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ISSUES OF ADJUSTMENT:
A CASE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ATTENDING
VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

by

Penelope L. Gallagher

B.A. (Archaeology), Simon Fraser University, 1986

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
in the Faculty
of
Education

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ISSUES OF ADJUSTMENT: A CASE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL
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ABSTRACT

In recent years the government of British Columbia has become active in international education activities. Several programs have been initiated with the intent of attracting larger numbers of international students to the Province's colleges and universities. The main target of these initiatives has been students in countries of the Pacific Rim. This thesis considers potential adjustment issues that need to be addressed by host institutions if they are to maximize benefits for international students, and reports the results of a questionnaire survey of adjustment problems experienced by international students attending Vancouver Community College.

An overview of the international education policies and programs developed by the B.C. Provincial Ministries of Education and Advanced Education is presented. Next, the literature on international student adjustment research is examined in order to provide a context for discussion of the VCC survey results. The literature review reveals that the research undertaken on international student adjustment problems is considerable and complex, and that no unifying themes and theories are apparent. The subject of foreign student adjustment has not been approached from the point of view that international education should be mutually beneficial and present opportunities for learning to the sojourner as well as to the host institution.

In the final chapters of the thesis the methodology employed in the VCC survey is discussed, and results of data analysis are summarized. Analyses suggest that generally, English language skills, family pressure to do well in studies, separation from family and friends, and establishing social relationships with Canadians represent important concerns. Examination of cross-tabulations discloses that English language skills are variably problematic for students of different national origins.

Comparison of the VCC survey results with previous research reveals similarities and differences. Areas of communality include concerns with English language skills and making friends with Canadians. In contrast, B.C. students generally rate their overall experience as less positive than has been reported in other Canadian surveys. Recommendations for improving the student's overall international educational experience are suggested.

...foreign students are at the center of a complex network of international academic relationships. They are human embodiments of a worldwide trend toward the internationalization of knowledge and research in an integrated world economy.

(Altbach 1991, p. 305)

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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Involvement in world affairs through international education has come to be seen as a necessary response to world-wide social, political and economic change (Lulat and Altbach 1985; Pengelly 1989; Province of B.C. 1988a, 1988c, 1990, 1992; Rogers 1984; Stewart 1987). In order to achieve this kind of international involvement, and to encourage "the world's academic community to take advantage of the learning opportunities the province offers (Province of B.C., Min. Ed., News Release #40, Sept. 24, 1987), the Government of British Columbia has made a commitment to international education activities. As early as 1987 the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (MAETT) stated that international education and international students are essential to this Province (Province of British Columbia 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1990, 1992).

Generally, initiatives in international education began as "a means of promoting international peace and equality" (Pengelly 1989, p. 2), but it appears that in British Columbia, they have emerged, at least in part, as a means of economic development. Representatives from public and private schools, colleges, universities, sponsoring agencies and the B.C. Government's representatives in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Singapore, Korea and Taiwan actively recruit foreign students into the B.C. school system. As well, declining secondary school enrollments and government funding reductions have induced some B.C. school districts to recruit visa students for the purpose of filling under-populated classrooms and supplementing financial resources with foreign student tuition fees.

As a result of provincial policies, the marketing of educational services has become increasingly popular as a means of enhancing economic, cultural and diplomatic ties with countries of the Pacific Rim, notably Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan (Brummet 1989, Province of B.C. 1988c, 1990). According to a recent publication, the International Education Department of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology views "the challenge for our Educational system" as follows:

Throughout the world, dramatic economic, social, technological, and political shifts are occurring almost daily. Industries, markets, and information networks are becoming more intense. The effects of these developments on British Columbia industry, trade, investment, tourism, immigration, and education system are already evident. In order to prosper, we must be prepared to participate fully and effectively in the world community.

(Province of B.C., 1990, p. 3)

If international education marketing ventures are to be successful in the long term, then the experience of participating students must be satisfactory and rewarding. The Provincial government of B.C. has stated that the mission of international education is "the effective delivery of educational services to enhance academic, cultural and economic links with the world community..." (Province of B.C., 1988c, p. 1). However commendable this goal may be, it probably will not be attained if students return to their home countries dissatisfied with their programs of study and/or disappointed with their social and educational experiences in British Columbia. Therefore, it is important for the future of international education that adjustment issues and the potential difficulties which may be encountered by these students be identified and addressed.

Definition of Terms

The term "sojourner" describes an individual who leaves one culture to spend time in another (Brislin 1981). Study abroad, therefore, is one type of "sojourn", and international students are sojourners. The designation "international student" means that an individual has declared that they are in Canada for the purpose of study and intend to return to their home country after a prescribed period of time (Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), 1987). These students must be in possession of a valid student authorization issued by Canada Employment and Immigration. The terms "foreign student" and "international student" are used interchangeably in this paper.

International education is defined in the *Encyclopedia of Education* (Butts 1971, p. 164) as "the totality of ways in which the educational institutions, ideas or practices of one social or cultural group influence those of another." International education is not limited to social or cultural influences but also presents opportunities for ideological exchanges among communities and nations. And, international students "... are at the center of a complex network of international academic relationships. They are the

human embodiments of a worldwide trend toward the internationalization of knowledge and research in an integrated world economy." (Altbach 1991, p. 305) Through a variety of initiatives, international education can supply social, political and economic links essential to international relations (Altbach 1985). The advantages of international education can be reciprocal, benefitting home and host countries alike.

Many diverse activities are associated with international education. Sharing knowledge through conference participation, comparative educational studies, international research projects and publications are all components of international education (Pengelly 1989). Foreign exchange programs are another aspect of international education. Exchanges of students, faculty and scholars between domestic and foreign institutions have traditionally played a major part in international education. Exchange programs can provide intellectual enrichment and economic benefits to all participants (Rogers 1984). In Canada "international students not only provide valuable trade and diplomatic contacts, but they return to their country of origin with Canadian training, espousing Canadian ideas, customs and techniques" (Stewart 1987, p. 290).

The social, cultural and political benefits of international education are incalculable. The economic benefits are, however, quantifiable and significant. As noted in the Discussion Paper, *Post Secondary International Education in British Columbia*: "Over 50 international development projects and contracts involving B.C. post-secondary institutions in May 1988 reported a total value of almost \$50 million" (Province of B.C., 1988a, p. 1). The B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology estimated that the economic contribution to the province for 1989/90 exceeded \$82 million (Province of B.C., 1990). In addition, tuition fees and associated living expenses incurred by international students attending B.C. schools represents a substantial contribution to individual communities as well as the B.C. economy.

Purpose and Objectives of this Study

One approach to identifying important issues which may confront international students is to solicit the opinions and perceptions of the students themselves. This can be accomplished by acquisition of

relevant data through a case study approach. The subject of this thesis is a case study of the international students attending Vancouver Community College (VCC). The research reported here focuses on the visiting students' points of view, and what the students perceive to be the personal, educational, financial, logistical and social issues that may affect their adaptation to and satisfaction with the VCC environment.

The goals of this research are:

- 1) to characterize the population of international students enrolled in courses and programs at the three campuses of Vancouver Community College during the spring term of 1992;
- 2) to solicit the students' views and opinions concerning their personal, educational, financial, logistical and social experiences while attending the College;
- 3) to identify difficulties these students may have encountered as a result of those experiences.
- 4) to ascertain whether or not adjustment issues differ among students of different national origins.

To accomplish these objectives, a survey was undertaken in March of 1992 of all currently registered VCC international students. At that time the students were attending one or more of the three specialized campuses of the college: Langara, King Edward and City Centre. In the following chapters, the results of that survey are reported and discussed.

Chapter two provides an overview of international education activities in the Province of British Columbia along with a historical sketch of the development of international education at Vancouver Community College. In Chapter three the concept of adjustment is discussed and the literature on foreign study and research on international education is reviewed. The fourth chapter describes how the questionnaire was designed and the methodology employed in collecting the data for this project. Chapter five is devoted to description and analysis of the data collected. Discussion of the survey results and their implications as well as suggested recommendations to improve the student's overall international experience are examined in the final chapter of this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO:

OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Introduction

An overview of international education in British Columbia and at Vancouver Community College is provided in this chapter. The chapter has been divided into subsections beginning with a report on the foreign student population followed by a brief historical sketch of the development of Provincial international education initiatives. A discussion of the roles of the Ministry of Advanced Education Training and Technology, the Ministry of Education and the British Columbia Centre for International Education is presented. A description of Vancouver Community College and a summary of the development of the College's international activities as well as an explanation of the programs and services available to foreign students concludes this chapter.

The Foreign Student Population

Over the past 20 years, the international student population has grown considerably (Tillett and Lesser 1992). From 1973-74 to 1982-83 the number of international students at Canadian educational institutions increased from 26,000 to just over 65,000 but fell to 52,000 by 1986-87. This decline was, however, almost exclusively concentrated in Ontario Universities (von Zur-Muehlen 1987). The number of international students attending post-secondary schools in the Western Provinces increased according to the 1988 *National Report on International Students In Canada* (CBIE 1988).

According to Statistics Canada (1992), the population of international students in Canada more than doubled from 1975 through 1990. In 1975 total enrollment of elementary, secondary, college, trade, undergraduate and graduate students recorded in 1975 was 42,346. By 1990 the enrollment had grown to 87,005. In college/trade programs the number of students rose from 9,684 in 1975 to 25,461. As well, between 1988/89 and 1989/90 B.C.'s post-secondary international student enrollments increased 33 percent, particularly for the colleges and institutes (Province of B.C., 1990). In 1975 there were fewer than one thousand students registered in colleges/trades programs. By 1990 there were over 4,000. The total international student population in B.C. grew from 3,385 to 12,988 during that same period.

Statistics on international students in post-secondary institutions must be reported regularly and the Ministry of Advanced Education has been developing an information management system to track international education activities in B. C. (Pengelly 1989; Savage, 1992). The MAETT compiles and publishes an Annual Report on the status of international students in post-secondary institutions. The number of international students attending B.C. Colleges and Institutes has also more than doubled in recent years. For example, in 1988/89 a total of 1,000 full-time students were registered at provincial institutions. Enrollment in 1991/92 totaled 2,061 (Savage, 1992).

The B.C. Government and International Education

In British Columbia, international education is administered by two separate Ministries: the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (formerly the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training) which manages colleges, institutes and universities, and the Ministry of Education (K-12). This division of levels of education was the result of a re-organization within the B.C. government in 1987.

An International Education Branch (IEB) within each Ministry assists in the administration of international education. The first IEB was established in 1985 as a division of the Ministry of Education. This Branch "assisted overseas governments' requests for customized training and services and provided access on request to B.C. resources in education and training" (Pengelly 1989, p. 61). At that time the Minister of Education was responsible for kindergarten to grade 12 as well as colleges and institutes. Universities were under the direction of the Minister of Science, Technology and Universities.

Also in 1987, the Government announced an "exciting new program within the province's school system" (Province of B.C. 1988b). This was the Pacific Rim Initiatives Program of the Ministry of Education. The program was "aimed at strengthening and further developing [a] growing cultural and economic relationship" with the Asian countries of the Pacific Rim (Province of B.C., 1988b). In conjunction with the creation of this program a new International Education Branch (IEB) was established to "work closely with the Canadian Education Association and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada" (Province of B.C., 1989a, p. 56). The original IEB was incorporated into the former Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training (MAEJT).

