culture shock, and how impression management is used to engage social adjustment and social integration of international students with the host society.

The study's findings may help understand tangential ideas and concepts on identity formation. However, the study aimed to provide an insight into how international students desire to be seen by Americans and coping strategies employed towards culture shock, impression management, adjustment and social integration.

Furthermore, the study adopted a themed perspective to analyse the interrelation between culture shock, social adjustment and social integration. The study examined how cultural stereotypes, state culture and national culture influence coping strategies employed. The study also examined students' self-perceptions as outsiders on similarities and dissimilarities among the various abovementioned factors that enable or hinder their social adjustment and integration with the host society.

1.3   The Research Question

The research question is exploratory in its approach. The title of the subject: "How Do International Students Perceive Social Integration? An Ethnographic Study."

The question will explore:

1. The dynamics of international students, social integration and culture as factors that promote or impede conditions for adjustment and social integration.

2. The use of symbolic interactionism, dramaturgy and the presentation of self in understanding the various challenges faced by international students, such as culture shock, coping strategies, and social adjustment, which are discussed in the body of the thesis.

2   THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The thesis employs a symbolic interactionism perspective in Putnamanian and Goffmanian approaches to analyse the findings of the study. The paper will also explore how students may make sense of some conditions and experiences to enable their social adjustment and social integration.

Symbolic interactionism examines the use of symbols and images and how they shape actions, self-identity and social interactions between the person and society. It focuses on the symbolic processes of communication. Goffman's dramaturgical perspective suggests that the world can be viewed as a theatre, and people act out roles in given situations (Goffman, 1959; 1963). This interaction thus influences how people adjust and socially integrate with their environment and society.

Social integration can be defined as a concept that enables the development of a local and global society or societies in which all social groups share social, culture and economic life to promote social function and cohesion through interaction with social structures, agencies and institutions (Goffman, 1959; Putnam, 1993, 1995, 2000).

On social capital, Putnam (1993, 1995) states that social capital has three elements: moral obligations and norms, social values, and social networks. Putnam's fundamental point was that social capital gains are a result of a cohesive economic structure and social integration (Putnam, 1993, 1995). Central to the argument is the concept of trust and the importance of trust, an integral aspect in enabling cohesion and integration in multicultural societies.

Putnam's concept and idea of trust is founded on the American understanding of pluralism that is perceived as based on a political system that caters to different groups, associations and interests (Baskin, 1970).

America's historical and ideological political disposition and situation structures and legitimizes American pluralism (Baskin, 1970). Norm and value negotiations are fundamental aspects in multicultural societies, social adjustment and social cohesion. Trust is a pivotal aspect in the social equation that can enable or disable social cohesion, interaction, and integration (Putnam, 1993, 2000).

The role of U of H in relation to the social situation of the students is to provide a balance between the host society and the international student to promote unity, trust and cohesion. This may be achieved through the sharing of pluralistic and multicultural values to cope with the ethnic diversity that an international student cohort brings to the host society (Citrin, 2001).

Factors such as ethnicity, culture and religion have contributed to the development of American pluralism and its ethos, formed in the American constitutional framework (Baskin, 1970). John Courtney Murray[1] said that conflict, misunderstanding and disagreements are to be expected in society when norms and values are negotiated. However, when the barriers are overcome through adjustment, it allows the development of agreement and understanding. The biggest challenge and struggle for pluralistic societies was to find and build on common values, which can link linguistically and culturally diverse ethnic groups without compromising cultural integrity (Murray, 1960). Citrin (2001) says that multiculturalism establishes the necessity to maintain ethnic diversity. A deviation from adapting a cohesive approach towards preserving cultural integrity in a multiculturalist society can result in prolonged culture shock, and resistance to social adjustment and integration (Citrin, 2001).

Putnam's (1993) idea of social capital aligns with the concepts of communal engagement and participation. He asserts that use of existing social capital in a community increases social capital through the establishment of wider social networks and connections. Broader exposure to the host society increases trust and social capital sharing, subsequently leading to less culture shock and greater integration (Oberg, 1960, Putnam, 1993, 1995).

---

[1] John Courtney Murray was J.F. Kennedy's presidential campaign advisor. He was an American theologian who was particularly known to advocate religious and cultural pluralism. His focus was to create relationships between American pluralism and the institutions of the modern state.

Putnam says, trust is required for social cohesion and the building of relationships. These factors lead to mutual reciprocity.[2] The consequence of this interaction results in social adjustment and integration. Trust enables reciprocity and voluntary host associations; reciprocity and voluntary host associations solidify and manufacture trust (Putnam, 1993, 2000). Increased social capital usage results in an increase and accumulation of other social capital. This results in social cohesion through engagement and participation; elements that engage social interaction, adjustment and social integration. However, this demands co-operation between the international student and the host society.

Putnamanian perspectives may help explore how international students engage in social capital sharing to:

1. Acquire networks.
2. Enable adjustment through engagement and participation with host society.

American pluralism in the larger context of Putnamanian perspective highlights the role of trust to ensure a cohesive multicultural environment. American pluralism suggests that social integration occurs when, American customs and social practices are embraced by non-Americans [3]. American pluralism suggests that social connections to the home country and ethnic heritage and social integration with American society are mutually compatible and are a hallmark of multiculturalist societies (Citrin, 2001). Tyler, Tom et al (1998) found that socially adjusted members of minority groups are likely to trust organizations, and facilitate their social integration through active participation. To illustrate: U of H hosts a variety of student-led organizations, housed under the larger aegis of the U of H. These organizations are connected with global and local businesses to promote and offer employment opportunities to both native and international graduates in America. This highlights trust and compliance, seen as beneficial for the international student.

---

[2] In this context, mutual reciprocity refers to the international student and the host culture in enabling adjustment and social integration.

[3] In this case, the non-American refers specifically towards international students

Because of their participation and engagement with such organizations, they're exposed to wider American groups of professional and social networks, host traditions, norms, values and customs that result in knowledge acquisition and affect adjustment and social integration (Luckmann, 2008).

In the context of this study, American pluralism and Putnamanian viewpoints facilitate the understanding of how links between pluralistic and multiculturalist values and capitals augment social cohesion. It illustrates how cultural integrity is maintained between international student groups and the host society to enable social adjustment and integration.

An absence of trust may lead to distrust between individuals/groups and the host society. Citrin (2001) asserts that social exclusion and a lack of trust and mutual sharing and exchanges of social capitals would have a negative impact on multiculturalism and American pluralism.

This dynamic can as a result in "othering" and thus hamper social capital sharing by the individual and host society, which may cause maladjustment and create blocks towards social integration.

The path to adjustment, social cohesion and social integration as explored above comes with challenges. Disruptive elements such as "othering" are part of the dialogue of symbolic interactionism and social integration (Goffman, 1959). These variables may cause hindrances to social adjustment and social integration, which may affect the outcome of how well international students cohesively integrate with the host society.

The concept of "dramaturgy" underpins the study. Goffman (1959) states that the social space is a stage on which we act out our given roles, as if we were engaged in a theatrical production. His focus is on micro-level social interaction and how people present themselves in the presence of others (Goffman, 1959, Goffman, 1963). He summarised his perspective, stating that "the stage presents things that are make-believe; presumably life presents things that are real and sometimes not well rehearsed" (Goffman, 1959, p. xiii). Goffman's use of terms like "performer," "audience," "front region," "back region," "performance" and "setting" provide a useful framework to understand and categorize certain aspects of a social act which

can explain the complexities of social interaction (Hare, Blumberg and Goffman, 1988).

Using dramatic language to communicate is pervasive and dominant in our everyday lives. We often use dramatic terms that communicate the state of our lives and relations. For example, a student may state they're "going to war" when preparing to present something to the classroom, to come "armed to the hilt" meaning to enter prepared into a meeting or discussion or to be "a la mode" when dressed stylishly in business or social situations. Such use of terminology allows us to communicate, understand our social world and the relationships we have in it (Sandstrom, Martin and Fine, 2006). It allows us to convey our social class, status, and exhibit the roles that we want to be in. Essentially, it's about "assuming the character," the outward projection of the managed "self" to the "audience" that matters.

Denzin (2001) stated: "we inhabit a performance-based, dramaturgical culture... [in which] culture itself becomes a dramatic performance" (p. 26). This statement exemplifies the metaphor of life as a performance, which Goffman describes as "dramaturgy." It extends beyond simple understandings and communication; it's integral to society and allows a better understanding of people and society.

From Goffman's perspective, and in the context of this study, students may assume a social role based on perceptions of how the expected behaviour and the received responses to the social cues they give during any given interaction. They act on an "idealised" version that's aligned with the "understanding of the audiences," which is perceived to be in their best interests (Goffman, 1959, p35). From this view, international students may present themselves in "accordance with their assessment of the perceptions and expectations of others" (Karp and Howell, 2004, p 59). The audience reads the actor's body language and speech to form their impression of the actor and provide feedback. The performance (presentation of self) is defined as "impression management (Goffman, 1959; Goffman, 1983; Leary, 1996; Smith, 2006).

From the perspective of international students as stage actors, they're required to translate their "desires, feelings, beliefs and self-images into communicable form, drawing on words, gestures, scripts, props, scenery and various features of

appearance" (Sandstrom, Martin and Fine, 2006, p. 105). Goffman concluded that people endeavour to convey favourable and positive impressions to an audience. The audience in turn evaluates the act and either positively welcomes it or provides a negative response. This interaction allows the student to assess what they must do to provide the best impression according to the received feedback.

He also states that people are engaged in "impression management," which may guide the perceptions of others towards themselves. This intercourse is engaged through the presentation of a "front region," the façade a person or group presents to the audience. The "front region" elements in the context of the study would, for example, include international student status, gender, racial and ethnic background, faith practices, social class, language, social media identity, dress sense, nationality and body language. These elements allow individual and group expression (Goffman, 1959; Wallace and Wolf, 2006).

However, pertinent dialogues also occur behind the "front region." The "back region" is hidden from the audience and engages in "backstage" dialogues, which inform "front region's" expressions and impression management.

The "back region" area is also a space cordoned away from the need to engage in impression management. It allows the person to disengage from the "front region" and be themselves, away from the scrutiny of the public, which in this case is the host society. It's a space that allows the person to conceal aspects of themselves that would compromise the presentation of their everyday self and the public impression they want to portray.

Goffman stated that social interactions are complex, reflexive and natural. He also said visual means were used to collect symbolic information. Visual aids engaged reflexivity in social interaction. Symbols, he stated, are generally visual and it's through symbolic interactionism such as dress-sense, hairstyle, grooming, which convey social status that gives visual cues to the "audience," which consequently informs a person's adjustment and social integration (Goffman, 1959, Goffman, 1983).

From this perspective, Goffman instructs and guides us to explore the many ways we negotiate self-presentation and impression management to ensure we present the best

and most advantageous impression of ourselves. He asserts that the need for impression management is necessary for social cohesion and social integration. An absence of appropriate management or control can lead to being discredited because of negatively perceived elements, which consequently may affect social capital sharing and inclusion that lead to maladjustment, lack of social cohesion and stunted integration (Wallace and Wolf, 2006).

3 BACKGROUND LITERATURE

3.1 Introduction:

The background literature aims to provide an orientation to understand the study.

- Part one of the literature review will examine the intersection of international students, social adjustment and integration and culture because it's central to the study. It will look at the placement of social and cultural norms and how these interplay with social capital sharing and social integration.
- Part two of the background literature will provide arguments to justify using visual methodologies in the study.
- Part three examines symbolic interactionism and understanding visual methodologies within this framework.
- Part four examines Goffman's perspectives on dramaturgy, and the situation of photography and imagery on the presentation of self.
- The final section will look at existing research on student integration using Goffman's dramaturgical and self-presentation framework and how this study aimed to bridge the existing knowledge gaps.

3.2 Intersection of International Students, Social Integration and Culture Shock

International university students choose to study abroad to acquire international work experience, cultural experiences and personal development (Hellsten and Prescott, 2004; Ward and Masgoret, 2004).