Historically, international education activities were concentrated in post-secondary institutions. And, prior to 1987, international education in British Columbia was limited to exchange programs, government contracts and international development projects at secondary schools, colleges and institutes. This is no longer the case. The creation of the Pacific Rim Education Initiatives Program as well as an increased awareness of the benefits of international education, have resulted in a rapid increase in the Province's international education activities.

The Role of the Ministry of Advanced Education

The Ministry of Advanced Education has identified and stated the mission, goals, and objectives specific to B.C.'s international education as follows:

The mission for International Education in the post-secondary sector is the effective delivery of educational services to enhance academic, cultural and economic links with the world community and in particular with the Asia Pacific nations.

(Province of B.C. 1988c, p. 1)

The objectives and roles of government in relation to this objective are clearly stated and defined.

The first objective of our post-secondary institutions is to serve the educational needs of British Columbia communities and other citizens. International Education will support, not supplant, this goal. Individual institutions will vary in the particular emphasis they place on the various types of International Education activities, in accordance with their own focus and priorities.

The roles of government are: to support, facilitate and foster coordination; to assist in locating and accessing funding in support of these activities; to liaise with government officials of other nations regarding international educational activities; to build bridges between public and private sector interests in British Columbia; provide focus regarding international educational priorities.

(Province of B.C., 1988c, p. 3)

To provide direction for achieving this goal, a "policy framework to guide Boards in the development of bylaws that include regulations for international students" has been provided by the government (Province of B.C., 1988c, 1991).

1. The tuition fees for international students will be set by the institutions at a level that covers direct costs and overhead.

2. No international student will displace a qualified citizen or permanent resident* from British Columbia or from other parts of Canada from a space within the provincially funded profile for that program for the institution.

3. International student numbers will be excluded from the institutions' FTE's (full-time equivalents) in calculating the formula allocation.

4. Colleges and institutes will provide the Ministry with regular statistical reports on international student enrollment and tuition fees at their institution in a reporting format approved by the Ministry.

5. At the time of registration at the B.C. college and Institutes international students registering for a semester or longer are to provide evidence of health insurance coverage for the period until the provincial Medical Services Plan becomes applicable.

6. To be treated as a domestic student for the purpose of funding and reporting a person must fall within one of the specific categories defined by the Ministry (e.g., applicants for landing, individuals with employment authorization, legal dependents of Canadian citizens or permanent residents, etc.).

*The interpretation of the term: "permanent resident" and "dependent" will be the same as defined by Employment and Immigration Canada.

(Province of B.C., 1991, pp. 1-2)

Leadership and commitment to international education by the Ministry of Advanced Education has been demonstrated through the mission statement, objectives and policies listed above. Their goals are clearly stated, and policies have been instituted to facilitate the accomplishment of those goals.

The Role of the Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education does not have a mission statement which specifically addresses international student issues. But, the Ministry did respond to recommendations of the 1988 Sullivan Royal Commission Report on Education by reviewing policy directions and issuing a mandate which included a new mission statement for education in general.

The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

(Province of B.C., 1989b, p. 8)

The mandates and objectives specific to international education appear to have been developed with reference to the Pacific Rim Initiatives Program. As previously stated, this program was established to strengthen cultural, political and economic relationships to the Asian countries of the Pacific Rim. This initiative was considered by the Ministry to be "one way of ensuring that B.C. Business will be able to compete successfully in the Pacific in the future" (Brummet in *Provincial Report* 1989).

These initiatives are part of the Government's overall strategy of building on the Province's natural strengths and of vigorously pursuing opportunities offered by increased cultural and trading contacts in East Asia. Our ability to compete in the Pacific Rim trade will demand a growing number of graduates from our schools who understand and appreciate the languages and cultures of that area of the world.

(Province of B.C., 1987)

A variety of specific programs intended to facilitate international study have been proposed. Some have already been implemented while others are in various stages of planning. School 'twinning', homestay programs, summer language institutes, Asian Pacific Studies, exchange programs, study tours, scholarship funds and the Hong Kong Selection Office are all in operation. The establishment of a school in Hong Kong to offer the B.C. Curriculum was proposed and later cancelled. The licensing of foreign institutions to offer Canadian educational credentials throughout Pacific Rim countries is planned. Emphasis is placed on providing:

today's student, the next generation of entrepreneurs, with a better understanding of the history, culture, economics, laws and languages of the Pacific Rim. Business and trade opportunities are often lost, not because of lack of technical expertise but because of a lack of understanding of other people, their language and culture.

(Province of B.C., 1987)

With the exception of the mandates for the Pacific Rim Initiatives, policies specific to international education and international students do not appear to have been formulated at the Ministry level. Individual school boards have developed guidelines on the admission of and tuition for international students, but they vary district to district.

The British Columbia Centre for International Education (BCCIE)

The British Columbia Centre for International Education (BCCIE) was established in 1990 and is funded by the Provincial government. This organization replaced the former International Education Training Group (IETG). The IETG was composed of members of nearly all B.C. Colleges, institutes and some of the universities involved in international education projects. As a group, they repeatedly expressed concern about, and addressed issues pertinent to, policy direction and the future of international education in the Province. Meeting regularly since 1983, the IETG had "been an important vehicle for the sharing of information and experience" (Pengelly, 1989, p. 85).

The BCCIE is a "voluntary organization committed to the development of international education programs in the province's public universities, colleges and institutes" (BCCIE, no date). The mission of the Centre is to "coordinate B.C. post-secondary International Education activities and enhance development of international expertise and understanding in B.C." (Turner 1989). The Centre provides information, liaison and service support to educational institutions (IETG, minutes. Jan 25, 1989).

International Education at Vancouver Community College

Vancouver Community College is only one of the provincially funded institutions in British Columbia pursuing international education projects and activities. An overview of VCC and a history of its international education development follows. Descriptions of the international programs and services are also provided.

Description of the Institution

Vancouver Community College is located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. It is the oldest community college in Canada and the second largest post-secondary institution in British Columbia. Founded in 1965, it became Canada's first comprehensive community college (Pengelly 1989). VCC is an amalgamation of a number of institutions: The Vancouver Vocational Institute, Vancouver School of Art, Vancouver School Board Night School Program and the King Edward Matriculation and Continuing Education Centre. Langara, City Centre (CC) (formerly Vancouver Vocational Institute) and King Edward Campus (KEC) are administered by a college board. In addition to the three main greater Vancouver locations, many off-campus sites enable students to access a variety of educational programs.

College-wide annual enrollment exceeds 20,000 full and part-time students in career, vocational and university transfer programs with an additional 20,000 students taking continuing education courses. More than 6,500 students attend Langara, which offers first and second year Arts and Science university transfer courses as well as 31 two-year career and technical diploma programs. Occupational programs vary from Nursing, Early Childhood and Physical Education to Business Administration and Journalism.

Over 50 vocational programs are offered at City Centre. Students are provided with practical experience and theory to upgrade or enter business, industry or service areas. Certificates and diplomas are available in Health Programs such as Dental Assisting and Hygiene, Long Term Care and Allied Health and Practical Nursing. Computer Graphics, Drafting, Electronics and Printing Production are taught at this campus. Asian Culinary Arts, Baking and Travel Agent programs are offered in the Tourism and Hospitality Division.

VCC King Edward Campus, has the longest tradition of post-secondary education in British Columbia. It opened its doors in 1904 as Vancouver's second high school, served as a centre for McGill University and was a forerunner of the University of British Columbia. Academic and vocational courses and programs for adults were introduced in the 1920's. KEC has the largest English as a Second Language Program in North America. Instructors at King Edward provide English as a Second Language training, Adult Basic Education and Career programs. The curriculum of this institution includes courses as diverse as pre-literacy ESL, Diesel Mechanics and university transfer Music courses.

The Development of International Education at VCC

According to Pengelly's (1989) history of the development of international education at VCC, "International education at VCC began quite incidentally in 1970...(1989, p.95)" when an instructor in the Continuing Education Division with contacts in Japan created a Summer English Language Program for Japanese students. However, a controversial event is credited as the catalyst for VCC's official involvement in international education.

Pengelly (1989) reports that the VCC College Board declined to honour a Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) contract by refusing to enroll 15 Libyan students in ESL classes at King Edward Campus. This was done to protest the activities of the Libyan leader, Moammar Khadafy. Unfortunately, by the time the students' registrations were rejected, they had already arrived in Vancouver. Protests against the Board's actions were voiced by faculty, administrators, and the community. A complaint was filed by the B.C. Muslim Association with the B.C. Human Rights Branch. Shortly after

this incident the Board passed a resolution authorizing the College to become involved in international education.

From early 1982 through 1984 a College International Education Committee (IEC) drafted terms of reference, approved policies and developed long and short term international educational plans. The goal for international education as presented by the College was that:

The College will continue to provide and expand International Education programming in accordance with Ministry and College policies at no additional cost to the College and without displacing any B.C. student.

During 1984 the college publicized its international education objectives to local, national and international organizations and institutions including the Vancouver Tourist Bureau, Vancouver Board of Trade, and the Asia Pacific Foundation (Pengelly 1989). Marketing activities were implemented with College personnel visiting countries in Southeast Asia, specifically China and Japan. Singapore was identified as a key area for VCC's international programs because of the need for technical training in that country (Pengelly, 1989; VCC/IEC minutes, Feb. 28, 1984). The first Director of International Education, Norm Hendersen, brought the College into the Hong Kong market. International education activities expanded during the period of 1984 through 1986.

The first international students were from Hong Kong and entered the College in the fall semester of 1985. They were either registered into the English Language Training or university transfer programs. And, as of October of that year, VCC had an employee stationed in Hong Kong to liaise with schools and recruit students (Pengelly 1989). To date, VCC has agents in Singapore and Malaysia (VCC 1988).

By 1988 international education at VCC was well underway. Goals and objectives had been identified and policies and procedures formally established. The aims and objectives of VCC's international education program are as follows:

1. VCC will enrich the nature of the educational experience within the classroom and the social activities of the student body by having students from various parts of the world enrolled in the College.
2. College faculty members and the administration will be provided with professional development opportunities through International Education.
3. The College will increase revenues for College use from International Education contracts. This will assist in overcoming financial shortfalls, thereby preventing the erosion of existing

programs and allowing new programs to be mounted and thus enabling more students to come to the College than otherwise might be possible.

4. The College will be provided with valuable public relations which will inform the countries of the world about the College's programs and expertise.

5. VCC will play a part in the Federal Government's plan for International Relations and the Provincial Government's plan to engage in more International Education.

(VCC Operations Manual, September, 1988, II.2)

Description of VCC International Programs

VCC's involvement with international education is not limited to the admission of international students to campus programs. Many initiatives have been undertaken and/or are planned for implementation in the future. For example, projects in China, India and Czechoslovakia are being developed. The Canadian English Language College (CELC) has been opened in Hong Kong. This is a joint venture of VCC and the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals to offer the VCC English Language Training Curriculum to students overseas. External Studies Programs at Langara include courses offered in Italy, France, Holland, Japan, Kenya and Ecuador. Approximately 50 students per year participate in these exchange programs (VCC/IEC minutes, June 28, 1990).

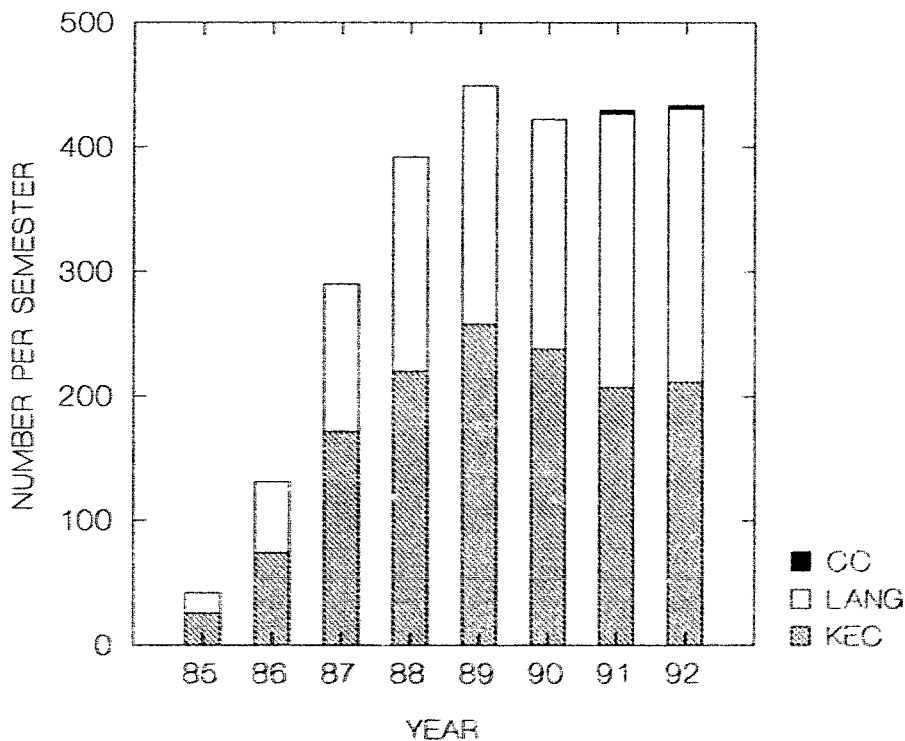


Figure 1. International Student Enrollments at Vancouver Community College, 1985-1992; CC = City Centre, Lang = Langara, KEC = King Edward Campus

Total enrollment is usually between 400 and 500 students per four-month term. The number of international students registered per campus varies and changes from term to term. Initially enrollments at Langara were higher than those of the King Edward campus. But, by 1991 enrollment was almost equally distributed between the two campuses and in the fall term of 1993 KEC registered more international students (Figure 1). There are less than half a dozen international students enrolled in vocational programs at the City Centre Campus at this time (VCC Institutional Research Report, Sept. 7, 1992a).

Programs Available to International Students

International students apply for admission to one of the following VCC programs: English as a Second Language, High School Completion, University Transfer and Career and Technical Programs. English Language Training and High School Completion programs are taught exclusively at the King Edward Campus. University transfer courses and vocational training are offered at Langara and City Centre respectively. Special Summer and Winter English Language Programs have been developed for international students in the Continuing Education Division. Acceptance into and placement within these programs is determined by a number of entrance requirements. And, each of the programs has different admission criteria. For example, English Language ability and age prerequisites for admission to the High School Completion Program and the University transfer program are not the same. An applicant can be 17 years old at the time of enrollment for the former and 18 years of age for the latter. Brief descriptions of these programs follows.

1) *English Language Training Programs (ELT)*

The objectives of ELT are to enable students to communicate in English and provide them with the requisite language skills necessary to perform successfully in high school and university courses (VCC 1992b, p. 18). There are two departments which offer ELT courses for international students: the English Language Skills (ELS) and College Preparatory English (CPE) departments. New international students are assessed upon arrival or in their home country and placed in the appropriate department. CPE courses prepare students for study at Canadian colleges, universities or other post-secondary educational institutions and are approximately equivalent to grades 10, 11 and 12 academic English.

Initially foreign students were integrated into the existing ELS and CPE courses along with Canadian Citizens and Landed Immigrants. "Convenience, economy and the College-wide policy of integration wherever and whenever possible" (Yildiz and Pollard, 1989: p. 1) has been cited as one reason for this decision. As the demand for international seats grew, however, it was argued that foreign students were displacing Canadians and Landed Immigrants in violation of the Ministry's policy governing international education. This resulted in classes designated for international students only. The displacement problem was solved. But, as will be discussed in the following chapters, students are dissatisfied with this arrangement.

2) High School Completion Program

The High School Completion program is offered through the Adult Basic Education Division at the King Edward Campus. Most of the courses in Business and Computer studies, English and Social Sciences, Mathematics and Science have been articulated to be equivalent to high school courses. A number of international students apply to VCC to complete the equivalent of B.C. Grade 12 and obtain an Adult Basic Education Provincial Diploma. This credential is accepted, with some restrictions, for admission to other colleges and B.C. universities. Students who want to up-grade skills, particularly in mathematics and Computer Keyboarding, also enroll in ABE courses. Students in the Intermediate Levels of ELS as well as those in CPE may take Adult Basic Education courses concurrently. International students enrolled in this program are integrated into classes with domestic students.

3) University Transfer Program

The Langara campus provides academic diploma and certificate programs and courses which are transferable toward many university degree programs. University transfer courses in Arts, Science, Business and Engineering are available to international students. Transfer credit has been formally arranged with universities across Canada, and students who enroll in this program can prepare for university entrance by completing one or two years of transferable course work. Registration of international students into the various sections of transferable courses is limited to a total of 30 percent international students. Internationals are given priority registration and are integrated into courses offered to domestic students.

4) Career and Technical Programs

Many of the Career and Technical programs of Vancouver Community College are not available to international students. Career and Technical programs are offered at all three campuses but usually have lengthy wait lists. Most of the Career and Technical programs available to internationals are offered at City Centre. Usually, the arrangements for program access at City Centre are done on the basis of contracts for groups. However, international students may be admitted on an availability basis into Hospitality and Tourism, Development and Staff Training, Health, Business and Technical programs such as Printing Production (VCC 1992, p. 28).

International Student Services

In addition to the programs listed above, many overseas and on-site services are provided for VCC's international students. Staff assigned to the VCC Hong Kong office regularly schedule information sessions for students prior to their departure to Vancouver. Services available on each campus include English language and mathematics assessments, personal and career counselling, assistance with course planning and scheduling, health services, learning skill centres, libraries, language and computer laboratories. College personnel conduct orientation sessions, workshops and plan social activities exclusively for the international students.

CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH ON FOREIGN STUDENT ADJUSTMENT

Introduction

In this chapter the concept of adjustment is reviewed and an overview of the status of foreign study and the complexities of the related literature are discussed. Finally, theories relating to the adjustment process are examined, and a selection of research pertinent to issues of foreign student adjustment is presented.

Defining the Concept of "Adjustment"

Foreign student adjustment is a complex process influenced by many factors. According to Fasheh (1984), adjustment is not merely related to

the acceptance or rejection of western values, attitudes, and perceptions. Adjustment involves, rather, learning how to deal with differences and with new perspectives, how to confront them, reflect on them, and develop new awarenesses and new syntheses (p. 317).

Individual personalities, age, gender, nationality, degree of similarity or difference and length of time within a new environment may all affect the process of adjustment. International students are exposed to contrasting and perhaps conflicting "societal values, roles, rights and responsibilities... they are suddenly in an alien culture which requires a significant adaptation. The international student is required to compare these new and different cultural factors with those of his own culture and decide how best to cope with them" (Dunnett 1977, p. 2).

The terms "adjustment" and "adaptation" are often used interchangeably in the literature on foreign study. As well, the meaning of these terms is often "vague and varied according to a particular researcher's point of view" (Dunnett 1977, p. 83). Dunnett suggests that "a review of the literature reveals almost as many definitions of adaptation as there are studies" (p. 83). However, the definitions applicable here are those proposed by Dunnett (1977) and Pruitt (1981). That is, that adaptation is "a process of learning to know and use the means to solve problems or attain goals within a social system (culture)" (p.8). Pruitt (1981) maintains that the process of adaptation is composed of two components: adjustment and assimilation. "Adjustment means coping with...[and] ...creating a productive and satisfying relationship

with [a] new environment while not necessarily abandoning...cultural identity" (p.119). Assimilation is interaction with and adoption of the new culture.

An alternate approach to the concept of adjustment was introduced by Furnham and Bochner (1986). They suggest that the concept of adjustment may be "cultural chauvinism" implying that the "newcomer should abandon the culture of origin in favour of embracing the values and customs of the host society" (p. 14). In contrast to Pruitt's (1981) concept of assimilation, Furnham and Bochner (1986) propose a "culture learning" or "culture accommodation" model which presents a non-ethnocentric view. In other words, a sojourner learns the "salient characteristics of a new culture" without assimilation or abandonment of existing cultural traits.

Furnham and Bochner (1986) also suggest that adjustment follows a natural course, that individuals "...voluntarily or involuntarily confront an unfamiliar set of rules about how life should be lived" and they eventually learn the rules and go on "living happily, or maybe grudgingly, ever after...until the next time" (p. xvi). Foreign students who journey from one country to another in search of an education have special needs and face extraordinary adjustment (Locke and Velasco 1987). According to Klineberg and Hull (1979), "One might argue that the stakes are higher, that foreign students are risking more by entering a culture which may be full of particular customs that are unknown and unanticipated" (p. 9). It is critical, therefore, that the process of adjustment be as fulfilling as possible for the international student. Otherwise, foreign students who encounter difficulties with the adjustment process may return to their home country dissatisfied with and defeated by their experiences.

What has not been addressed through these concepts of adaptation, assimilation and culture learning, is that foreign student adjustment is a two-way process. The foreign student experience should be viewed as mutually beneficial and rewarding to the sojourner and host institution. Foreign students present many opportunities to their hosts for "culture learning", and this perspective has not been stressed in the literature. For example, an understanding and appreciation of other cultures and languages as proposed in the government's mission statement can be accomplished through international education for both the sojourner and host institution.

The Literature Review

Overview of the Literature

Preparing a literature review on foreign student issues is a complicated process. The volume of published materials is substantial and highly dispersed among various disciplines. Psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, counselors, English as a Second Language teachers, and other educators are involved in research on foreign students.

The field of foreign study is multidisciplinary and the literature diverse. Altbach (1991) describes the status of foreign study as follows:

Foreign study has fairly recently emerged as a topic for serious research...The large portion of research on foreign study has been done by scholars in the field of education who are concerned with cross-cultural relations and especially with the counseling of foreign students. A partial exception to this generalization is research by psychologists...the literature on foreign students tends to be related to cross-cultural psychological and adjustment issues [and] tends to be applied and, in general atheoretical (p. 306).

Prominent authors such as Spaulding and Flack (1976), Altbach and Kelly (1985), Altbach, Kelly and Lulat (1985), Y. G-M. Lulat (1984; 1987) and Altbach and Wang (1989), have attempted to organize the literature by compiling comprehensive bibliographies on foreign students and international study. For example, *The World's Students in the United States: A Review and Evaluation of Research on Foreign Students* (Spaulding and Flack, Eds., 1976) examines relevant literature on foreign students and international education up to 1976. Publication of *Research on Foreign Students and International Study: An Overview and Bibliography* (Altbach, Kelly and Lulat, 1985) succeeded the work of Spaulding and Flack and includes almost three thousand listings by topic areas "deemed to be relevant to a broad understanding of foreign students (p. vii). This "Overview and Bibliography" as well as the most recent publication of Philip Altbach and Jing Wang (1989) *Foreign Students and International Study: Bibliography and Analysis, 1984-1988* categorize key issues into as many as 37 topic areas including "Adaptation Problems" and "Cross-Cultural Issues and Activities".