Zhai (2002) provides an examination on international student adjustment and integration with a host society. There's a wide range of literature on international students and adjustment in the US. Boyer and Sedlacek (1986) highlight the requirement and need to provide better and specialised services targeted towards helping international students adjust into the host society, which would help alleviate culture shock and various other adjustment and social integration problems. Reinicke (1986) further states that aside from studying in a new society, international students were dealing with the anxieties of living in a different society, which usually involved a lack of language fluency and difficulties in social integration.

Malinckrodt and Leon (1992) states culture shock manifestations such as antisocial attitudes, withdrawal, sleeplessness, depression, self-confidence issues, anger and academic issues were viewed as contributory factors, which may hinder social integration. Mallinckrodt and Leon (1992) inferred that the intersection of international students, social integration, adjustment and culture shock may affect how they perceive their adjustment and how their perceptions may affect their social integration with the host society.

Zhai (2002) made compelling discussions surrounding the intersections of international students, social integration and culture shock. The results of her study showed that cultural differences, language challenges and a different education system were three of the main concerns that contributed towards adjustment and integration problems. These findings were consistent with the findings of Parr et al (1992) who stated that cultural differences such as competitiveness, an individualistic approach, and forwardness were significant factors affecting adjustment and integration, in addition to language, as stated by Malinckrodt and Leon (1992), Chen (1996) and Wan et al (1992).

Zhai (2002) said that international students tended to seek help in adjustment and emotional support through friends and family in the region. Help from institutions and agencies were sought for particular issues such as academic support, finance and legal. International student services personal counselling was underutilised, mainly due to a lack of awareness of its existence and availability (Sandhu and Asrabadi, 1991). Cultural and academic orientations were marked as significant integration issues. Zhai (2002) states that a provision of support for international students on such matters would reduce obstacles, thus reducing culture shock and increasing the likelihood of quicker and less problematic social integration and adjustment with the host society.

Based on the research, Zhai (2002) concluded that stronger cultural and academic international student orientation beyond the university should be addressed to alleviate culture shock, which would provide a broader framework of understanding of the host society and local environment. An active push towards improving student counselling services would help increase adjustment and enable network expansion and cultural capital exchanges which may lead to cohesive integration with the host

society. Language problems were indicated as an obstacle to adjustment; thus language support to enhance better communication was recommended. Interaction with US students was identified as a solution to improve language fluency, reduce culture shock, engage greater adjustment and social integration and building of social networks.

3.2.1 Social Norms

Social norms are accepted beliefs, values and behaviours in a society that enable cohesion and a person's continued inclusion and membership in it (Astin, 1993). Social norms are internalised and observed in nature, and acquired through observation and social interaction with the host society (Ahuja and Galvin, 2003). According to Berkowitz (2002), social norming theory states that behaviour is modified according to peer pressures, which "have a greater impact on individual behavior than biology, personality, familial, religious, cultural and other influences" (Berkowitz, 2002, p5). This suggests that people behave in the manner in which they're expected to behave, not how they would choose to behave if actions and context were not factors.

Social norming campaigns are created to provide international students insight into the host society and university's normative values. This enables social interaction, network connection and impression management of the university based on student perceptions (Berkowitz, 2002). For example, Berkowitz (1986) stated that such a campaign on drinking had positive effects, reducing freshmen alcohol consumption by 21% and high-risk alcohol consumption by 10%.

At U of H continued university and student led campaigns seek to engage social norming to enable adjustment and social integration by providing information through text and symbols on accepted norms and behaviours. These campaigns require a thorough understanding of the local environment and host society (Berkowitz, 2002). A failure to have that understanding can cause incongruence and ineffective message delivery.

3.3 Photographs

Use of imagery has been part of the social sciences and been used for a variety of research. Despite the scope's limitations (Bogdan, 1997), Goffman states images "do not speak for themselves" and require deeper investigation and interpretation than writing (Goffman, 1979, c1976; Hodder, 1994). For this study, photo elicitation was used as a tool to engage conversations surrounding international students' perceptions on adjustment and social integration. It appeared to allow memory recall through rich visual features, which helped stimulate rich dialogues.

Images are an integral aspect of our daily lives. They allow the use and display of symbols. They have become a primary source through which people express themselves, convey information and varied methods of use and consumption (Manning, 1996).

Goffman's dramaturgical concepts examine symbols and how they're imbued with meaning, how people give symbols meaning and how they're used (Goffman, 1959, 1963). The study gave attention to the use of photographs and images because visualization allows deeper insight into how students perceive their social integration and adjustment. It provides them with the ability to use them to present and explain how meanings are constructed, attached and used. In turn, this provides understanding of different socio-cultural norms and how these are perceived, which may affect adjustment into the host society.

3.3.1 Photographs in Social Research

The use of photographs and images in social studies, according to Harper, (1998) is that they were for capturing realistic and truth-eliciting images, which would be used to complement social theories. The use of images in sociological studies is still very limited, and only in the last decade has it seen increased interest and use. The earliest record of photographic use in social research was by Bateson and Mead who published *Balinese Character* (1942) in which 759 photographs were submitted with text on capturing and detailing Balinese culture. *African Rainbow*, by Lorenzo and Mireilla Ricciardi (1989) was another photograph/text study that used photography to capture the journey across Africa by boat, which captured the tribal cultures from the East to the West coasts of Africa. Both books highlighted the use of photographs

beyond simple illustrative purposes. However, the use of visual methodologies in social research remains scant (Harper, 1998; Plummer, 2001).

Photographic and image use was and still mainly used for documentation. A renewed interest in using it for social documentation was explored during the 1960s. The advent of the Internet and digital technology such as Photoshopping, which can alter and manipulate images, have introduced discourses on validity and complexity of visual methods (Davies, 2007, Harper, 2002; Hogben and Waterman, 1997).

Although photographs are considered rich in data, there is little research on methods to extract data from visual images (Plummer, 2001). Renn (2003) stated the obvious issue of imageries having many interpretations and meanings attached. She suggested that analysis must address: 1. What does the photograph/image signify and 2. What cultural understandings are necessary to analyse the visual data?

Contemporary social research and studies focusing on visual methodologies such as photography and internet-based images is scant. One study conducted by Davies (2007) used a discourse analysis approach and showed that photographs are viewed as cultural artifacts.

In the study, photographs and images were used to guide interview discussions on the socio-cultural norms, values and meanings attached to the photographs and images.

3.4   Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a social psychological theory that says meaning is made through social interaction. Symbolic interactionism has been a significant cornerstone in qualitative and ethnographic research since the ground-breaking work by G.H. Mead (1863 - 1931) *Mind, Self & Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist, (1934)*.

For this study, the symbolic interactionism perspective was utilised to explore how people give and interpret meanings to daily interactions that construct our social worlds (Karp, et al, 2016). This was done through using gestures, props and settings (Goffman, 1959, 1963).

Symbolic interactionism can be viewed as an interdependent operation between people in any given situation. Gestures are made and interpreted in a responsive manner. Thus it can be inferred that given responses are in relation to reactions. The symbolic interactionism framework provides the understanding that people actively modify and alter behaviours on analysing the appropriateness of their behaviour and the expected responses to an action/behaviour (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, Fine, 2005, Karp and Howell, 2004, Sandstrom et al, 2006). This engagement provides an understanding of how bodies, situations, events, senses and various social worlds are imbued with meaning through active interpretation and participation. The viewpoint implies that symbols are used to provide meaning for the present, linking symbols, events and articles to other points in time, which can provide a forward outlook and give a means to enrich concepts (Holdaway, 2000a).

Similar to the topic of this study are studies conducted by Harrington and Lindy (1999) and Harrington and Schibik (2003). These studies investigated the alternative method of reflexive photography to investigate student impressions and experiences of higher education. They were asked to take a number of reflexive photographs that would illustrate their impression and perception of the university. The photographs were used at interviews, which promoted a more reflexive and creative analysis of student perceptions. This study used a similar method of data collection and analysis.

Harrington and Schibik (2003) concluded that the reflexive photography method allows a student-environment interaction that can enable understanding on the development of meanings that people assign to symbols, experiences and objects through social interaction. This method complements the symbolic interactionism framework that allows the elicitation of meaningful insight.

3.5   Dramaturgy

Goffman's dramaturgical and impression management perspectives are embedded in a symbolic interactionism framework and dramatic performance (Smith, 2006). Symbolic interactionism highlights how people modify behaviours and actions to their environment. This implies fluidity between the mind, body and society (Turkle, 2007). The responses of how we interact with our environment are deeply embedded and internalised – what Goffman called the everyday (Goffman, 1951). These only

become visible and we become aware of them when we're in circumstances that critique and examine our self-presentation.

The general motivation towards the presentation of self is to enable effective communication and social interactions, which aid the individual and to promote positive impressions. Spoiled impressions engage coping mechanisms to manage the impressions others have of them (Brown, 2003; De Paulo, 1992; Leary et al, 1996; Leary & Tangney, 2003; Vrugt & Van Eechoud, 2002).

Fronts are learned behaviours, used as tools to provide information and interpretation to the other about oneself (Goffman, 1959, 1964, 1983). They're props that allow people to be expressive and provide colour to the landscape. They're the manner through which normative roles are expressed.

Props, settings and gestures are essential facets of symbolic interactionism and drama (Smith, 2006). They can consist of clothing, posture, facial expressions, dress sense and style, walk, cars and other objects that help define an impression of a person (Leary et al, 1996). These props and settings are socially constructed and managed to exhibit the impression a person, organization or group desires. They also enable people to manage the expressions we give and give off ourselves in making certain they're accurately understood and correct meanings are given.

Organizations and institutions can employ props for symbolic reasons. For example, U of H C.T. Bauer College of Business has an overhead ticker in the main lobby of the college building. This expression tool helps signal and symbolize that they're a business college. This in turn influences how students dress and engage to give off cues as U of H C.T. Bauer business college students.

The use of photography and imagery highlights how international students use visual methods to portray their understanding of the host and understand their position within the host society. The choices of photography and imagery may be selected through international students' conscious effort to "give off" an appropriate self-presentation and perceived understanding towards the host society (Goffman, 1959).

3.6   Research and Existing Knowledge Gaps

An article by Wu, et al., (2015) wrote on the challenges International students encounter when entering a host society. Their research used qualitative interviews to explore adjustment issues. The study illustrated that communication, engagement and participation – both with the university and socially – was required to reduce culture shock and enable cohesive adjustment. The results showed that student adjustment was strongly influenced by their academic and socio-cultural settings. The study also indicated that to ensure cohesive adjustment and integration, hosts may need greater engagement with international students prior to and upon arrival. Although the study failed to use imagery in its methodology, it provides a good underpinning to my research. The study also highlights a gap in visual methodology use, which would have enhanced the study by enabling them to glean richer data through photo elicitation (Harper, 2002). My study implemented the use of photography and imagery to complement the interview method, allowing another element to enhance the data collection process and help elicit richer data.

Wu et al (2015) elaborate on the issue of hosts and student adjustment. These reaffirmed previous research and stated that communication, social network acquisition and sharing encourages adjustment, social and academic mobility and reduces culture shock. The studies also stated that to engage the integration process, hosts could establish connections prior to students' arrival. At the University of Houston, the process was engaged before arrival through mailed information packets consisting of practical information on the university, image-heavy information leaflets and information on social media, which was strongly encouraged to build networks and establish cultural understanding prior to arrival.

Pham and Tran (2015) wrote on the importance of symbolic capital and social integration of international students. They conducted 105 interviews. The results indicated the significance of English-language fluency as a significant capital that enabled network acquisition and access to benefits and employment that would otherwise be closed off. The participants understood language as a high cultural capital and that a lack of fluency could affect entry into social groups and socialisation processes due to "othering" and differentiation. Participants expressed an understanding of how cultural capital and social interaction may affect their

employability and social integration. Finally, the study highlighted the importance of a host society's active engagement in enabling cohesive international student adjustment and social relations.

Scharp, Paxman and Thomas (2015) conducted a study on homesickness experiences of people in a host society. They implemented a symbolic interactionism theoretical foundation and conducted thirty-four in-depth interviews. The findings reported that "home" was associated with safety and comfort. The study reported that culture shock and homesickness are significant stress factors that can impede pursuit of social support networks and adjustment. They highlighted communication as a pivotal factor to enable adjustment and network acquisition. This study tied in with the previous studies on the adjustment, integration and culture shock issues that international students face, and reinforces previous and contemporary research on the topic and the theoretical perspectives chosen to underpin my research.

Goffman's and Putnam's theoretical frameworks do not provide researchers the ability to conduct a testable method; however, their perspectives allow researchers to understand social issues through a qualitative and interpretative framework. In addition, the exclusion of imagery as a tool and a prompt may limit the scope of richer data collection in this domain. In support, Harper (2002) states that using imagery can lead to enhanced data analysis.

Goffman's concepts on self-presentation and dramaturgy complement the use of photo elicitation in tandem with more traditional methods to provide valuable insight (Harrington & Lindy, 1999; Harrington & Schibik, 2003). Visual methods may also be applied to Putnam's concepts on social capital sharing to highlight stereotypes that have positive/negative social capitals and use the visual data in interviews to elicit deeper meanings and understandings.

A study by Bowling (2002) used Putnamanian perspectives to explore the leisure lives of the working poor through photo elicitation and interviews. The framework and data collection allowed for the articulation of abstract ideas and elicitation of richer meanings on the interaction of trust and reciprocal relationships in families.

Scharrer and Ramasubramanian (2015) conducted a study on media influence on the formation of cultural stereotypes. Their study spoke of the power of media in shaping

attitudes towards stereotypes. They stated that stereotypes are sculpted through mainstream and social media, which provides the cultural definition associated with a particular society. As a result, this informs how people view different cultures and societies, based on preconceived notions underpinned via media interpretations. This study influenced my study's coding methods and how I chose to code the photographs and images using some stereotype eliciting keywords.

These studies provide arguments for chosen theoretical and methodology approaches implemented in my research. Previous research allowed me to identify methods and approaches commonly used. It also highlighted the lack of visual methodology and photo elicitation in exploring international student perceptions on adjustment and social integration. The studies showed a tendency towards a qualitative method approach in this subject area and use semi-structured and in-depth interviews in extracting and collecting data. The scant literature about visual methodology in sociology highlighted the need for further research using it as a complementary tool to the traditionally favoured semi-structured interviews. This analysis informed my methodology design, based on existing research and knowledge gaps.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The methods section aims to detail the employed research method and data collection methods used. I will address the research question and expand on its influence on methodology. This section will also remark on the theoretical perspective. A methodology overview will be provided, with justifications for adopting ethnography for the research design. The thesis addresses data collection: photo and summary analysis, photo elicitation interviews and informal sessions. The limitations and ethics of this study will also be briefly explored.

Qualitative research methods allow the study of largely interpretive (Lancy, 1992). It allows the researcher the ability to describe and conduct analysis through an organised method of research (Holdaway, 2000b). Meaning is provided through social interactions – a process dependent on context, situation and person. Furthermore, it's a process negotiated to give meaning through communication and symbolic interactionism (Schwandt, 1994).

The nature of the study inclined towards an interpretative nature that requires social understanding. This highlights the requirement to adopt a theoretical perspective that uses data collection methods, which require observation and interaction (Adler et al, 1987).

The subject of impression management and self-presentation is highly subjective, thus perfectly suited to using qualitative methods for interpretive and prospecting research.

4.2 Research Question

The study's research question asks, "How do international students perceive social integration" and how do these perceptions affect their "everyday" experiences?

Due to the limited use of visual methodology in sociology, there's scant literature using this form of data collection method, student social integration and adjustment studies employing visual research methodology.

The following research questions provide a framework to understand international student perception on social integration with the host society.

1. How does photography and imagery affect student perceptions of the students' daily experiences at the host, The University of Houston?

2. How are preconceived ideas and prejudices challenged?

1. *How does photography and imagery affect student perceptions of the students' daily experiences at the host, The University of Houston?*

This question explores the manner in which images and photographs are instrumental in engaging perceptions that aid in the construction of multiple narratives on cultural identity and impression formation, and the participants situation as transplants into a different environment. Photographs and imagery allow people to see symbolic data that may inform their perception of "everyday socio-cultural experiences."

2. *How are preconceived ideas and prejudices challenged?*

This addresses existing stereotypes and how these preconceptions and prejudiced ideas about a host country are perceived, challenged and negotiated. Visuals help shape and challenge perceptions, which can enable or disable adjustment and social integration. The question shall also explore techniques about coping strategies to aid international student adjustment and social integration with the host society. Findings to this will be discussed further in chapter 5.

4.3 Site Selection

Data collection for the research study was conducted at C.T. Bauer College of Business, University of Houston. There were 6,105 enrolled students in the business school.

International students at the University of Houston consisted of 1,787 female students and 2,332 male students in the year 2015. The international student population composed 9.6% (4,119 students) of the student body. [4]

The site was selected as due to my internship at C.T. Bauer College of Business, University of Houston. I was also an international student on a master's program exchange, which gave me first-hand knowledge of student culture, adjustment and social integration issues.

Onsite data collection allowed me the ability to "get close to those studied" (Emerson, et al., 1995, p. 12) through email and advisor appointment contacts. The participants allowed the development of the research study and implicit understanding of symbolic meanings of the photographs, images and summaries submitted.

4.4   Methodological Overview

Ethnography was selected as the most suited method towards data collection and the chosen theoretical perspectives. It was well suited for case studies, unstructured data, and for observation during informal sessions. It allows "for learning about groups and individuals as they go about their daily lives" (Emerson et al, 1995 pg. 1). This methodology complements Goffman's theoretical perspective on dramaturgy and Putnamanian perspectives on social capital. Ethnography was chosen due to its tendency towards an exploratory approach to research.

The unstructured method underscoring ethnographic research relies on the researcher's ability to write a believable and coherent narrative based on observations, stringent data collection and identified markers for attention (Wolcott, 1999). Lancy (1992) also stated that clarity in qualitative methodology was essential.

Photograph and imagery submissions with a short summary of why the photographs were seen as typically "American" were used in data collection. This material was subsequently used in photo elicitation interviews to stimulate dialogues on socio-cultural perceptions, student adjustment and social integration.

---

[4] http://www.uh.edu/ir/reports/facts-at-a-glance/facts-at-a-glance.pdf

4.5   Data Collection Methods

The data collection methods were chosen to complement the theoretical perspectives on symbolic interactionism and dramaturgy.

The first data collection was where I was a participant observer for two months in the program. I was assigned to the pre-business and majors academic advice sessions in the Undergraduate Business Program (UBP) department. I was also an interning academic advisor for participants in the study, which allowed me to document international student's cultural experiences, adjustment and social integration pathways.

The second method was photograph and imagery submissions with attached summaries. For these, participants were asked to submit 2 photographs weekly with summaries about why the photographs signified "American" to them. This was over a period of six weeks from five business school undergraduates.

The third was photo elicitation interviews. Submitted photographs and summaries were used as prompts to generate perceptions and dialogues.

Each method was conducted separately. This was done to increase data reliability by reducing researcher bias.

4.6   Participant Observation

Participant observation requires involvement in the field and documenting experiences and observations of other people (Emerson et al, 1995).

My involvement as a participant observer in this study was through my role as an intern advisor to the participants in my study. Part of the benefit of participation was access to provide academic help on research methods, grammar, essay writing, internship search and résumé construction. Through this method, I could steer conversation, informally, taking notes as they shared perceptions of their experiences in adjustment and social integration with America and Houston, TX.

I also sat in on several academic advice sessions, which provided the opportunity to ask non-participating international students on their experiences with student

adjustment and social integration in America (Emerson et al, 1995). This gave me deeper understanding and knowledge of how international students negotiate their social worlds and develop coping strategies to deal with culture shock, adjustment and social integration.

4.7 Photo and Imagery with Summaries Submissions

Photograph and imagery submissions were provided with a summary of why they signified "American" to them. This was an exercise to engage and encourage students to perceive their social situation as an international student in a host society and perceive culture shock, student adjustment and their social integration with the host society.

4.8 Photo Elicitation Interviews

Weiss (1994) stated that interviews allow a researcher access to people's inside experiences and learn about how they perceive the social world, their social situation and how they interpret perceptions. Interviews are generally a two-person situation where one party questions and the other provides the information (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). This method was used to complement participant observation and the photograph and imagery submissions.

Interviews were conducted between 16th November and 23rd November 2015.

Photo elicitation interviews are common in anthropology, however, its use has seen a decline (Hurworth, 2003) and it's a method scantly used in traditional research methods (Harper, 2002). The premise of using photographs and images was to involve the participant in the interview process to enable memory recall, which would elicit deeper responses and narratives. This would in turn help the researcher interpret data based on observation (Hurworth, 2003).

4.9 Recruitment

Recruitment strategy involved providing benefits and incentives for participation.

The following incentives were provided to recruit students: access to my expertise and knowledge in research analysis, European methodologies and perspectives, essay writing and résumé construction.

Many students inquired about cash or gift certificate incentives. Such incentives were not offered because of (a) lack of funds and (b) concerns that monetary incentives for participation could indirectly affect informed consent.

The international office, student organizations, sororities and fraternities and academic advisors at the Undergraduate Business Program Department (UBP) were approached for recruitment purposes. Leaflets were provided for distribution to all international students.

The results of this drive resulted in the interest of a small number of international students. Three students joined the research study on the advice of their academic advisors stating participation benefits available only to research participants. The other two participants were recruited from cold-calling international students at the Bauer College of Business, and an informal meeting at 'Reg Week'.

During the recruitment process, the faculty of social sciences, business and liberal arts were approached to offer study participation for credit; however, the study was refused due to the lack of relevance to the current subjects being taught at the time.

Study participation incentives offered didn't seem to have any effect or influence on participants' decision to participate. Participants cited their personal interest as the motivation for participating in the study.

Five international student participants at the U of H, Texas were picked as part of the case study for this thesis.

Participants were picked from the International student community at C.T. Bauer College of Business, U of H. Participants had to have diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds to provide a more holistic sample to the study.

The following participant profiles were selected for the study:

- Angolan (African) female, Pakistani (Sub-continental Asian) female, Vietnamese (Far East Asian) male, Brazilian/French (Latin American/European) male and Turkish (Eurasian) female.
- Participants fell within the 20 – 29 years age range.
- Participants were to be non-US nationals undertaking study at an American University (University of Houston).
- Participants were to have lived in the United States for a minimum of one-year.
- The participants were not to be on any US financial aid program.

4.10 Issues of Access

Issues of access determined participant selection. The research design requirement for the study was to acquire ethnically diverse participants. Study modifications were required due to the inability to successfully recruit a diverse cross-section of participants on the initially proposed study.

4.11 Time Restrictions

The timeframe assigned to the gathering of this data was limited from October to November. Several factors influenced the adoption of this time frame: (a) The Thanksgiving holiday saw the departure of students for the holidays and mounting pressures for upcoming tests, (b) time constraints to conduct the interviews before the first week of December, as the participants were due to leave for their respective countries for the Christmas break, (c) participants' scheduling commitments to ensure that their study pressures and conflicts would be minimally affected by the research study.

4.12 Interview Protocol

Participants were invited for a 60-minute interview. Interviews were held in the conference room belonging to the C.T. Bauer College of Business, UBP Department where I interned. Interviews were scheduled via email to ensure student attendance. Photographs were also used at the interviews to prompt memory recall to aid dialogue.

The participants were provided with an overview of the research study and reminded of their informed consent and that they had the option of opting out and could decline to answer questions if they chose to do so. The interviews were audio recorded.

Interview transcriptions were done using *Garage Band,* a ready installed application on Apple Mac computers.

Coding was implemented to discern patterns in the transcribed data as it allows the researcher to explore the data (Emerson, et al., 1995).