Concerns regarding the literature on foreign students have been noted by many authors. Particularly because most of it is based on American data, and because it is

characterized by a great deal of haphazard diversity in terms of topics covered, findings and conclusions...research is lopsided in the direction of exploring either the cross-cultural consequences of studying abroad or the conditions and means necessary to help international students adapt and succeed in an alien institutional and cultural environment.

(Altbach and Lulat 1985, p. 459-460).

Spaulding and Flack (1976) state that "many theories have, since their original formulation, elicited almost no research follow-up (p. 282)". Most studies are "point-in-time" specific, "tracer" studies have not been undertaken, and a very limited number of replicative studies have been conducted. According to Spaulding and Coelho (1980)

...we know a great deal about what happens to foreign students in the United States and how they are handled, yet at the same time we know little. Most studies are situation-specific: they deal with a group of readily available foreign students at one university, or with students affiliated with certain sponsoring organizations, or with the problems of managing and supervising foreign students in one or several institutions of higher education (p. 326).

It has been suggested that "the major gap in research on education-abroad programs, in terms of the consequences for individuals and for institutions, is the lack of internationally planned and executed studies designed with a comparative perspective" (Spaulding and Coelho 1980, p. 328).

Furthermore, sponsoring agencies such as the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA), the Institute of International Education (IIE) and others have been the motivation behind much of the research on foreign study and their respective interests have shaped the nature of the research. In addition, most of the information comes from relatively few of the "industrialized 'host' countries and not from the Third World 'sending' nations" (Altbach 1991, p. 307; Altbach and Wang 1989).

The literature pertaining to adjustment and adaptation as well as the theories and concepts associated with it are not unique to foreign study or international students (Furnham and Bochner 1986). It is common practice within the literature to include research from many disciplines into studies of foreign student issues. This all-inclusive model has been criticized by Kahne (1976), who feels that most of the ideas concerning international students "are borrowed from studies of immigrants to the United States, displaced persons, and Peace Corps volunteers". An example of this aggregate approach is demonstrated by some of the theories relating to the adjustment process.

Theories Relating to the Adjustment Process

There are two popular theories regarding the adjustment process: Sverre Lysgaard's "U-Shaped" theory and Kalervo Oberg's "Four-Stage" theory. Both theories were proposed in the mid-1950's and were based on research involving two distinct populations. Specifically, Lysgaard studied foreign students and Oberg studied missionaries.

Lysgaard's theory was based on the results of 200 interviews of Norwegian Fulbright scholars who had spent time in the United States and then returned to Norway. The hypothesis, which is also referred to as the "U-curve", implies that students progress through stages as they learn to cope with and adapt to new and different cultures. These stages are "characterized by good initial adjustment, followed by an adjustment 'crisis' after which good adjustment is again achieved (Lysgaard 1955, p. 49). In other words, there is a "U-curved" relationship between the length of time a student is in a new environment and their level of adjustment to that environment.

Not all research supports the U-curve theory (Humphrey 1990). In particular, the results of two comprehensive studies of international students did not validate the U-curve adjustment. For example, Spaulding and Flack (1976) concluded that more research was necessary before "definite claims of any predictable cultural adjustment patterns conforming to the "U-Curve" hypothesis may be confidently made (Humphrey 1991, p. 18). Similarly, Klineberg and Hull (1979) found no evidence in their study of any relationship between the duration of the sojourn and key adjustment variables such as homesickness, loneliness, etc. (Lulat and Altbach 1985).

Oberg postulated that four sequential stages were incorporated into the adjustment process: the "honeymoon", culture shock, recovery and adaptation/assimilation (Oberg 1954; Humphrey 1990). This conclusion was based on Oberg's anthropological observations of missionaries in Third World countries (Humphrey 1990). According to Humphrey the honeymoon phase is a result of "superficial" experiences and not enough contact with the new culture. When interaction does occur, cultural differences are realized and the result is "culture shock". The next stage includes "culture stress". It is the gradual acceptance of differences "characterized by a frustrating feeling of belonging to neither the native nor the host culture" (Humphrey 1990, p. 7). The fourth and final level in this process results in adaptation or

assimilation depending upon the individual and their goals within the host culture (i.e., permanent or temporary, sojourning or immigrating).

The "culture shock" phenomenon has received a great deal of attention in the literature. It is closely examined by Furnham and Bochner (1986) in *Culture Shock: Psychological Reactions to Unfamiliar Environments*. The term "culture shock" has been used to describe the impact of a new and different culture (Oberg 1960; Bennett 1977; Brislin 1981; Adler 1987, Furnham and Bochner 1986, Befus 1988). This stage of the adjustment process is considered to be an emotional period characterized by

an ebbing and flowing of exhilaration, anxiety, frustration, hostility, bewilderment, homesickness, denial, lethargy, and other reactions to stress [which] subside and eventually settle into a calming sea of relative adjustment to, and acceptance of, the other culture as just another way of construing reality (Furnham and Bochner 1986, p.xvii).

A broader view of the "culture shock" concept has been taken by Bennett (1977), who suggests that the transition experience occurs in a number of intercultural situations and that culture shock is only one aspect of change. According to Bennett, "culture shock" is a "subcategory of transition shock". Transition shock is described "as a state of loss and disorientation...experienced during any change in our familiar environment which requires adjustment" (p. 45).

A literal alphabet of theories concerning the adjustment process is included in the literature. The W-shaped hypothesis proposed in 1963 by Gullahorn and Gullahorn measures the sojourn experience at four stages: beginning, middle, end and return home. Satisfaction with experiences is shown to peak at the beginning and end of the sojourn and hit low points at the middle and returning stages. This high-low-high-low process forms the "W" shape. In terms of cross-cultural adjustment the "W" theory is considered by Brislin (1981) to be a "compelling depiction of people's experience" (p. 280) and suggests that "It is one of the few concepts shared by virtually all professionals involved in cross-cultural programs, rivaling only "culture shock" as a well-known starting point for analyzing sojourner's experiences" (p. 280). Coelho (1981) proposed a double "U-curve" theory stating that not only are the levels of changes in the new culture represented but also stages of re-entry into a sojourners' home culture. Selby and Woods describe a "V" curve based on results of a 1966 study. An inverted "U" curve of adjustment was demonstrated by

Becker (1968) based on research of students from Third World countries studying in the United States (Spaulding and Coelho 1980).

Time is the key element with these models. The length of the sojourn is viewed as having a direct affect on the experience itself. Although time is an important factor in the adjustment process, other variables may influence adjustment to and the degree of satisfaction with the overall sojourn experience. For example, academic, psychological and social aspects should be considered. The result of extreme differences in teaching/learning styles for students transferring from one educational system to another may result in academic difficulty. "The quality of the sojourn experience...[is] linked to the kinds of social networks that the sojourners have been able or unable to establish" (Furnham and Bochner 1982, p. 173).

An individual's personal traits, the severity of cultural difference, availability of support systems and language skills, as well as the time factor, may contribute to a positive or negative experience (Brislin 1981, Furnham and Bochner 1982, Thomas and Althen 1989). In addition, an international student's perceptions of study abroad and their personal expectations must be considered.

The temporal element and associated theoretical notions are a significant contribution to the literature on foreign student adjustment. However, they were not integrated into the present research for a number of reasons. For example, previous research which provided the basis for these models was undertaken at four-year colleges and universities. VCC is a "two-year" institution. Therefore, the objectives of this study did not include the temporal aspects of adjustment because the time element was questionable. This proved to be an appropriate decision. The results of this survey (reported in Chapter Five) indicate that the majority of respondents had been in Canada less than one year so that comparison to previous results would have been problematic.

Review of Related Research

Although foreign study is only one type of cross-cultural contact, according to Paige (1990), international students "exemplify many of the central issues in cross-cultural psychology" (p. 161). They bring contrasting cultural orientations to the 'host' culture, and these differences may result in adjustment problems. International students present an opportunity to observe and examine members of a particular

population as they adapt and adjust from one culture to another. Cross-cultural issues and problems of foreign student adaptation and success are areas of research on foreign students that have received considerable attention (Altbach 1985, 1989, 1991; Dunnett 1977; Lulat and Altbach 1985; Lulat 1984; Pedersen 1985).

Scholars have studied differences among cultures and the problems these differences present (Brislin 1981, 1990; Brislin, Cushner, Cherrie and Yong 1986; Pedersen 1985, 1980; Bochner 1982; Furnham and Bochner 1986; Coelho and Ahmed 1980). Studies of cross-cultural contact and adaptation can be categorized into broad topic areas: personal concerns, social adjustment and the educational experience (Eng and Menter 1984; Holdaway, Bryan and Allan 1988; Zelmer and Johnson 1988; White and White 1981). Within these areas factors that may affect adjustment and adaptation have been examined. Issues that have been examined include cross-cultural counselling, English Language proficiency, intercultural communication, differences in teaching and learning strategies, stress and coping behaviors, and financial concerns. A collection of reports on some of these topics is provided by Dunnett (1981) in *Factors Affecting the Adaptation of Foreign Students in Cross-Cultural Settings*.

Many comprehensive studies on adjustment issues have been initiated over the past two decades. In Canada, the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) has been responsible for conducting and sponsoring several studies to identify and investigate foreign student issues. Neice and Braun (1977) reported in *A Patron for the World?* on the results of an interview survey designed to solicit information regarding student satisfaction with their experience in Canada. Over 700 foreign students studying in Canada were included in this study. Incorporating questions from this study, de Vries and Richer (1988) surveyed over 2700 Canadian international students "to document the background and experiences of international students in Canada" (p. 1). *The Right Mix* (CBIE 1981a) addressed requisite language testing and admission to academic programs. *Closing Doors?* (1986) dealt with the problem of declining enrollment of foreign students in Canada (Fletcher 1989). In the 1987 and 1988 Annual Reports, this organization drew attention to many of the problems facing international students in Canada.

Two prominent American studies undertaken during the late 1970s were designed to analyse the issue of foreign student adaptation and the success or failure of these students to cope with and adjust to a new

culture and academic environment" (Hull 1978, Klineberg and Hull 1979). An investigation of the attitudes and intentions of foreign students in Australia, the U.S.A, Canada and France was conducted by G. Lakshmana Rao and reported in *The Brain Drain and Foreign Students* (1979). By comparing data from an Australian National University survey of overseas students in Australia to data obtained from similar surveys conducted in the U.S., Canada and France, Rao concluded that "stereotyped images about the problems and difficulties" of overseas students have been created by individuals working with those students and that the survey data suggests that "there is a significant difference between the problems perceived and the problems actually experienced by the respondents" (p. 100).

A number of university populations have been targeted for research on adjustment. Sharma (1973), sampled the international students enrolled in selected universities in the State of North Carolina in order to analyze experiences of non-European students. Surdham and Collins (1984) surveyed students from the University of Wyoming to investigate intercultural contact to determine relationships between the student's adaptation and specific variables such as personal background and family support. Carter and Sedlacek (1985) conducted a study of the needs, goals and interests of international students attending the University of Maryland. Perkins, Perkins, Guglielmino and Reiff (1977) identified some "significant differences in the adjustment problems of different national groups" (p. 382) enrolled in the University of Georgia.