4.13 Visual Photographs and Imagery Analysis

Content analysis allows an investigation of information or content. The material could consist of symbolic or textual matter (Neuman, 2009). It has more often been associated with written material and in discerning patterns in words. As Harper (2002) states, visual material is less often utilised in research but nonetheless allows deeper exploratory research.

The photographs were coded for analysis through observation, which resides in Goffman's dramaturgical framework. The photographs and images were to communicate what signified something as "American." Participants were asked to identify what they perceived as "American." The following keywords were used as coding markers to identify "American": American brands, state-specific cultural practices, national cultural practices, food and accessibility, sports and firearms.

The appended summaries were implemented to reveal why they were viewed as "American" and provide insight into the participants' impression formation through visual cues of how they perceive their host society and their social world (Karp, et al 2016; Leary et al, 1996). Food, car culture, education, travel and employment were selected themes in interpreting the visual data and triangulate the data with participant observation and photo elicitation interviews.

4.14 Privacy and Destruction of Data

Participants were informed that all material that identified them to the study would be destroyed.

Email correspondence and interview audio files shall be deleted. Notes taken during the research study and all consent forms will be shredded after thesis submission and approval.

4.15 Methodology Limitations

Creswell et al., (2008) stated that researchers must have an awareness and understanding of the limitations and weaknesses of their study. This study had several limitations that may have influenced the results. The first limitation was that it was a small case study with only five participants and second, it had a sample of only seventy-two photographs. The number of participants was limiting in providing an adequate representation of student's adjustment and social integration. This induced me to consider a larger sample to discern more complexities and patterns in international student impression management, coping strategies, adjustment and integration.

A longer period to elicit a larger body of photographic and image data of what they considered as "American" would help identify sequence of patterns to be used at interviews and a focus group, which would enable richer understanding and analysis.

Having a second researcher on the study would reduce researcher bias and generate discussions on data interpretation and study findings. This could be implemented if this study is replicated on a larger scale.

The lack of a broader, ethnically diverse group of participants was a concern for the study. Study modifications, issues of access and time restrictions contributed to the absence of a larger sample. A larger and more representative participant selection would have certainly influenced the findings. Recommendations about this will be discussed in the findings.

4.16 Ethical Considerations and Informed Consent

The study required no approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participants were informed in person, in detail on study participation and its requirements. Participants were also informed on opting out of the study. I explained

these issues, and questions about the study were answered before obtaining informed consent.

5   RESEARCH FINDINGS

All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players;

They have their exits and their entrances;

And one man in his time plays many parts.

-As You Like It, Act II Scene VII, William Shakespeare

5.1   Introduction

The focus of this study was mainly concerned with understanding student perceptions on social integration and social adjustment with a host society through the viewpoint of impression formation and dramaturgy (Goffman, 1959).

Goffman's concerns rest in the study of face-to-face social interactions and the exchange of symbolic capital and information such as language, appearance, body language, and tangible objects. These constructs aid people on how they present themselves into a host society, which may dictate their adjustment and integration in a different environment.

The findings of the study were established on three types of data collection: researcher observation experiences as an intern advisor and participant photography, imagery submissions with summary analysis and photo elicitation interviews from the five participant case study.

The findings will undertake an analysis based on the following: (1) preconceived ideas and stereotypes of "American," (2) culture shock, (3) impression formation, (4) host society and international student interaction, (5) impression management techniques, (6) and adjustment and social integration.

5.2   Preconceived Ideas and Stereotypes of "American"

Participants reported during advisory meetings that the visual aspect of the study helped them to identify what they perceive as 'American.' They reported that using

photography and imagery guided their summaries and interaction between international and American students. Their submissions and summaries were inspired by their personal experiences and preconceived ideas about "Americanisms." They reported that the exercise engaged them with peers on cultural discussions and generated perceptions on what constitutes "American." They revealed the result of these discussions, encouraged them to question established stereotypes about what constitutes 'American,' which informed their interaction with American students, the host culture and their environment.

This ties into Putnam's assertions (1993) on the need for trust, social networking and connectedness and the acquisition of social capital (Putnam, 1993).

Furthermore, participants cited an awareness of the following: state culture, national culture and cultural stereotypes. These are discussed later in the thesis.

5.3   Perceptions of Self among American Students

Participant findings illustrated different levels of self-perception on how they're viewed by Americans. Participants described themselves as different due to their culture, traditions and values. They also stated that these cultural identities were present in America, as it's a multicultural society. They indicated that their accent and language were the two primary factors, besides their international student status, that contributed to being "othered."

P1 stated that he's seen as the *"French"* boy who distinguishes himself by his *dress sense* and his *accent*. He spoke on his cultural differences in how he engages in a work/leisure time balance, which differentiates him from the Americans. He stated that he's perceived as different, but that the responses are a combination of positive with respects to curiosity to learn and negative due to a fundamental ignorance of his culture and the threat he poses as a person bringing skills (language and cultural understanding) and experiences to the job market which his American counterparts lack.

In comparison, P4, the Turkish female participant, perceives herself as being viewed as ambitious and a source of inspiration to her American peers.

She stated: "They usually tell me that I am very ambitious and if I think of getting something, I will get it no matter what. I see stunned faces mostly because when I tell them how I was when I came here and how I am now, they are surprised and inspired."

During informal meetings, P4 stated that she highlighted the similarities between her culture and American traditions to present herself as someone aligned with American values. She dressed in a western/Texan manner by wearing daisy boots[5], adopted the local language and presented herself as a "global" person.

P5, the Pakistani female participant, echoes these sentiments and elaborates that she's different due to being an international student and not being from the US, thus she will never be considered a local.

She stated: "They don't consider me American because I am not born here. If you see someone and talk to them, you have an idea that they are raised in this culture or not. I think if you are international, meaning not from here, you will never be considered a local."

P1 and P4 highlight the sense of being the 'other' in a host country and the consequent behavioural adjustments made to adjust into the host society. The findings imply self-presentation as an important facet in reducing culture shock and enabling social adjustment and integration. For example, during informal meetings, P1 stated that he used the cultural differences to his benefit by highlighting his multicultural background and "French" dress sense to present himself as a global person. P4 also exhibited dress style changes and adopted the local language and references to symbols. At informal sessions, she stated she saw herself as a "Coog."[6] She wore U of

---

[5] Daisy boots are a type of western boot typically associated with Texas and the Southern United States, even though they're widely available and worn throughout the USA.

[6]"Shasta is the University of Houston mascot, represented as a North American mountain lion, also called a Cougar. Cougar is shortened to "Coog" and used as an identifying moniker for all University of Houston students and Alumni.

H brand clothing occasionally and combined them with "daisy boots" (Refer to footnote 5) to reinforce this identity.

P3, a Vietnamese male, stated that he's viewed primarily as Vietnamese but is perceived as understanding the "American" way and *similar to the kids who kind of grew up here."* He stated that he has family settled in the US, in Dallas and Houston, which made it easier for him to adjust and make connections through established networks. During informal meetings, he identified language uncertainty and difficulty as an issue in his daily life, despite having family connections in America. He relayed that a lack of fluency in English affects how he is perceived, which conflicted with his desire to be seen as someone *"coherent and needing to be understood."*

This illustrates Putnam's (1993) statement on the importance of social networks and connections to establish social capital[7] that can enable social interaction, integration and adjustment.

Participants stated that photographs highlighting issues surrounding host society, culture, practices and social integration issues generated discussions with fellow American students. The interaction, enabled participants to understand formed perceptions on the host society and self-perception as international students in a host society. In turn, the participants stated at informal meetings that this interaction enabled them to acquire stocks of knowledge about the host culture, resulting in behaviour modification and further cultural understanding.

5.3.1 Summary of Introduction, Stereotype Preconceptions and Student Perceptions.

Participant statements underscore the importance of the presentation of the self (Goffman, 1969). They also highlight language (Ruiz, 1984) as an important marker that enables social adjustment and social integration. All five participants demonstrated the need to highlight or to downplay certain cultural practices. These

---

[7] Social capital in this instance refers to the student's existing social networks that allows him to have some familiarity and uses it so as not to be viewed as an outsider and subject to being 'othered'.

are engaged, as Putnam (1993) suggests, to socially adjust, interact, integrate and acquire social capital. At the crux of the matter on cultural identity are stereotypes and preconceived ideas about how dynamics of "us" and "them" are formed and constantly feed self-perceptions on how we're viewed in the host society.

In contemporary society, we're subjected daily to digital stimuli from photos, images, symbols and news. This suggests ideas and images of what societies and individuals represent. Consequently, these heuristic processes influence how the host culture and international student respond to social adjustment.

5.4   Culture Shock

Oberg (1960) coined the term 'culture shock'. What Oberg suggested was that "culture shock is precipitated by an anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse" (Pg 177). This includes traditions, language, geographical topography, food, customs, and people. Adler (1975; Arensberg and Niehoff, 1964; Foster, 1962; Gullahorn and Gullahorn, 1962; Lundstedt, 1963; Oberg, 1960) state that culture shock is an expected stress reaction to immersion into a different cultural environment, combined with the desire to find a familiar environment to reduce cultural dissonance.

P2 shared interesting insights about his experiences on cultural differences and similarities exchange. He highlighted the food culture and how different it is from his Vietnamese cultural practice. He stated the summaries and photographs made him aware of the entrenched American stereotypes and how for him, they're somewhat true.

For example, he stated in the interview: "People here eat out a lot and typically go to a fast-food restaurant. So like over here, you can go to a restaurant and order like ten items but in my country you go to one restaurant and get one thing." [8]

---

[8] The participant stated that in Vietnam, one dish is served instead of many dishes. Other accounts of food culture in Vietnam suggest the opposite – many dishes are served instead of just one main dish.

He said that the study participation made him understand his experiences with cultural shock, personal change and adjustment to American culture. He commented: *There is definitely a lot of difference, and I never really focused on the similarities per se because the differences are easier to spot out than the similarities…… I experienced culture shock in my first year of coming here, like how people approached you. In my culture, everyone tries to be the same in a sense because it is a small culture and not a lot of diversification and people are quite conservative. In my culture we are the same, which is the complete opposite of here. We have this mentality that A is good and B is bad but in America, each to their own and things are viewed differently like perhaps B is better than A. This less linear perspective is the biggest difference.*

Interestingly, during informal interviews, P3 said that he became more aware of American culture and symbols through photograph and imagery-prompted self-discourse.

For example, he stated: "It was whatever that stood out as American, like if I look at it, then I can identify immediately that this is America like American football, and Wall Street. When you say Wall Street, you immediately think of capitalism and America."

When asked during informal sessions if informed perceptions prompted awareness, P2 responded that they did and that his awareness made him identify with part of the host culture and societal practices.

P2 made an interesting observation on her experiences with culture shock. She stated: "I have always been travelling within my country and abroad, but I have always been in contact with different cultures, so for me it wasn't really a culture shock but I know that for other Angolans it would be, because they haven't travelled as much as I have and do."

Participants emphasized that their stereotypes were challenged. During academic sessions given as part of the study, 3 participants said that they didn't realise the vastness of the country, the car culture and the state-specific cultures that existed, unlike their preconceived idea of one homogenous "American" culture.

They highlighted how photographs, images and media had provided them with an idea of what "American" culture was, but had not prepared them for the variety of state or local cultures. They became aware of this through direct experience.

For example, three participants said that they were unaware that "Whataburger," a Texas state fast-food burger joint, wasn't available outside Texas. "Pig and Blanket," an American diner, was only available in the Pacific Northwest. They spoke of the different types of cultures they'd been exposed to in the various states they had visited.

The participants spoke of "Rodeos" and their association of it with the "Wild, Wild, West" and Texas. They illustrated how photographs and images were congruent with their ideas and how they played with the stereotype and engaged in gaining cultural experiences and understanding through participation and historical narratives.

They also illustrated an understanding that certain cultural practices such as the Rodeo were state- or region-specific, compared to other cultural practices such as Thanksgiving, Labor Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day, all recognised as typically American. These also they stated photographs and images were strongly responsible for crystallising their perceptions and stereotypes surrounding these holidays.

They further stated that their engagement and participation in these holidays increased their adjustment and their social interaction and social integration with the host culture. It also reduced culture shock and enabled the acquisition and sharing of similar social and cultural practices in return. P4 illustrates this point:

S: "The united aspect; this kind of stuff, we have in Turkey, too, you know. Maybe we don't have Thanksgiving but we have other stuff to celebrate with our friends. We have the nature too which is similar and different."

Participants spoke extensively on their experiences of culture shock at informal meetings. All participants said their initial reaction to entering the host society was of curiosity, fascination and optimism.

One of the five participants stated that she encountered difficulty in adjustment due to the vast cultural differences and desired familiar surroundings. Because of maladjustment, she found a home in a neighbourhood that housed many from her cultural background and surrounded with familiar symbols. This, she stated, alleviated her anxiety and engaged her interaction with the host society over time. Furthermore, as time passed, the lessened anxiety enabled her to gain more independence, make friends, have new experiences and find employment. She nevertheless remained detached and placed her culture as "superior" to the host culture.

The participants stated that their initial perceptions, based on photographs and images, contradicted their real-life experiences. They stated that a live experience necessitated attitude readjustments to enable their social integration and adjustment when they entered the host society.

5.4.1   Summary of Culture Shock

International students contend with adjustment towards: a different language, different society, university, culture, immigration and education infrastructures (Ladd & Ruby, 1999; Lee, 1997; Mori, 2000; Parr, et al., 1992; Robertson, et al, 2000; Sarkodie-Mensah, 1998; Wan, 2001). Dissonance, a lack of familiarity, and established social circles lead to psychological and emotional distress because of culture shock (Rajapaksa and Dundes, 2003, Murphy, Hawkes and Law, 2002).

Oberg (1960) says there are four distinct stages toward sojourner adjustment:

1. Honeymoon stage: The time this stage lasts depends on how soon before a person must enter daily routine. During this stage, the person is fascinated, curious and optimistic about their situation in the host culture.
2. Hostility and Negative Emotional Stage: This state results as host cultural stereotypes appear. This leads to sojourners seeking company of fellow sojourners.
3. Recovery Stage: As the sojourner gets acclimatized and slowly adjusted to the host culture by language acquisition and independence, they adopt a superior 'self-perception' towards the host culture and society. Increased social interaction results.

4. Adjustment Stage: The person has adjusted to the host environment and enjoys the traditions, customs, language and rhythm. Stress and anxiety are largely absent.

Sewell and Davidsen (1956) write about the reticent 'detached observer,' who identifies more with the home society than the host society. On the other end of the spectrum sit the 'enthusiastic participants,' more open in their social perceptions and interactions with the host society. These are examples of extremes. However, the middling 'adjustors' adopt a socially integrative position; this group seamlessly interacts with infrastructures provided by the host society (in this case, U of H organizations) and assumes the prescribed roles with ease (Bennett et al., 1958).

Sojourner adjustment is further aided by reducing maladaptive situations that impede social integration and adjustment such as introduction to ethnic group-specific geographical areas. Introduction to culture-specific aspects of a host country would impede social integration, as it would provide exposure to discriminative stimuli and reinforce negative stereotypes. Other studies (Brein and Kenneth, 1971, Church, 1982, Oberg, 1960) indicate effective methods of social integration are mainly through exposure to host society traditions and norms. Foreign students from different cultures experience culture shock, adjustment and social integration to varying levels (Hull, 1978). Participants stated that observation, participation, engagement and communication aided their adjustment and social integration.

Research studies indicate high levels of adjustment result in low levels of culture shock and vice versa (Akhun, 1961; Beals and Humphrey, 1957; Deutsch, 1970, Hull, 1978). Studies also indicate nationality significantly determines adjustment. International students arriving from a similar society suffer less dissonance and experience fewer adjustment issues (Lysgaard, 1955; Sewell and Davidsen, 1956), compared to those coming from dissimilar societies who felt higher levels of dissonance and increased adjustment difficulties (Lambert and Bressler, 1956; Bennett et al. (1958).

5.5   Impression Formation

Smith and Kollock, (1999) stated that our perceptions of the other are based on patterns of social categories. Initial impressions are often based on brief observations,

which inform the categories we place people we meet. Changing these first impressions into a different category require substantial and relevant information.

Goffman's (1959) concept of impression formation and dramaturgy is based on the premise that people actively manufacture the image they wish to convey to others (Leary et al, 1996). This section will employ its use to analyse the findings on how the participants altered and navigated their fronts to reduce culture shock, enable social adjustment and integration and the acquisition of social capitals to broaden their social networks for personal benefit (Putnam, 1993).

5.5.1 Intrepid Student

Travelling and gaining cultural experiences were cited as important to understand and interact with the host society. All participants had travelled to different states and shared these experiences with peers and friends.

The reasons they chose to share their experiences varied.

On her experiences, P4 stated: "Travelling. It enabled more understanding of American people. I have seen people from Houston, New York and other states like Colorado and saw different sides of America; Houston is just one side and there is so much more to America. I perceived the US has being big – big people, big houses, big cities, big cars and lazy. Then I went to Colorado and, my gosh, people were just outside all the time. They read more and are active. I have seen the conservative side here in Texas and then I saw the liberal side in Colorado, which gave me a more whole picture."

P1 spoke on local travel. He stated: "I visited NASA, Houstonian Ballet and drama troupe, the symphony, downtown area. I do it to get cultural experiences that I can share with others. It allows me to also meet new people and gives me something to talk about and tells people a little about myself and my interests."

5.5.2 Networking Student

P1 spoke about networking and the differences between his culture and American culture towards work and study. He stated: "Where I want to start working. Everyone has really good grades so if you want a really good job, you have to network which is

what I have been doing for the past six months. It was a new concept for me to work this way. In France, professionals are professionals and students are students. There is no interaction between the both of them, so this was definitely something new to me to integrate into. "

P1 furthermore remarked on the effect the networking mind-set has on living. He stated: "I was expecting to hang out more with American people but what I found was how super busy they really are to commit time towards a friendship. From what I have noticed, American students are really more focused on their professional growth."

5.5.3 Life of the Party Student?

P5 stated: "I do not like to go to their parties and do those stuff like drinking and being vulgar. They have different things and different priorities and the culture that I belong to has different priorities so we clash somewhere. "

P3 talked about hazing and how it has become a rite of passage for freshmen students. He explained that there were many types of hazing, and students often had no choice due to peer pressure to gain approval into a group.

He stated: "I hang around with a lot of guys who like to joke around and they use the stereotypical jokes and make fun; like little racist jokes to make me aware of the differences but it's not typical hazing (which can be one or a combination of physical, mental, emotional abuse) or anything like that. Some things in America is way overboard compared to back home but they were only teasing. I remember that there was one kid who was from a different part of town in Vietnam and some would make fun of him on his language and how he talked but it is nothing like the hazing that happens here which involves peer pressure drinking or alcohol waterboarding."

5.5.4 Maladjusted Student?

P5 stated: "I don't have so many friends and one reason for this is that I cannot adapt to their culture completely. When I meet someone from my culture then I know what and how to speak with them and what the commonalities are. If I meet an American, it is kind of difficult for me to get to know where to get started, what their routine is,

what they do when they are free and how they look at life. This makes it difficult for me. I do try and so, whenever I go to work or I am in class, I am around Americans so I cannot find people who are in the same culture with me all the time."

She spoke of a perceived lack of shared values between her culture and that of the host society. She stated: "I don't make many friends as I cannot be like them or do the things they do – this is why I try and find my own people so that I can enjoy my life and do what I like and what I have been doing for so many years. I seek people who share the same values and who are of similar personality to me. I give priority to my culture. "

P4 provided an interesting alternative viewpoint on maladjustment. She highlights her culture and religious faith but pointedly removes herself from learning about the cultural practices of the host society. She said: *"Most of them don't know about either Turkish culture, Turkish people, Islam. They consider Islam in a very different way and then they met me and their first impression five years ago was why I did not cover my head, wear the burka or the hijab. They had no idea what Islam can be besides Saudi Arabia, but they learned differently."*

The situation of her adjustment and social integration was compartmentalised. She indicated adjustment and integration with certain customs, traditions and festivities. She illustrated this in her comment: *"I have been here about five years and I have lived 3.5 years with an American family as an au pair. We celebrated Halloween together, then Thanksgiving together and then Christmas together. They were my family. I feel like I miss it. I don't live with them anymore, but when it comes to Thanksgiving time, I miss that cooking that she used to do, or decorating a Christmas tree and all different kinds of things that I really got used to it."* However, the issue of faith remained an area, which highlighted resistance. She indicated high social integration and adjustment in certain areas but low social integration and adjustment in others.

5.5.5   Summary of findings

Participant perceptions illustrated how their daily interactions formulated their social worlds (Karp and Howell, 2004). The participants' interaction with unique cultural practices – such as rodeos and cowboys, Thanksgiving, seen as symbolically

American -- provided the students with meaning using time, symbols and events to shape what they perceive as "American."

Their engagement highlights how bodies and the social worlds we construct are imbued with meaning through participation and interpretation. An absence of participation can influence perceptions of how international students view the host culture and perpetuate cultural stereotypes that may increase the duration of the student's culture shock and hinder their adjustment. It's through daily experiences (Goffman 1951) that cultural objects become visible, increasing awareness and, as a result; influence an attitude adjustment to promote a positive self-image. This may enable international students' access into certain areas that would have been closed to them, which would allow social capital sharing and acquisition, increasing their exposure, network expansion and benefit (Putnam, 1993).

5.6   Host Society and International Student Interaction

This section will highlight how the host society and international students interact to minimise culture shock and enhance social adjustment and integration.

The section will present and discuss how cultural stereotypes, state and national cultures interact and inform students' interaction, adjustment and social capital sharing to enable integration. It will also explore how coping strategies are employed by international students to aid their interaction and adjustment with and in the host society.

5.6.1   Cultural Stereotypes

A study by Lippman (1922) stated that stereotypes are hard to alter. Bartlett (1932) stated in his book *Remembering*, that if cultural stereotypes represent social groups in the host society, then their upkeep and alteration should partially involve the process of recall. Kashima (2000) stated that there are two types of stereotype-relevant information: stereotype inconsistent (SI) and stereotype consistent (SC). He stated that SI information recall and memory would facilitate change, and that SC information would stabilise and crystallise perceived stereotypes.

American society is largely seen as a multi-ethnic and multicultural (Fowers and Richardson, 1996). Devine (1989) states that people share cultural stereotypes and these are well-known and understood by society, irrespective of prejudice about stereotyped groups. Stereotypes can be reinforced and crystallised through social learning and exposure. Krueger (1996) study showed that personal beliefs and values are predictive of beliefs and values about cultural stereotypes.

Despite this perception, individualistic orientation is often attached to American society (Markus and Kitayama, 1991a; Markus and Kitayama, 1991,b; Triandis, 1995). American society is focused on the values of independence and individual merit rather than circumstance. Individualism is seen as strongly influential values that interact with many areas of American culture and society and their strong work ethic (Katz and Hass, 1988).

In context of this study, the findings explore students' perceptions on stereotypes and its influence on social integration and adjustment.

Participants stated that before arriving in the host society, their exposure to American culture and society was through mixed media channels such as photographs, television, films and advertisements. All participants stated that their perception of American society was of the "American dream," described as the ability to pursue a goal and the possibility and opportunities available to enable its realization. Participants stated that they experienced culture shock when they experienced the strongly individualistic nature of American society. Reconciling and accepting this reality was difficult due to their preconceived ideas of America. They expressed an understanding that the host society would be different but were unprepared and surprised at the strongly individualistic focus in American society. However, they also stated that they perceived America as a multicultural, diverse and multi-ethnic society that enabled equal opportunity and high social interaction. They perceived this aided their adjustment, and negated the dissonance they felt from the individualistic focus of the host society.