"Alienation in International Students" and the effect of alienation on "retention, academic success, and satisfaction" have been discussed by Schram and Lauer (1988). Heikinheimo and Shute (1986) determined that language skills, academic issues and social interaction were the most difficult adjustment problems experienced by the international students attending a Canadian university. This conclusion was reached through qualitative methodology using interviews with and observations of international students attending a Canadian university.

Adjustment and the dilemmas of cross-cultural counseling of foreign students are reported in *Counseling Across Cultures* (Pedersen, Draguns, Lonner and Trimble 1989) and *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Counseling and Therapy* (Pedersen 1985; Hull 1985). Thomas and Althen (1989) present a case study on the challenges of "Counseling Foreign Students". They identify what they consider to be "distinctive" about foreign students; that is, foreign students are people in transition with different values

and face "pressures that do not afflict domestic students" (1989, p. 210). Pedersen (1985) suggests that international students require specialized treatment within an unfamiliar educational environment.

Language skills and communication studies in relation to adjustment have been reported in the literature on cross-cultural contact and have been included as components of research on foreign study (Bickley 1982; Argyle 1982; Dunnett 1981). Perspectives on language and culture, integrated learning and academic success have been discussed by Humphrey (1990), Pugh and Fenelon (1988) and Fletcher and Stren (1989). Burns (1991) presents an evaluation of English skills in his study of stress among foreign students studying in Australia. He suggests that "The difficulties with English lie in the fact that not only is it a second language but that the English the students learn in Asia was a standard English with formal grammar" (p. 66); that is, that slang, accent and language "speed" are considerably different once students are in an English speaking environment.

Cultural differences in teaching and learning have been explored. According to Wehrly (1988), the previous learning style of many international students has been "from rote memory. Being expected to synthesize and draw their own conclusions from what they read (in a foreign language) may be an entirely new assignment" (p. 5). Typically, North American teaching and learning emphasizes "individual autonomy and critical thinking". However, in Asian countries "social integration and responsibility" are encouraged (Pugh and Fenelon 1988). One author suggests that a successful cultural adjustment would be easier if the teacher taught in the student's language rather than the student learning in the teacher's language (Hofstede 1986).

Attending school in a foreign country can be an exciting and rewarding experience, but it is also challenging and often stressful. Stress among international students has been the subject of a fair amount of study. For example, authors have reported on the challenges of learning to deal with change and the adaptive behaviors utilized such as role learning and coping strategies (Coelho and Ahmed 1980; Pedersen 1980; Coelho 1981; Klineberg 1980). It has been suggested that the adjustment period, or period of change, can be a time of "disaster and desolation" or "adaptation and growth" (Coelho and Ahmed 1980). According to Pedersen (1980)

the circumstances encountered by foreign students suddenly and simultaneously impose a variety of competing and sometimes contradictory roles which must be learned. When the requirements of those roles are realistically perceived and effectively learned, the experience is likely to be successful, but when the roles are not accommodated, the resulting identity diffusion and role conflict may affect the students' emotional well-being, and present serious obstacles for achieving their educational objectives. (p. 295)

In addition to the cultural difficulties, foreign students also face many bureaucratic challenges. For example, one of the criticisms of the Royal Commission on Canadian Studies (Symons and Page 1984) was that international students were "subject to a bewildering array of restrictions and regulations over which they have no control and which are often unhelpful..." (p. 242).

Financing their international education can be a problem for foreign students. Foreign students are usually supported by family and friends (Holdaway, Bryan and Allen 1988; Rogers 1984), and have limited opportunities to earn an income while attending school. As well, in most of the Provinces of Canada as well as in many other countries, foreign students pay higher tuition fees than domestic students (Holdaway, Bryan and Allen 1988). Although differential fees are only one aspect of the economic situation, justification of the high cost of an education to international students has been argued in Great Britain, the United States, Australia and Canada (Belcher 1988; Mace 1987; Mooney 1987; Murphy 1987; Nicholls 1987; Symons and Page 1984; Altbach 1985, 1989).

The financial issues surrounding international education and foreign study have been debated by a number of educators and policy makers (e.g., CBIE 1981b, Throsby 1991). According to Altbach (1989), the economic realities of foreign students are very complicated. The true cost of international education to both home and host countries and their long-term economic implications are virtually unknown (Altbach 1989). Whether or not foreign students are an "Economic Benefit or Liability" has been questioned by Rogers (1984). He concludes through discussion of the issues that it is essential for institutions to have a clear understanding of the contributions of international students and a commitment to enrollment management. If this is the case, then "the economic benefits of enrolling foreign students far outweigh the liabilities" (Rogers 1984, p. 25).

Summary

In this chapter the terms "adjustment" and "adaptation" have been defined. As well, some of the concepts and theories pertaining to the adaptation of international students and the adjustment process have been reported and discussed. The complexities of and concern with the literature on foreign student issues have been noted, and, to conclude, a review of the extensive and diverse research including bibliographies, cross-cultural perspectives and studies related to many of the adjustment issues addressed in this study have been presented.

This review has shown that a great deal of research has focussed on the conceptualization of foreign student adaptation, student reactions and temporally based theories. Key adjustment issues including language skills, educational problems, social interaction, and financial concerns have been addressed qualitatively and quantitatively in earlier studies. Some of these have provided a focus for and have contributed to the design of this project. For example, research reported in Dunnett's (1981) *Factors Affecting the Adaptation of Foreign Students in Cross-Cultural Settings*, studies by Heikinheimo and Siute (1986), Perkins, *et. al.* (1977), Hull (1978) and Klineberg and Hull (1979), Holdaway, Bryan and Allan (1988), *etc.*, investigated many aspects of adjustment and have been incorporated into this research. The literature reviewed for this study generally does not emphasize international student concern with the issues of race and discrimination. However, the data collected in this study indicate that these issues may be items of concern for some of the students who were questioned.

Previous studies tend to view adjustment as a process primarily affecting the sojourner rather than as an opportunity for a mutually beneficial and rewarding cultural exchange. World-wide social, political and economic changes as well as the B.C. government's stated mission for international education require that a new perspective be introduced. That is, that the foreign student experience should be a two-way relationship benefitting the host institution and sojourner alike.

CHAPTER FOUR:

METHODOLOGY

The Questionnaire Survey

As previously stated, the goals of this research are to characterize VCC's international students, to solicit their views and opinions concerning their educational and personal experiences while attending the college, and to identify difficulties these students may have encountered as a result of those experiences. As outlined in the preceding chapters, the approach taken in conceiving and executing this study was to obtain aggregate data regarding student views on issues that they perceive to be problematic. It was intended that these students' concerns and suggestions be used to improve their experiences by implementing changes to the international program of the host institution. In addition, many of the adjustment issues were intended to be cross-tabulated with students' national origin to ascertain whether or not their concerns varied among these groups. To accomplish these objectives, a survey was undertaken of all currently registered VCC international students. The target population included students attending the City Centre, Langara and King Edward Campuses of the College in the spring of 1992.

This survey was designed not only for the collection of data for this investigation, but also to solicit information from students that could be useful to the administration of VCC's international education department. For example, staff of the international education department were interested to determine the country from which students had applied for admission to the college, and this query was included in the survey. The responses obtained only for the benefit of the college are not included in this report.

The instrument for collection of the data for this study was a questionnaire comprising 53 questions. Most of the questions were multiple choice with single or multiple response options, while others required a rating scale response (*e.g.*, from "not a problem" to a "big problem"). Seven questions were open-ended to permit students to express preferences, suggestions or comments, and to allow them to describe their experiences in their own words. A copy of the final version of the questionnaire and covering letter that was distributed is included in Appendix 1.

This questionnaire was constructed after reviewing previous research and consulting the instrumentation of others who had examined similar adjustment factors. The subject areas and variables

used in this project were incorporated from earlier studies. These studies were diverse and focussed on many different aspects of the foreign student experience. For example, academic, social, personal and psychological issues have commonly been examined in the literature. Some of the statements used to describe various adjustment difficulties and many of the questions included in this survey were extracted directly or adapted from earlier studies on foreign student issues (Holdaway, Bryan, and Allan 1988; Hull 1978; Klineberg and Hull 1979; Zelmer and Johnson 1988; Stafford, Marion and Salter 1980; Surdam and Collins 1984; Perkins *et al.* 1977; Heikinheimo and Shute 1986; Fletcher and Stern 1989; Burns 1991).

However, the primary models for this survey were The 1988 Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) *Survey of International Students in Canada* (de Vries and Richer 1988) and the 1992 B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education study entitled *British Columbia Public Post-Secondary International Student Survey* (Forsythe 1992). The CBIE project was intended to collect data to "document the background and experiences of international students in Canada" (de Vries and Richer 1988, p. 1). The CBIE research questions focussed on these issues: Preparing to Come to Canada, Experiencing Canada, Students Background; and Possible Changes [to International Education policies].

During the development of this thesis research project the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training was in the process of undertaking a province-wide study of international students. Permission was obtained to duplicate a number of questions contained in the Ministry-sponsored survey. The objective of the B.C. survey of post-secondary international students "was to obtain information on the international students' perspective of their experience of studying in British Columbia...[with the hope] that the survey results can be used to improve the quality of that experience" (Province of B.C. 1992, p. 2). The major topics of investigation in the MAETT survey were: (1) Demographics, (2) Preparing to Come to Canada, (3) Experiencing Schooling in Canada, and (4) Personal/Social/Cultural Experiences in Canada.

The goal of the survey sponsored by the Ministry of Advanced Education Training and Technology was similar to the purpose and objectives of the current study. That study is also concerned with international student characteristics and educational, personal, social and cultural experiences. However, it is suggested that the recorded experiences of the VCC "sub-population" of international students will provide not only an opportunity for in-depth study of some of the prominent issues within that institution,

but also will permit comparisons with the more extensive Provincial survey. Through this comparative process, issues may be identified which are unique to VCC. Or, problems may become apparent that affect not only students attending VCC, but international students enrolled at other provincially funded institutions.

The Pilot Study

Prior to distribution of the final questionnaire, a test questionnaire was administered to a small group of international students. These students were primarily English as a second language speakers. The objective of the pilot study was to test the survey questions for possible ambiguities and comprehension by second language speakers. With permission of the International Education Director of Camosun College, the pilot study was conducted by their International Education Counsellor. Approximately two hundred students are registered in Camosun's international program. These students are enrolled in a variety of courses and programs offered among three campuses. Questionnaires were distributed to ten randomly selected international students. A questionnaire and covering letter along with two dollars in cash and a self-addressed stamped envelope were distributed to the students through the counseling office. Appendix I contains a copy of the questionnaire that was given to the participants in the study. The pilot study produced a 100% rate of response.

The covering letter instructed the students to fill out and return the survey form. In addition to the questions to be investigated for this research project, the pilot questionnaire included questions regarding the survey itself. For example, the Camosun students were asked to list the questions they did not understand. They were asked to express their opinion about whether or not they felt other international students would experience difficulty in completing the questionnaire. None of the Camosun respondents listed any questions which they did not understand. However, two of the ten respondents felt that it was possible that students with very limited English skills would have difficulty with the questionnaire. Specifically, one student stated that good English skills were necessary to clearly express ideas and opinions. The other student asked that only "formal expressions" and not slang be used in the questionnaire. It is necessary to note, however, that with one exception, the Camosun respondents

indicated that they were enrolled in the university transfer program. This means that they would have been at an advanced ESL level.

As a result of this preliminary exercise it appeared that only a few of the survey questions were not easily understood by the Camosun students. The Camosun international counsellor suggested minor grammatical changes, and some questions were re-worded for clarity. Two questions regarding expenses were considered redundant and eliminated (*i.e.*, Nos. 36 and 37). As well, the decision was made to include "Did you have difficulty completing this questionnaire because of the level of your English" on the VCC survey to test for comprehension. However, over 90 percent of the VCC survey respondents stated that they did not have difficulty understanding the questions.

The data from the ten pilot questionnaires were coded, recorded in table form and returned to Camosun College for information. Student comments were listed in summary form so that individuals could not be identified through their responses. A few of the comments from the pilot study are notable. One student expressed a "Thank you for the two dollars!". Another offered help "if you ever need it from a student". One of the most significant and perhaps most enlightening comments, however, was made by a student who wrote, "No money, no study, said principal".

The Vancouver Community College Survey

As described above, the questionnaire was revised based on comments received through the Camosun pilot study. The new version of the survey was then presented for discussion and final review to a committee composed of VCC international education staff. One member of this group was an ESL instructor who serves as coordinator of the College's international education activities. During the course of this meeting this instructor offered to critique the survey questions. Obtaining the assistance of an English as a Second Language instructor with international education experience proved to be a very valuable contribution to the design of the final questionnaire.

As a result of the expertise and experience of this ESL instructor the final survey form was greatly improved. Formatting was streamlined, vocabulary simplified, verb tenses changed to be consistent and grammar was corrected. For example, "Please (✓) all campuses you are attending now" replaced "I am

currently attending (check all campuses you attend)". "Did you speak a second language in childhood? If yes, write the name of the language" was used instead of "Write the name of the second language if you spoke two languages about equally well in childhood". The term "understanding" was changed to "listening" and "interrupt" to "stop". "Have your experiences...been what you expected them to be? (Check one)", was replaced with "Describe your experiences at...". The pilot study version can be compared with the final format by referring to Appendices 1 and 2.

The Director of VCC's International Education Program offered two hundred dollars in prizes as an incentive for students to return completed questionnaires. A prize draw card was included with the survey form and a covering letter provided simple instructions to students regarding their participation in the project. The survey "package" contained: (1) a questionnaire, (2) a covering letter, (3) a prize draw entry card, (4) a small envelope marked "prize draw", and (5) a large envelope marked "return by VCC campus mail". To ensure anonymity and confidentiality students were instructed to insert and seal the entry card into a small separate envelope and to place it along with the completed questionnaire inside the larger one. Students were asked to drop off the envelopes at the following VCC Campus locations: the Registrar's office, any Departmental office or the Counselling Centre. Appendix 2 contains a copy of the VCC survey questionnaire.

Methodological Considerations

"Methodological weaknesses" have been addressed by some researchers with respect to data and data collection on foreign students (Grisbacher 1991; Pedersen, 1980; Klineberg and Hull 1979). For example, the very nature of the survey instrument invites abuse. Students voluntarily answer and return questionnaires. Therefore, students who choose to comply with the research may have their own reasons for participating in the project. Their views may not necessarily be representative of the student population as a whole.

A number of potential biases are noted by Grisbacher (1991). "Findings from survey data often are superficial and limited, and there is extremely limited experimental control" (p. 9). Respondent truthfulness, cultural sensitivity, English language comprehension and the point in time [at] which the data

are collected may affect survey results, [or] students may reply to questions with answers that they think researchers want to hear. Results obtained from questionnaires translated into a student's native language may differ from those obtained via the English version. As well, "Non-longitudinal studies fail to adequately account for certain changes which have occurred over time" and conclusions may be attributed to relationships that would not be observed at a later date (Grisbacher 1991, p 10). According to Pedersen (1980)

The research on sojourner adjustment is so varied, divergent and unrelated in its approaches that it is difficult to develop any theoretical consistency among research results. The population of "foreign students" is itself so diverse that, even when the same issues are being researched, the findings are often contradictory. Some of the more frequent approaches to describing or explaining the adjustment process of foreign students depend on curves or stages of adjustment, cultural shock, personality typologies and traits, background and situational factors, and social interaction (p. 300).

There are factors relevant to this VCC study that could have influenced the students' responses. Prior to the distribution of the survey two significant events took place. A very lengthy faculty strike closed two of the three college campuses for five weeks. One of the negotiated settlements to the strike was a reduction in scheduled classroom instruction. And, a few months later a substantial tuition fee increase was implemented. It is possible that these events prompted angry students to use the survey as a vehicle to express their dissatisfaction.

In addition, there are unique aspects to the International Education Program of Vancouver Community College which should be noted. For example, ESL courses are segregated into domestic or international classes. International students are restricted to international sections of language training courses, and they are not integrated into classes with "new Canadians".

The student population of the King Edward Campus is primarily composed of "new Canadians". For the most part these students are all ages, part-time and many are sponsored by various government agencies. They attend KEC to study English, complete high school and/or upgrade academic skills. A large proportion of the student population are immigrants from Southeast Asia and South America. The majority of VCC's international students also come from Southeast Asia. Therefore, the international and domestic students are not "western" Canadian. This could be a problem for international students arriving in Canada with the expectation that their classmates will be "typically" Canadian.

Another point of contention has been the process of English language assessment and placement. Upon arrival students are given an "in-house" English language assessment developed by VCC instructors. Scores obtained on this test determine a student's language level placement, that is, beginner, intermediate, advanced, college preparatory or post-secondary. Many students are disappointed with their test results. Some students had intended to enroll in university level courses at the Langara Campus, but are not able to do so because of their assessment results. It can take one, two or additional semesters for some students to acquire the requisite English Language skills to transfer to Langara. At approximately \$3,000 per semester this is a significant financial setback.

Summary

The methodology applied to this research project was explained, and the design and development of the questionnaire used in this study have been summarized in this chapter. The purpose and objectives of the pilot study conducted at Camosun College and the results of that activity have been reported and discussed. As well, the manner in which the questionnaire was distributed to the VCC international students is outlined. Methodological considerations noted in previous research and some of the events which may have influenced the views and opinions of the participants of the study have also been acknowledged.

CHAPTER FIVE:

REPORT OF SURVEY RESPONSES

Introduction

To facilitate summarizing the results of this survey, the questionnaire responses have been organized into three sections. These sections are divided according to the objectives of this study. The first part contains the students' responses to questions of a personal nature. These questions were designed to obtain a characteristic profile of the respondents. Also included in this section are the students' responses relating to the degree of difficulty experienced for specific adjustment issues in each of the following categories: personal, educational, financial, logistical and social issues. Questions concerning "personal" and "educational" issues have been subdivided according to related topics. For example, personal characteristics were separated from personal concerns, and the section on education was split into two parts: language skills and instructional method. Some of the topics associated with these themes include:

1. personal:

a) characteristics: age, gender, citizenship, length of time in Canada, *etc.*

b) concerns: *e.g.*, loneliness, homesickness, nutrition

2. educational:

a) language skills: reading, writing, comprehension

b) instructional methods: similarities/differences to home country

3. financial: living expenses, tuition fees, sponsorship

4. logistical: immigration, accommodation, *etc.*

5. social: making friends, Canadian customs

The second section includes the students' views and opinions about their expectations with regard to their experience at VCC. These views and opinions were drawn from the open-ended questions presented in the survey. Statements about and comments concerning what the students' felt to be their "best" and "worst" encounters during their programs are also reported.

Part three of this chapter contains a summary of a contingency table analysis of the survey results. Many of the survey questions concerning specific adjustment issues were intended to be cross-tabulated

with the students' country of citizenship (national origin). The purpose of this exercise was to determine differences among citizenship groups and identify potentially important relationships in the data. Patterns which became evident through cross-tabulation were then examined more closely to determine whether or not they were statistically significant.

A comparison of the findings of this study to those of previous research is presented at the conclusion of this chapter.

Rate of Response

Of the 492 surveys distributed *via* campus mail and delivered by staff and/or instructors, 211 were directed to the Langara campus, 277 to King Edward and four to City Centre. Seventy-five were returned as undeliverable.

Most of the undeliverable packages were returned from the Langara campus. There are a number of possible explanations for this. For example, some of these students may have either discontinued their program of study or transferred to other institutions. Moreover, during this particular semester approximately 30 Langara

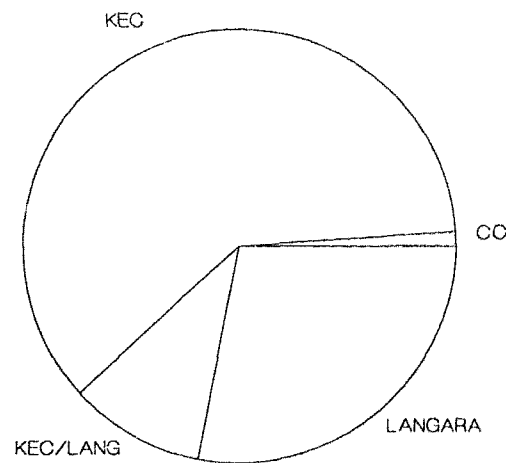


Figure 2. Distribution of Respondents over Campuses; CC = City Centre, KEC = King Edward Campus, Lang = Langara

international students had been required to withdraw due to low academic standing (*i.e.*, g.p.a. below 1.50).

A 45% response rate was calculated by subtracting the number of undeliverable questionnaires from the total number prepared and mailed out, and dividing the total number of questionnaires returned (186) by the result. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents were attending the Langara campus, 60.8% King Edward, 1.1% City Centre and 10.2% were concurrently enrolled at both Langara and KEC (Figure 2).

Personal Issues

Personal Characteristics:

The ages of respondents to the VCC International student survey range from 15 years to over 35 years. The largest number were between 20 and 24 years (Figure 3). Females comprised 64% and males 36% of individuals in this age range. Most students were born in Hong Kong,

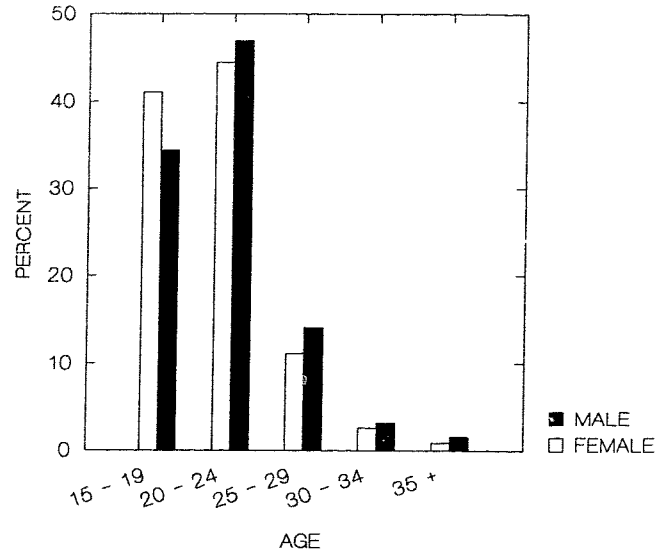


Figure 3. Age Distribution of Male and Female Respondents

Country	Birth	Citizen
Hong Kong	39.8%	37.1%
Taiwan	27.5	28.0
Japan	14.0	14.0
Singapore	4.8	4.8
China	4.3	3.2
Malaysia	3.2	3.8
Korea	2.2	1.6
Portugal		1.1
Africa	0.5	1.1
Philippines	0.5	0.5
Unknown	3.2	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents' Birth Country/Citizenship

school either 12, 13 or 14 years prior to admission to VCC. Figure 4 shows the distribution of years of schooling for the respondents to the survey.