5.6.2   State Culture

Photographs and images were submitted by participants, some of which illustrated their knowledge of Texas state culture. Participants stated during informal meetings that they were unaware of state-specific cultures before their arrival into the host society.

This section will explore the four main state cultures that participants engaged in: food culture, "tailgating", language, and rodeo.

On Southern culture (Texan), P3 used photography and imagery to illustrate this point. He stated in the photographic summary attached to a photo submission (Refer to Appendix 1): *"This represents America for me, because football is the national sport, and tailgating is a part of the culture for America, or at least what I feel like it is for the South. It is how people in America get together and bond."*

P4 also spoke on state-specific culture, in particular, to Texas DFW (Dallas/Fort Worth) area. She stated in her photograph summary (see Appendix 2 for photo submission): *"That picture was taken when I visited Forth Worth and it was great to see some part of Texas hold on to its own traditional roots with cowboys."*

P1 spoke on the stereotype of Southern food being unhealthy. His accounts told of a different aspect of Texan food culture that he stated are shaped on his knowledge of pervading American stereotypes (see Appendix 3 for photo submission). He stated: *"Picture represents the variety of excellent restaurants here in Houston. People that haven't lived in Houston or more generally in the US tend to think that American food is reducible to junk food, burgers, etc., but that is not true. There's a large amount of good restaurants here, and definitely not junk food. That is an example of stereotype that does not have foundation."*

5.6.3 National Culture

Participants shared photographs and images that illustrated national culture. Photo elicitation interviews and informal meetings were used to stimulate dialogue on their perceptions of American culture. This section will explore various cultural norms and customs perceived as national cultural practices by the participants. During informal meetings, participants said that they had preconceived ideas of American culture mostly based on stereotypical information. They also shared photographs on their experiences, which differed from their stereotype expectations. For example, participants saw the car culture and car dependency as vastly different from their own societies. P3 stated that in Vietnam, cycling and walking were more common modes of transport. P1 also said that cycling and public transport (buses, trams, metro) were more common methods of getting around his home country (France) and indicated the fast pace that American society lives with that requires independence, in contrast to his home country. He stated: *"First thing is traffic. It took me 45 minutes this morning to get on campus. This same picture also shows the hectic routine of American people. Another interesting thing since I got here in the US is the fast-pace at which my days pass"* (See Appendix 5). P5 stated that in her country (Pakistan), she would travel by car but stated that rickshaws, motorcycles and bicycles were more common. P1 and P5 both highlighted the heavy dependence on cars and the huge car culture that they saw nationwide through their travels (Appendix 5). P5 stated that her experiences with the car culture made her feel part of the host society through interaction and shared experiences.

P3 and P5 highlighted their perception of shopping malls as typically American. P3 stated: "This is something I feel uniquely American. American spends a lot of time shopping at the mall especially during the holiday seasons. From where I come from, we did not have the gigantic malls and department stores; therefore, the environment and atmosphere is different for me." P5 stated "Americanism" is 'mall culture' (See Appendix 6) and discussed how this is incorporated into leisure and family time. To illustrate this, she stated: "In my country, my family works seven days a week, so we have not been together for lunch or dinner or weekends to go out together at any time in my life, so for me this was a very shocking thing because people have a stressful

life here yet they manage to make time for their families and enjoy their time and weekends."

Participants were specific about the sports culture they associated with the host society. American football and baseball were seen as "American," an opinion participants based on stereotype information. They indicated an ignorance of "Homecoming," specifically linked to high school/college American football. It's a university tradition of alumni graduates going back (coming home) to their universities for a celebration. This celebration traditionally occurs sometime around October or November.

P5 spoke on her perceptions and experiences of what constituted American culture. She illustrated her perception of one cultural practice, the day after Thanksgiving (see Appendix 4 for photograph submission): *"Black Friday fights: The most interesting thing of being American is waiting so long for black Friday sales and eventually end up in fights."* She indicated similar shopping experiences between her culture and the Black Friday experience in the US.

Sports, in particular American football and baseball, are seen as stereotypically "American" in students' perceptions. All participants stated that they associated both sports with the host society. P4 stated: *"Baseball is very American sport. It is popular with all ages. Colleges and Universities have their own baseball teams, also. It is a culture, a business and a sport like American football."* (See Appendix 7). P5 stated about American football, *"Game day is one of the most important day in life an American. I feel like there should be [a] national holiday on game day."* (See Appendix 8).

Both participants highlighted the notion according to Lippman (1922) that stereotype consistent (SC) information would stabilise and crystallise perceived stereotypes.

In keeping of Lippman's (1922) assertion, P3 discussed gun ownership in America. In the study, only P3 mentioned the "right to bear arms" as part of the American constitution and law, thus perceived it inherently, as an "American" practice and custom. This indicated her awareness of the second amendment and its situation in American culture. She made no references to a "gun culture," gun problems or fear of gun violence in their interpretations of "American and Americanisms."

She refers to gun ownership in the host society and said, "It is known that in the United States common people have the right to bear arms. It's normal to find gun ranges across towns in America." (See Appendix 9).

During informal sessions, she stated that she perceives this practice as a national culture and stated that it's part of the American constitution and law, thus perceives it inherently, as an "American" practice and custom. She stated that this was a true stereotype she encountered that concretely established her preconceived ideas about gun ownership and the host society.

Although research has been and continues to be conducted on gun ownership in American society, the "gun culture" phenomenon unique to America wasn't part of this study. Due to recent gun law changes such as the campus carry law[9] enacted in several states, it demonstrates a need for expanded/additional/on-going research into the influence of gun-ownership as a right of citizenship on the adjustment and social integration of international students.

5.7   Impression Management Techniques

This section examines how certain types of behaviours, attitudes and actions are used to manage impressions given off.

The use of props, gestures and fronts will be examined in how they influence social integration and adjustment, and whether certain impressions are managed or disabled as coping strategies. Goffman, (1959) said that people use symbolism-laden images to impart information during social interactions. These can be in the manner of using props, gestures or settings.

---

[9] Campus Carry Law came into effect in the State of Texas in 2015.

http://www.uh.edu/police/campus-carry/

5.7.1 Props

According to Leary et al (1996), props are tangible goods. Their display can convey perceptions of how the bearer is viewed. For example, P1 stated that his dress sense illustrates his difference, which he uses to highlight his cultural background (French/Brazilian). During informal meetings, he said that his dress sense provided him with cultural capital that he highlighted during interviews to generate conversation on his cultural roots. This presented him as a global individual with an understanding of other societies and cultures, which he perceived gave him a competitive edge over the native student.

Alternatively, P3 would downplay his Vietnamese background and highlight similarities and commonalities between him and the host society. During informal meetings, he stated that he mimicked "monkey see, monkey do" approach, which, he perceived positively affected how others perceived him. He wore visible American brands and sported a University of Houston bag. He stated that acquiring symbolic material alleviated culture shock, enabled his social integration and broadened his social networks and opportunities. This is in keeping with Putnam's (1993) concept on social capital sharing and Goffman's (1959) concept of dramaturgy and impression management (Van Elferen & Vries, 2007).

P5 highlights how her dress sense, behaviour and manner of speech indicate her as the "other" to the host society. She spoke of interaction with the host society, but indicated that her interaction is adjusted and moderated to her own cultural values and practices. She indicates a level of social adjustment and integration, however, only on certain aspects. She stated: *"My culture is more obvious because whatever I wear, how I talk and behave expresses my culture and what background I am from. If in the future I become American, I will not forget my ethnicity or the culture I belong to. I have my own values and set of boundaries which I am not willing to cross and the teachings my parents have taught me. Those will stay with me for the rest of my life unchanged. I cannot adapt to their culture completely. I cannot go to their parties because I am not that sort of person. I do not like to go to their parties and do those*

stuff like drinking and being vulgar. They have different things and different priorities and the culture that I belong to has different priorities so we clash somewhere."

5.7.2 Settings

Settings, per Goffman, (1959) are the backdrop, which aid to divulge symbolic information about the person, similar to how props are used, with one difference – they are fixed.

Participants stated during informal meetings that the setting they choose to interact in informed the type of social capital and impressions they wished to convey. For example, P1 stated his extracurricular activities involved sport, such as tennis. When probed further, he described native students' perception that tennis is a high-culture sport played in elite circles. This informed the native students about the social connections P1 may have and perceive P1 as having high social capital.

P1 stated that this interaction enabled him to broaden his social and professional networks, which opened opportunities otherwise closed, such as access to native student's parents who had networks in the business world. He stated that in his perception, friendships were a social network that were a platform into the professional world. He maintained that a certain manner and attitude was required that fit into the local culture and accordingly adjusted his image to the situation and event.

P2 stated she was a member of a sorority and sororities allowed her access to conferences and events as a student and later as an alumnus that would enable her to socially and professionally network and acquire employment opportunities. She also stated that being a member gave her access to events closed to non-members and provided her with social capital through association from, which she could benefit.

P5 highlights the importance of engagement and participation with the host to build social networks to accrue social capital and benefits. She stated: *"By joining organisations and involving myself in work, sororities and tutoring as an academic support assistant, too. My involvement with work influences my participation with American culture. Because there are celebrations such as Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas that I have never celebrated in my country but I have celebrated here*

through my place of work as it is promoted within the corporate environment." Her interaction indicated the part she played in her assigned role, and actively chose the settings in which to express herself and conduct impression management. She provided an awareness and understanding of how customs and traditions are important in the host society and the importance of engagement with these cultural capitals to her benefit.

5.7.3 Gestures

Goffman (1967) stated that our faces and bodies provide visual cues to our audiences about what we want to convey. These can be exaggerated or understated. Participants stated that they would modify and control their body and facial gestures dependent on situation. For example, P4 stated that she would use hand gestures to convey enthusiasm between friends but would be a little more reserved in a formal situation such as a job interview. All other participants stated similarly.

In summary, participants found that props, settings and gestures to be important elements in impression formation. P3 and P5 stated that it was difficult for them to make overt expressions and attributed this to their culture and upbringing. The other participants stated that they were naturally expressive, so mitigating those tendencies was a bit challenging. These challenges were further compounded by the fact that they were non-natives and were still learning the social and professional societal norms, customs and etiquette. Participants stated that their involvement in settings such as sororities, student organisations, internships, fraternities and employment provided them with the ability to acquire social capitals and share social capitals for their benefit (Putnam, 1993).

5.8 Adjustment and Social Integration

Goffman (1959) asserts that social identities are formed and influenced by various factors. Sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, religion, social class, subcultures are some of the many factors that contribute to the formation of social identity. The insertion of an ingroups/outgroups, 'us' and 'them' dialogue provides us with subtle cues of differences between individuals and groups that form the concept of the 'other' in relation to our social reality (Goffman, 1959).

The issue of stigma is particularly relevant in the discourse of impression management, adjustment, social interaction and integration. Stigmatizing factors lead to 'othering', which label an individual as deviant. Many factors can contribute towards the assignation of stigma and labels based on religious association, gender, nationality, etc, the result of which leads to the formation of a spoiled identity, causing anxiety. This can consequently lead to either an internalisation of negative beliefs, which becomes part of the individual and devalues the individual based on their socially stigmatised profile. Alternatively, it can force coping strategies, which guides the individual to seek ways to manage their identity that can lead to positive effects on adjustment and social integration (Goffman, 1963).

Goffman (1969) presented the idea of the identity as a simulation of how we present our 'self' in daily activity and life. Life is a dramatic event for Goffman:

"When an individual plays a part he implicitly requests his observers to take seriously the impression that is fostered before them. They are asked to believe that the character they see actually possesses the attribute he appears to possess, that the tasks that he performs will have the consequences that are implicitly claimed for it, and that, in general, matters are what they appear to be." (Goffman, 1969: p.28)

Goffman's dramaturgical perspective sets international students at U of H as actors on the university stage, which dictates identity constructs, and interaction with the host society. Goffman's analysis states: "The real secret behind the mystery is that there really is no mystery; the problem is to prevent the audience from learning this too." (Goffman 1969; p.76). This understanding links into how front and back regions play an important role in impression management.