Personal Concerns:

Students were asked to indicate the degree to which various areas of adjustment had caused them difficulty. There were four choices presented: "no problem, "somewhat of a problem", "a big problem" or "does not apply". Table 4 shows the students' opinions

Taiwan and Japan: 39.8%, 27.5%, and 14% respectively. Most of the remainder came from Singapore, China, Malaysia and Korea, but students from Africa, Portugal and the Philippines also responded to the survey (Table 1).

Forty-nine percent of the international students participating in the study had been in Canada one year or less (Table 2). Of the students who returned the survey 22% began their studies in September of 1991 and 49.5% in January 1992 (Table 3). Most of the students in this study had attended

Months	Canada	B.C.
Unknown	2.69%	2.15%
0 - 12	49.46	50.00
13 - 24	30.11	30.11
25 - 36	11.29	11.29
37 - 48	3.76	3.76
49 - 60	2.15	2.15
60 +	0.54	0.54
Total	100.00	100.00

Table 2. Length of Time in Canada and B.C.

Term	Percent
Fall '87	0.5
Fall '88	1.1
Sum '89	0.5
Fall '89	2.7
Spr '90	6.5
Sum '90	3.2
Fall '90	5.4
Spr '91	1.6
Sum '91	4.8
Fall '91	22.0
Spr '92	49.5
Unknown	2.1
Total	99.9

Table 3. Respondents' Entry Dates

25% and somewhat of a problem for 37% of these students. Family pressure, separation from friends, homesickness and loneliness also presented problems for well over 50% of the survey participants.

of the degree to which a variety of personal concerns constitute problems for them.

Health and "getting the kind of food I'm used to" were no problem for over 70% of the students. The stress of academic work was a major problem for

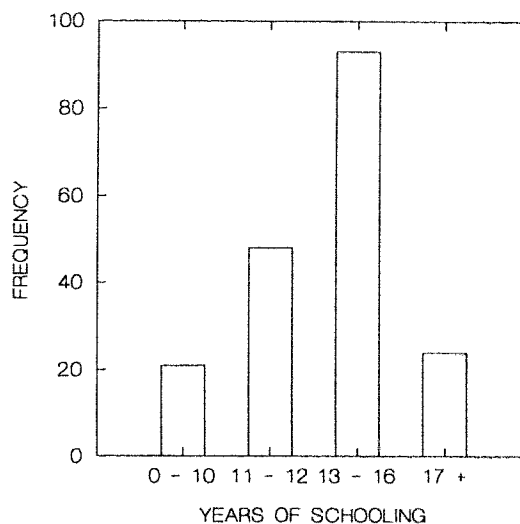


Figure 4. Distribution of Respondents' Years of Schooling

Issues	Responses				
	Unknown	Not a Problem	Somewhat a Problem	Major Problem	N/A
Eating Canadian Food	0.54	66.67	24.73	2.69	5.38
Getting kind of food I'm used to	1.61	73.12	20.97	3.23	1.08
Family pressure to do well	.54	41.40	38.17	16.13	3.76
Loneliness	.54	44.62	40.32	12.90	1.61
Homesickness	1.08	40.86	44.09	12.90	1.08
Problems with my health	.54	77.42	17.20	2.69	2.15
Separation from family	1.08	50.00	37.10	9.14	2.69
Separation from friends	.54	38.17	46.24	13.98	1.08
Stress of academic work	1.61	33.33	37.63	25.81	1.61

Table 4. Distribution of Responses to Personal Issues

Educational Issues

The majority of respondents to the VCC survey were enrolled in an English as a Second Language program (34.4%) or a University Transfer program (28%). The remaining students were in combined

programs such as High School Completion or University Transfer and College Preparatory English or English as a Second Language (37%) (Figure 5). One hundred and forty-one students or 76% stated that their main reason for studying at VCC was to gain admission to college or university; sixty students (32%) indicated that their goal was to improve English language skills; only 12% were attending VCC to complete high school.

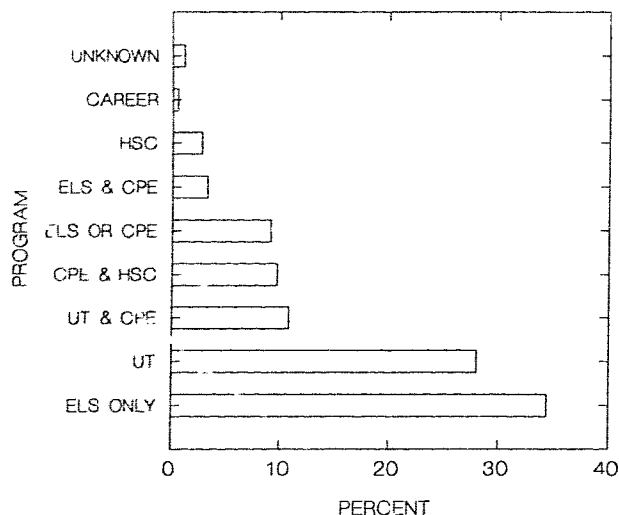


Figure 5. Distribution of Respondents over Programs. ELS = English Language Skills; UT = University Transfer; CPE = College Preparatory English; HSC = High School Completion

Language Skills:

Cantonese is the primary or first language of 36.5% of the international students completing this survey. Additional first languages include Japanese, Taiwanese, Mandarin and Chinese (which includes different dialects). Swahili, Icelandic, Korean and English are also represented (Table 5).

The students were asked to rate themselves as "not very good", "good" or "very good" in four English language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Just over half of the students felt their listening and reading skills were good. About forty-six percent felt their writing was either good or not very good (Table 6). Students were also asked to rank these same English language skills on a scale from "no problem" to "a big problem". Equal numbers of respondents felt that writing English was either no problem or a big problem and more than 50% considered writing

First Language	Percent
Cantonese	36.5
Mandarin	21.0
Japanese	12.4
Chinese	8.6
Taiwanese	9.6
English	6.5
Korean	2.2
Icelandic	1.6
Swahili	0.5
Unknown	1.1
Total	100.0

Table 5. Distribution of Respondents' Language

Skill	Response				Total
	Not Very Good	Good	Very Good	Unknown	
Listening	29.6	52.2	17.7	0.5	100%
Speaking	40.8	47.3	10.8	1.1	100
Reading	32.8	53.7	12.4	1.1	100
Writing	46.8	46.2	5.9	1.1	100

Table 6. Respondents' Ratings of English Language Skills

to be somewhat of a problem; over 75% of the students felt that writing was either somewhat of a problem or a major problem. Almost half of all students in the study indicated that all of these skills were somewhat of a problem (Table 7).

Skill	Response					Total
	No Problem	Somewhat a Problem	Major Problem	N/A	Unknown	
Speaking English	34.95	47.85	15.59	1.08	0.54	100.0%
Writing English	21.51	55.91	21.51	0.54	0.54	100.0
Listening	40.86	46.77	10.75	0.54	1.08	100.0
Reading English	38.71	50.54	9.68	0.54	0.54	100.0

Table 7. Respondents' Assessments of their English Language Skills

Instructional Method:

A list of educational activities was provided, and respondents were asked to indicate which of these activities they felt caused them difficulty because of their language skills. In addition, they were asked to identify difficulties with the same activities they felt were problematic as a result of VCC's instructional method. Writing essays, participating in class discussions and writing examinations were most often considered to be difficult due to the students' language ability (Table 8). And, although 83% of responses indicated that the instructional method employed by VCC was different from the instructional method in the home country, 30.5% did not think the instructional method was the reason for their learning difficulties. Typically, the difference in instructional method is considered to be "rote" learning and examination versus critical thinking and active class participation.

Problem	English Skills*	Instructional Method*
Coping with teaching method at VCC	7	
Listening to my instructors	15	11
Understanding content of lectures	25	12
Taking notes in class	29	23
Answering questions in class	32	20
Participating in class discussions	46	32
Writing essays	103	48
Writing examinations	41	20
None of the above	35	73

Table 8. Problems Experienced due to Language Skills and Instructional Method; * Number of responses recorded; because multiple responses were possible, the number of responses does not add to the total number of respondents

Financial Issues

One hundred and seventy-two of the 186 students who participated in this survey were funded by their parents. Typically, they considered themselves to be of average wealth in their home country (Figure 6).

Generally, students did not believe that their financial situation affected their studies at VCC, but 5% reported having to discontinue school because of financial problems. Obtaining money for tuition and living expenses was a concern for almost 30% of the students. Overall, finances were not a problem for more than 60% and somewhat of a problem for less than 25%. Tuition was a big problem for

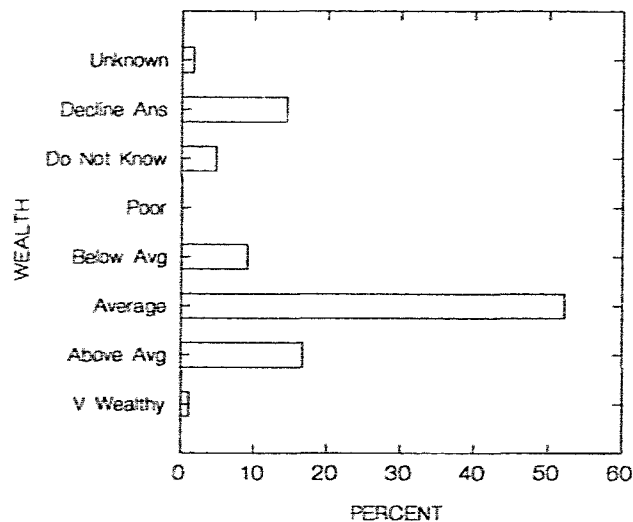


Figure 6. Distribution of Wealth of Respondents' Families

13% of the students (Table 9). Only 17% of the students in the study felt that studying at VCC was worth the amount of tuition they are required to pay. Seventy percent either were not sure or did not feel studying at VCC was worth the money paid for tuition fees (Figure 7).

Financial Problem	Response					Total
	No Problem	Somewhat a Problem	Major Problem	N/A	Unknown	
Paying Rent	68.23	16.13	2.69	10.75	2.15	100.0%
Tuition Fees	62.90	20.43	13.44	1.61	1.61	100.0
Books/Supplies	73.12	18.28	4.84	1.61	2.15	100.0
Food	79.03	13.98	1.08	3.23	2.69	100.0
Transportation	84.95	9.14	2.15	1.61	2.15	100.0
Clothing	62.90	20.97	6.99	7.53	1.61	100.0
Leisure Activities	63.98	24.73	4.30	4.30	2.69	100.0
Getting money from home	64.52	22.04	6.45	3.76	3.23	100.0

Table 9. Respondents' Assessments of Financial Problems

Logistical Issues

Immigration officials did not present a major problem for the students. Most students either did not meet with immigration officials or did not have any difficulty. Nearly, one-third of the international students in this study experienced some difficulty with immigration

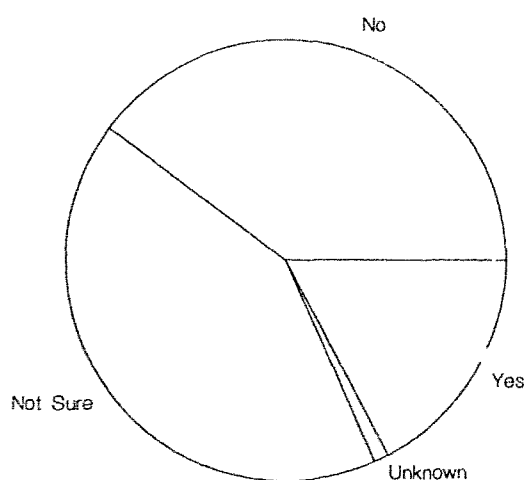


Figure 7. Opinion of Value for Tuition Fees

officials in Canada with the figure being somewhat lower for difficulty with officials in their home country (Table 10).