The role of impression management highlights the importance of how social identities are negotiated for adjustment to occur. This leads into the issue of culture shock and what coping strategies employed by international students to aid their adjustment and social integration.

Student's personal experiences challenged their perceptions of 'Americanisms,' leading to their interaction with American students to gain an insight into the host culture. This interaction led to mutual exchanges, which added to their existing stocks of knowledge. The sharing practices enabled active communication, social interaction

and engagement, which may lead to adjustment. This is achieved through a sense of inclusion into the host society (Tajfel, 1979). Participants identified individualism as a strong American tendency, but said that values of unity and solidarity were universal values. This refers to the concept of 'mirroring' that Luckmann (2008) states occurs when individuals and groups are engaged in a process of enabling conformity, adjustment, social integration.

6   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   Introduction

International students studying abroad in a different culture and society may not only deal with the pressures of academic work but also with wider social adjustment and integration in a different environment. This adjustment can be easier if the student has existing networks or prior knowledge of the host society, which can help the international student begin their adjustment upon arrival. A lack of knowledge or understanding of the host society or assumptions that the host society operates like their native country can lead to high culture shock and maladjustment.

This section will summarise how impression management, dramaturgy and social capital may reduce culture shock and facilitate behavioural modification to enable participation and engagement, which may result in increased social interaction and cohesive social adjustment and social integration.

6.2   Summary of Research Findings

International students' successful adjustment and adaptation to the host culture may be due to their ability to alter certain behaviours and attitudes to socially integrate with the host culture's norms, values, and attitudes of the university and environment. The study explored preconceived ideas and encouraged participants to reflect on their photographs, in addition to various other images as to what they perceive as "American."

Participants stated that photograph submissions and summaries helped them in addressing their understanding of what they perceived as "American." They further stated that photographs and images elicited conversations with their American peers and discussions on American symbols, cultural identities and values.

Photography, imagery and summaries engaged international student participants to contemplate their perceptions of what they typically considered "American." Participants reported that photographs and images highlighted the presence of multiple American cultures instead of a monolithic American culture. Participants spoke of how their travelling experiences during spring break and other short holidays

during the academic year exposed them to state cultures and highlighted certain cultural practices as national culture such as Thanksgiving, Black Friday, car culture, etc. Participants said that engagement in image sharing of their cultural practices with American students highlighted the thread of universal values, present in different cultural practices. These exchanges enabled stronger intercultural communication, which consequently aided international students' adjustment and social interaction into the host culture.

Students identified language as a significant issue in adjustment and social integration. Schumann (1978) states that language is an important indicator of social integration and adjustment. It enables active communication and sharing of social and cultural identities (Lee, 2001). Absence of fluency implies challenges to adjustment and cultural understanding. Participants highlighted language as a pivotal and influential factor in their adjustment, engagement, network and capital acquisition and social integration.

Participants stated that they did not reject their cultural values or cultural identities to enable adjustment and social integration. They said they chose what aspects to engage in and modified their attitude to accommodate their interaction and social integration. Participants stated that they negotiated between their own and the host cultures to achieve a moderate amount of adjustment without compromising cultural integrity.

6.3   Implications for International Students Services Organization

An understanding of the power and influence of photography and imagery may help institutions understand the challenges that international students face. It may also help deliver services by seeking dialogues with existing international students on their experiences, and how best to support, encourage and further enable them and future students. These events may be designed, facilitated and supported by faculty members and staff.

A focused implementation of photography and imagery in existing support infrastructures such as International Student Services Organisation, Fraternities and Sororities, etc., may enable and help international student adjustment and social integration. These benefits may subsequently translate from the university into the

workplace and the social world, thus promoting social cohesion and better cultural understandings with the host country.

Social support such as international students' offices, sororities, fraternities, and student organizations are important to ensure international students are afforded a strong support structure. The concept of trust (Putnam, 1993) can greatly influence the efficacy with which students adjust and socially integrate. Higher trust levels have demonstrated an inverse relationship with culture shock and increased interaction and integration with the host society. This can result in balanced student socio-psychological health (Tanaka et al, 1997).

Are social adjustment and social integration issues the same for all international students? Redmond and Bunyi's (1993) research affirms that students coming to America for studies from Eastern Cultures experience greater difficulties in adjustment and social interaction and integration than those who come from Western countries.

6.4   Implications for Future Research: Addressing the Knowledge Gap

Implications for this study indicate that specific orientation programs may be adopted to target international students to help their adjustment and adaptation into the host culture and environment. Although U of H has established student-host networks and infrastructure, the college could further benefit from a more engaged, integrative and better-connected network. This would facilitate a more holistic adjustment for the international student.

Participants stated that using photography and imagery encouraged them to open dialogues with native students. They said the subsequent interaction led to knowledge sharing. This seemed to improve understanding of cultural identities, dispelling of misunderstandings and the establishment of better relations between international and native students.

6.5   Conclusion

Student perception on adjustment and social integration is a mercurial enterprise. Students consider a broad spectrum of issues in the host society. Factors such as

culture shock, "othering" and vastly different norms, values, attitudes, etiquettes, traditions and customs all play an integral part in how a student will adapt and adjust to their new environment. These factors may help students determine which coping strategies to use to help their adjustment and social integration with the host society.

International students benefit from socially interacting and integrating with the host society. Enhanced interaction and integration helps improve international students' social, psychological, emotional and academic experiences. This is consistent with studies by Pruitt (1978) and Ward and Kennedy (1993), which illustrated that higher interaction with a host society led to fewer academic difficulties and better social integration. Zhai (2002) also stated that higher interaction leads to reducing culture shock, resulting in better social adjustment and integration. Social integration and adjustment also led to better communication and adaptation to the host society (Zimmerman, 1995). Furthermore, increased social interaction, engagement and participation with the host society led to better social adjustment compared with socially maladjusted students (Pruitt, 1978). Additionally, lower anxiety and greater socio-psychological adjustment resulted from broadening of networks and trust (Putnam, 1993) between international students and the host society.

However, levels of adjustment differ, and social interaction may be curtailed and mediated (Nowak and Weiland, 1998). Due to unfamiliarity with the host society, international students are more likely to seek social connections with people from the same or similar cultures (Bochner, et al., 1977). Furnham, (2012), Furnham and Alibhai (1985) also report that weak social interaction with the host culture may result in cultural distance, which was an aspect highlighted in the study.

Oberg (1960) said that this may lead to delayed social adjustment or social integration due to prolonged culture shock. A study conducted by Redmond and Bunyi (1993) illustrated that students from countries with Western perspectives socially integrated with less difficulty than students from Asia. Increased social interaction and quality of interaction with the host society and native students, as stated by Ward and Kennedy (1993), led to a perceived quality of social support from the host. This is a key factor in students' perception on social integration.

Finally, the study invited the possibilities and potential for further intercultural participation, and future research including the expansion of the use of photography and imagery to further understand international student adjustment and social integration issues. Using photography and imagery enhanced students' engagement in exploring their situation in the host society and their adjustment. Since its use appeared to add value to the research study, continued research using photography and imagery is encouraged.

A focus group in tandem with a larger case study would be a consideration for further research.

7 REFERENCES:

Adler, Peter S. "The Transitional Experience: An Alternative View of Culture Shock." *Journal of humanistic psychology* (1975).

Adler, P. A., Adler, P., & Fontana, A. (1987). Everyday Life Sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 13, 217-235.

Ahuja, M. K., Galvin, J. E., & Ahuja, M. K. (2003). Socialization in Virtual Groups.

Akhun, I. I. Turkish Engineering Students Studying in the United States (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Missouri, 1961). *Dissertation Abstracts International,* 1961, *22,* 2726A. (University Microfilms No. 61-6, 028).

Arensberg, C. M., & Niehoff, A. H. Introducing Social Change: A Manual for Americans Overseas. Chicago: Aldine, 1964.

Astin, A. W. (1993). What Matters in College? : Four Critical Years Revisited (1st ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bartlett, Frederic C. "Remembering: An Experimental and Social Study." *Cambridge: Cambridge University* (1932).

Baskin, Darryl. "American Pluralism: Theory, Practice, and Ideology". *The Journal of Politics* 32.1 (1970): 71–95.

Bateson, Gregory, and Margaret Mead. "Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis." *New York* (1942): 17-92.

Beals, R. L., & Humphrey, N. D. *No Frontier to Learning: The Mexican Student in the United States.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957.

Bennett, J., Passin, H., & McKnight, R. K. *In Search of Identity: The Japanese Overseas Scholar in America and Japan.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958.

Berkowitz, A. D., & Perkins, H. W. (1986). Problem Drinking Among College Students: A Review of Recent Research.

Berkowitz, A. (2002). The Social Norms Approach: Theory, Research and Annotated Bibliography.

Bochner, Stephen, Beverly M. McLeod, and Anli Lin. "Friendship Patterns of Overseas Students: A Functional Model." *International Journal of Psychology* 12.4 (1977): 277-294.

Bogdan, Robert, and Sari Knopp Biklen. *Qualitative Research for Education.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1997.

Bowling, Christopher P. "Exploring the Leisure Lives of the Working Poor Through Photo Elicitation." *Leisure/Loisir* 27.1-2 (2002): 3-30.

Boyer, S, P. & Sedlacek, W. E. (1986). Attitudes and Perceptions of Incoming International Students.

Brein, Michael, and Kenneth H. David. "Intercultural Communication and the Adjustment of the Sojourner." *Psychological Bulletin* 76.3 (1971): 215.

Brown, D. K. (2003). Goffman's Dramaturgical Sociology: Developing a Meaningful Theoretical Context and Exercise Involving "Embarrassment and Social Organization". Teaching Sociology, 31(3), 288-299.

Chen, S. F. (1996). Learning Multiculturalism from the Experience of International Students: The Experience of International Students in a Teacher Training Program.

Church, Austin T. "Sojourner Adjustment." *Psychological Bulletin* 91.3 (1982): 540.

Citrin, Jack, Cara Wong, and Brian Duff. "The Meaning of American National Identity." *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction* (2001): 71-100.

Creswell, John W., V. L. Plano Clark, and A. L. Garrett. "Advances in Mixed Methods Research." (2008): 66-83.

Davies, J. (2007). Display, Identity and the Everyday: Self-presentation Through Online Image Sharing. Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 28(4), 549-564.

De Paulo, Bella M. "Nonverbal Behavior and Self-Presentation." *Psychological Bulletin* 111.2 (1992): 203.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Handbook of Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. (2001). The Reflexive Interview and a Performative Social Science. Qualitiative Research, 1, 22-46.

Deutsch, S. E. (1970) *International Education and Exchange.* Cleveland, Ohio.

Devine, P. G. (1989). Stereotypes and Prejudice: Their Automatic and Controlled Components. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 56, 5–18.

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Evans, N., Forney, D., & Guido-DiBrito. (1998). *Student Development in College.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Fine, G. A. (2005). Interaction Ritual Chains. Social Forces, 83 (3), 1287-1288.

Foster, G. M. Traditional Cultures and the Impact of Technological Change. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.

Fowers, Blaine J., and Frank C. Richardson. "Why is Multiculturalism Good?" *American Psychologist* 51.6 (1996): 609.

Furnham, Adrian, and Naznin Alibhai. "The Friendship Networks of Foreign Students: A Replication and Extension of the Functional Model." *International Journal of Psychology* 20.3-4 (1985): 709-722.

Goffman, E. (1951). *Symbols of Class Status.* The British Journal of Sociology, 2 (4), 294- 304.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.

Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma; Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity.* Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall.

Goffman, E. (1964). The Neglected Situation. American Anthropologist, 66 (6, Part 2: *The Ethonography of Communication*), 133-136.

Goffman, E. "Interactional Ritual." Garden City: Anchor (1967).

Goffman, E. "The Insanity of Place." *Psychiatry* 32.4 (1969): 357-388.

Goffman, E. "Replies and Responses." *Language in society* 5.03 (1976): 257-313.