Response	Home Country	Canada
Did not meet immigration officials	46.7%	21.6%
Had no difficulty at all	31.2	41.9
Had some difficulty	19.4	31.7
Had considerable difficulty	2.7	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 10. Respondents' Assessment of Difficulties with Immigration Officials in Home Country and in Canada

Homestay arrangements for accommodation were not an issue with this group. Eighty-four percent indicated either that they were not living with a homestay family or that homestay was not a problem.

Transportation, housing, and climate appear to be considered problematic for about one-third of these students. The majority indicated that they had experienced no problems as a result of the items included as logistical aspects of their international experience (Table 11).

Problem	Response					Total
	No Problem	Somewhat a Problem	Major Problem	N/A	Unknown	
Transportation	65.59	27.42	4.30	1.61	1.08	100.0%
Finding Suitable Housing	55.38	26.88	9.14	7.53	1.08	100.0
Coping with B.C. Climate	66.13	29.03	2.15	1.61	1.08	100.0
Homestay	35.48	11.29	3.76	48.92	0.54	100.0

Table 11. Respondents' Assessments of Logistical Problems

Social Issues

Fifty-eight percent of the VCC students participating in this study almost always or often spend time with students from their home country (Figure 8), and 60% indicated that they have no problem making friends with other international students. Making friends with Canadians, however is a major problem for over 40% of the students.

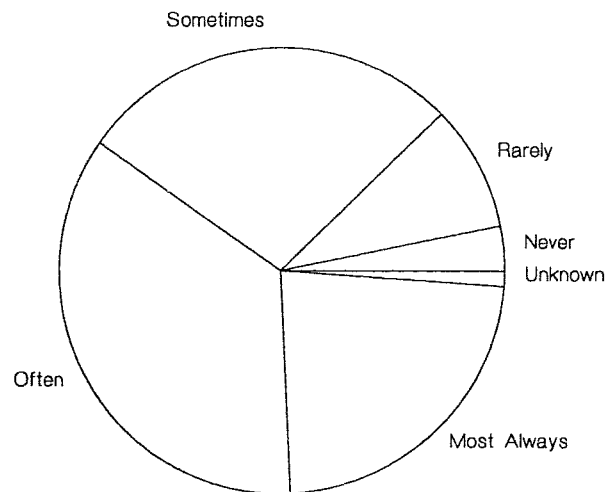


Figure 8. Amount of Time spent with Students from Home Country

Forty-three percent of the students felt that poor treatment because of their race or national origin (discrimination) presents somewhat of a problem, but an equal percentage did not consider this to be the case. Poor treatment because of religious belief was no problem for 80% of the students. Survey results

concerning discrimination and poor treatment are reported here under the "Social" category. But, it should be recognized that conceptually these particular issues could have "personal" implications. As noted earlier, the literature and surveys on which the questionnaire was modeled did not emphasize issues of racism and discrimination but focussed on other areas of personal adjustment. Regardless of the category under which the data are reported, it is important to point out that the data collected in this study do suggest that this is an area of concern for many of the survey respondents.

Canadian social customs were no problem for just over 50% and somewhat of a problem for 36%. The students' opinions of the level of difficulty they have experienced because of these social issues are illustrated in Table 12.

Problem	Response					Total
	No Problem	Somewhat a Problem	Major Problem	N/A	Unknown	
Making friends with Canadians	17.74	37.63	41.94	2.15	0.54	100.0%
Making friends with other international students	60.22	30.65	4.84	2.15	2.15	100.0
Coping with Canadian Social Customs	51.61	36.56	8.06	3.23	0.54	100.0
Poor treatment because of race or origin	43.55	43.01	6.99	5.38	1.08	100.0
Poor treatment because of my religion	80.65	3.76	0.54	14.52	0.54	100.0

Table 12. Respondents' Assessments of Social Problems

Student Views and Opinions

The students surveyed were presented with a number of open-ended questions designed to ascertain their opinion of their experiences at VCC. For example, the international students were asked to describe their experiences as either completely as expected, somewhat as expected or not at all as expected. Seventy-four percent of the students described their overall

Response	Percent
Completely as Expected	6.45
Somewhat as Expected	74.73
Not at all as Expected	17.21
Unknown	1.61
Total	100.00

Table 13. Respondents' Assessments of Experience vs Expectations

experiences at VCC as only somewhat as expected (Table 13). If the students' experience was not as expected, they were instructed to indicate why they felt that the experience was not as they had anticipated.

Almost half of the total number of respondents (84) wrote down one or more reasons why they felt that their experience was not as expected. The reasons were quite varied, but the majority of the remarks were related either to problems with the educational system including instructors and the instructional method, and/or the inability to make Canadian friends. Students complained about their initial English language placement within the college system and about their rate of acquisition of English language skills. They criticized the availability of courses, class examinations, the amount of instruction provided (hours per week), course workload (too much or too little), the timetable of classes, *etc.*

Most social concerns were related to difficulties in making friends and meeting western Canadians. Many students felt that there were too many "Asians" or students from their home country in their classes. As a result they spoke their native language and were not able to practice speaking English. Some students remarked that they did not think "Canadians" were "friendly" and that there were "hints of racism".

Many students commented on various administrative aspects of the international program. For example, students were very unhappy about being required to enroll in English language courses and attend the King Edward Campus when they had expected to be at the university transfer level and studying at the Langara campus. Frustration and disappointment with the course planning and advising process was expressed. A few students felt that there should be more extracurricular activities. And, although this particular question seems to have presented students with an opportunity to complain and criticize, many of the responses were very positive. Comments such as "On the whole, VCC is a great place to study" and "I didn't expect teachers to be friendly" were noted.

Students were asked to identify and describe their "best" and "worst" experience at VCC. Almost 80 percent of the respondents completed these two questions. The observations were diverse, and, as above, most comments were related to educational and social experiences. However, some students included the cost of tuition and the tuition fee increase as their worst experience. On balance, the majority of international students in this study considered interactions with instructors and the instructional method to be either their best or worst experience.

Rating	Percent
Very Positive	11.8
Somewhat Positive	32.8
Mixed	46.8
Somewhat Negative	7.5
Very Negative	1.1
Total	100.0

Table 14. Respondents' Rating of their Overall Experience at VCC

Making friends, meeting "people from other countries", and learning or improving English language skills were considered to be some of the best experiences. Facilities such as the library, learning centre and language laboratory were favorably noted. Worst encounters included learning or improving English language skills, English language level placement, the strike, too many non-westerners, and the system of course planning. The student's responses to these questions were very similar to their comments about their expectations. Overall, the students rated their experiences at VCC as "somewhat positive" to "mixed" (Table 14).

Contingency Table Analyses

While a number of personal characteristic such as age, gender and length of time in Canada may affect the experiences of international students, one of the objectives of this study is to ascertain whether or not adjustment issues differ among students of different national origins. Therefore, survey questions regarding personal, educational, financial, logistical and social adjustment issues were cross-tabulated with country of citizenship. The majority of students responding to this survey (n = 183) are citizens of Hong Kong (37.1%), Taiwan (27.9%) and Japan (13.9%). The remaining 20% of survey participants represented citizenship of at least seven different countries (Table 1). Because of this the cross-tabulation analysis focuses on variability in responses among these three groups. Contingency tables are contained in Appendix 3.

As previously stated, the purpose of this exercise is to identify potentially important relationships between adjustment issues and the students' home country which became evident through analysis of the survey data. Contingency table analysis was used to determine the statistical significance of these relationships. The following summary addresses primarily those adjustment issues exhibiting significant differences among the citizenship categories described above.

Personal Concerns and Country of Citizenship

Among the four groups, a significant difference ($p=.045$) was noted for "Eating Canadian Food" for students from Taiwan (Table 15). Concerns for "Health" (Table 16), "Being separated from friends in my home country" (Table 17) and the "Stress of Academic work" (Table 18) appear to vary significantly with

citizenship. In general, students from Hong Kong, Japan and Taiwan registered moderate concern over their health more frequently than did students from "other" countries. Students from Taiwan seem to exhibit marginally less concern over separation from friends. Japanese students seem to suffer less stress due to academic work, while students from "other" countries feel, on balance, that stress associated with their studies is more of a concern.

No significant differences among citizenship categories were evident on the variable of "Loneliness". However, Table 19 suggests that students in the heterogeneous "Other" group experience loneliness somewhat more than those students from the Pacific Rim countries of Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan.

Educational Issues and Country of Citizenship

Language Skills

Question 22 of the survey instructed students to rate themselves on the following English Language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Variation in responses over citizenship was highly significant ($p=.000$) for each of these skill categories (Tables 20, 21, 22, 23). Responses to this question vary among the culture groups. For example, Taiwanese and "Other" students differ in their perception of their Writing and Reading abilities. Japanese and "other" students differ from Hong Kong and Taiwan students in their assessment of their English speaking skills; "others" seem to be very different in responses describing their listening skills.

In a similar question, the respondents were asked to rank these same skills on a scale of "not a problem", "somewhat of a problem" or a "big problem". Again, the nature of responses appears to be related to country of citizenship. The Japanese students and those students classified as "Other" seem to differ consistently from Hong Kong and Taiwan students (Tables 24, 25, 26, 27).

In Question 23 of the survey, students were asked whether or not they attributed difficulties in a variety of instructional activities to their level of English. The Japanese ($p=.046$) and Taiwanese ($p=.001$) students differed significantly in their response to "taking notes in class" (Table 28) and "participation in class discussions" (Table 29).

Instructional Method

In Question 25 of the survey students were presented with the same instructional activities as in Question 23. They were asked to indicate which of the activities they felt were problematic because of the instructional method. The statistical calculations suggest that "listening to instructors" ($p=.013$) is significant and "taking notes in class" ($p=.056$) is marginally significant for the Japanese students (Tables 30, 31). The students from Japan also perceive the instructional method to be different from that in their home country, but it is not possible to ascertain the nature of the perceived differences as elicited on the questionnaire. Responses from the students in the "Other" category are also significant in this regard (Table 32).

Financial Issues and Country of Citizenship

The responses on three financial issues show significant differences for international students from Japan and Taiwan: paying rent ($p=.040$), paying tuition fees ($p=.000$) and getting money from home ($p=.004$). None of the Taiwanese participants felt that paying rent or getting money from home was a big problem (Table 33, 34, 35).

Logistical Issues and Country of Citizenship

Of all the potential "logistical" problems presented to students, only responses to difficulties with transportation ($p=.010$) and immigration in Canada ($p=.000$) and in the students' home