Goffman, E. "Gender Advertisements." (1979).

Goffman, E. (1983). The Interaction Order: American Sociological Association, 1982 Presidential Address. *American Sociological Review,* 48(1), 1-17.

Gullahorn, J. T., & Gullahorn, J. E. Visiting Fulbright Professors as Agents of Cross-Cultural Communication. *Sociology and Social Research,* 1962, *46,* 282-293.

Hare, A., Blumberg, H. H., & Goffman, E. S. (1988). *Dramaturgical Analysis of Social Interaction.* New York: Praeger.

Harper, D. "An Argument for Visual Sociology." *Image-Based Research: A Sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers* (1998): 24-41.

Harper, D. (2002). Talking about Pictures: A Case for Photo Elicitation. *Visual Studies,* Vol 17, No 1. Pg 13-26.

Harrington, Charles F., and Ingrid E. Lindy. "The Use of Reflexive Photography in the Study of the Freshman Year Experience." *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice* 1.1 (1999): 13-22.

Harrington, Charles F., and Timothy J. Schibik. "Reflexive Photography as an Alternative Method for the Study of the Freshman Year Experience." *NASPA Journal* 41.1 (2003): 23-40.

Hellstén, Meeri, and Anne Prescott. "Learning at University: The International Student Experience." *International Education Journal* 5.3 (2004): 344-351.

Hodder, Ian. "The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture." *Sage Biographical Research* 1 (1994).

Hogben, Matthew, and Caroline K. Waterman. "Are All of Your Students Represented in Their Textbooks? A Content Analysis of Coverage of Diversity Issues in Introductory Psychology Textbooks." *Teaching of Psychology* 24.2 (1997): 95-100.

Holdaway, Don. "Affinities and Contradictions: The Dynamics of Social or Acquisition Learning." *Literacy, Teaching and Learning* 5.1 (2000a): 7.

Holdaway, Simon. "Theory and Method in Qualitative Research." *Research Training for Social Scientists* (2000b): 156-166.

Hull, W. F. (1978) Foreign Students in the United States of America: Coping Behavior.

Hurworth, R. "Social Research Update." *Photo-Interviewing for Research* (2003).

Karp, David A., et al. *Sociology in Everyday Life*. Waveland Press, 2016.

Karp, Karen, and Philip Howell. "Building Responsibility for Learning in Students with Special Needs." *Teaching Children Mathematics* 11.3 (2004): 118-127.

Kashima, Yoshihisa. "Maintaining Cultural Stereotypes in the Serial Reproduction of Narratives." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 26.5 (2000): 594-604.

Katz, Irwin, and R. Glen Hass. "Racial Ambivalence and American Value Conflict: Correlational and Priming Studies of Dual Cognitive Structures." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 55.6 (1988): 893.

Komives, Susan R., and Dudley B. Woodard Jr. *Student Services: A Handbook for the Profession*. John Wiley & Sons, 2003.

Krueger, J. (1996). Personal Beliefs and Cultural Stereotypes About Racial Characteristics. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 71, 536– 548.

Ladd, P. D., & Ruby, R. Jr. (1999). Learning Style and Adjustment Issues of International Students. *Journal of Education for Business*, *74*(6), 363-367.

Lambert, R. D., & Bressler, M. *Indian Students on an American Campus.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956.

Lancy, D. F. (1992). Qualitative Research in Education: An Introduction to the Major Traditions. White Plains, N.Y.: Longman.

Leary, Mark R., Julie L. Landel, and Katharine M. Patton. "The Motivated Expression of Embarrassment Following a Self-Presentational Predicament." *Journal of Personality* 64.3 (1996): 619-636.

Leary, Mark R., and June Price Tangney. "The Self as an Organizing Construct in the Behavioral and Social Sciences." *Handbook of Self and Identity* (2003): 3-14.

Lee, D. S. (1997). What Teachers Can Do to Relieve Problems Identified by International Students. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, *70*, 93-100.

Lee, David. *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction*. Vol. 13. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Lippman, Walter. *"Public Opinion."* (1922): 428-428.

Luckmann, Thomas. "On Social Interaction and the Communicative Construction of Personal Identity, Knowledge and Reality." *Organization Studies* 29.2 (2008): 277-290.

Lundstedt, S. An Introduction to Some Evolving Problems in Cross-Cultural Research. *Journal of Social Issues,* 1963, yp (3), 1-9.

Lysgaard, S. Adjustment in a Foreign Society: Norwegian Fulbright Grantees Visiting the United States. *International Social Science Bulletin,* 1955, *7,* 45- 51.

Malinckrodt, B. & Leong, F.T.L. (1992). International Graduate Students, Stress, and Social Support. *Journal of College Student Development*, 3(1), 71-78.

Manning, P. K. (1996). Dramaturgy, Politics, and the Axial Media Event. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 37(2), 261-278.

Markus, Hazel R., and Shinobu Kitayama. "Cultural Variation in the Self-Concept." *The Self: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Springer New York, (1991a). 18-48.

Markus, Hazel R., and Shinobu Kitayama. "Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Motivation." *Psychological Review* 98.2 (1991b): 224.

Mori, S. (2000). Addressing the Mental Health Concerns of International Students. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *78* (2), 137-144.

Murphy, Christina, Lory Hawkes, and Joe Law. "How International Students Can Benefit From a Web-Based College Orientation." *New Directions for Higher Education* 2002.117 (2002): 37-44.

Murray, J.C. (1960) "We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition", Sheed and Ward, Kansas City, MO.

Neuman, William Lawrence. *Understanding Research*. Allyn & Bacon, 2009.

Nowak, R., and R. Weiland. "Culture Shock Coming Undone: Social Selection in the International Students Sojourn." *Society for Australasian Social Psychology, Christchurch, New Zealand* (1998).

Oberg, K. Cultural Shock: Adjustment to New Cultural Environments. *Practical Anthropology,* 1960,7, 177-182.

Parr, Gerald, Loretta Bradley, and Revathi Bingi. "Concerns and Feelings of International Students." *Journal of College Student Development* (1992).

Pham, Lien, and Ly Tran. "Understanding the Symbolic Capital of Intercultural Interactions: a Case Study of International Students in Australia." *International Studies in Sociology of Education* 25.3 (2015): 204-224.

Plummer, Ken. Documents of life 2: An Invitation to a Critical Humanism. Vol. 2. Sage, 2001.

Pruitt, France J. "The Adaptation of Foreign Students on American Campuses." *Journal of the NAWDAC* (1978).

Putnam, Robert D.: Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1993.

Putnam, Robert D. 1995. "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital." *Journal of Democracy* 6: 65-78.

Putnam, R. D. (2000). Bowling alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Rajapaksa, S., & Dundes, L. (2003). It's a Long Way Home: International Student Adjustment to Living in the United States. *Journal of College Student Retention*, *4*(10), 15-28.

Redmond, Mark V., and Judith M. Bunyi. "The Relationship Of Intercultural Communication Competence With Stress And The Handling Of Stress As Reported By International Students." *International Journal Of Intercultural Relations* 17. (1993): 235-254. *ScienceDirect*.

Reinicke, M.J. (1986). Cultural Adjustment of International Students in the U.S.A Revaluation Using Reformulated Learned Helplessness.

Renn, K. A. (2003). Understanding the Identities of Mixed-Race College Students Through a Developmental Ecology Lens. *Journal of College Student Development*, 44(3), 383-403.

Ricciardi, Lorenzo, and Mirella Kenyan Ricciardi. *"African Rainbow: Across Africa by Boat."* (1989).

Robertson, M., Line, M., Jones, S., & Thomas, S. (2000). International Students, Learning Environments and Perceptions: A Case Study Using the Delphi Technique. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *19*(1), 89-101.

Ruiz, R. (1984). Orientations in Language Planning. NABE: *The Journal for the National Association for Bilingual Education*; Vol 8, Pg. 15 – 35.

Sandhu, D.S & Asrabadi, B.R. (1991). An Assessment of Psychological Needs of International Students: Implications for Counseling and Psychotherapy.

Sandstrom, K. L., Martin, D. D., & Fine, G. A. (2006). Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality: A symbolic Interactionist Approach to Social Psychology and Sociology (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, Calif.: Roxbury Pub.

Sarkodie-Mensah, K. (1998). International Students in the U.S.: Trends, Cultural Adjustments, and Solutions for a Better Experience. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, *39*(3), 214-222.

Scharp, Kristina M., Christina G. Paxman, and Lindsey J. Thomas. "I Want to Go Home" Homesickness Experiences and Social-Support-Seeking Practices." *Environment and Behavior* (2015): 0013916515590475.

Scharrer, Erica, and Srividya Ramasubramanian. "Intervening in the Media's Influence on Stereotypes of Race and Ethnicity: The Role of Media Literacy Education." *Journal of Social Issues* 71.1 (2015): 171-185.

Schumann, John H. *The Pidginization Process: A Model for Second Language Acquisition*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, 1978.

Schwandt, Thomas A. "Constructivist, Interpretivist Approaches to Human Inquiry." (1994).

Sewell, W. H., & Davidsen, O. M. The Adjustment of Scandinavian Students. *Journal of Social Issues,* 1956, 72(1), 9-19.

Smith, M. A., and P. Kollock. *Communities in Cyberspace.* Psychology Press, 1999.

Smith, G. W. H. (2006). *Erving Goffman.* London; New York: Routledge.

Tajfel, Henri. "Individuals and Groups in Social Psychology." *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 18.2 (1979): 183-190.

Tanaka, Tomoko, et al. "Effects of Social Networks on Cross-Cultural Adjustment." *Japanese Psychological Research* 39.1 (1997): 12-24.

Taylor, Steven J., and Robert Bogdan. "In-depth Interviewing." *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods* 3 (1998): 87-116.

Triandis, Harry Charalambos. *Individualism & Collectivism.* Westview Press, 1995.

Turkle, S. (2007). Can You Hear Me Now? *Forbes,* 179(10), 176-182.

Tyler, Tom, et al. "Conflict With Outsiders: Disputing Within and Across Cultural Boundaries." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 24.2 (1998): 137-146.

Van Elferen, Isabella, and Imar De Vries. "Floating Fabulousness: Representation, Performativity and Identity in Musical Ringtones." *Proceedings of the 4th International Mobile Music Workshop.* 2007.

Vrugt, Anneke, and Marieke Van Eechoud. "Smiling and Self-Presentation of Men and Women for Job Photographs." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 32.3 (2002): 419-431.

Wallace, R; Wolf, A., (2006) *Contemporary Sociological Theory 6th Ed*, Prentice Hall, India.

Wan, G. (2001). The Learning Experience of Chinese Students in American Universities: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. *College Student Journal, 35* (1), 28-44.

Wan, T. Chapman, D.W. & Biggs, D.A. (1992) Academic Stress of International Students Attending U.S. University Researching Higher Education, 3(5), 607-62.

Ward, Colleen, and Antony Kennedy. "Where's the 'Culture' in Cross-Cultural Transition? Comparative Studies of Sojourner Adjustment." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 24.2 (1993): 221-249.

Ward, Colleen, and Anne-Marie Masgoret. "The Experiences of International Students in New Zealand." *Report on the Results of a National Survey. Wellington: Ministry of Education* (2004).

Weiss, R. S. (1994). *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies.* New York; Toronto; New York: Free Press; Maxwell Macmillan Canada; Maxwell Macmillan International.

Wolcott, Harry F. *"Ethnography: A Way of Seeing."* Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press, 1999.

Wu, Hsiao-ping, Esther Garza, and Norma Guzman. "International Student's Challenge and Adjustment to College." *Education Research International,* (2015).

Zhai, L., (2002). Studying International Students: Adjustment Issues and Social Support. PhD Thesis.

Zimmerman, Barry J. "Self-Efficacy and educational Development." *Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies* (1995): 202-231.

8   APPENDIX:

Appendix 1:

Appendix 2:

Appendix 3:

Appendix 4:

Appendix 5:

Appendix 6:

Appendix 7:

Appendix 8:

Appendix 9: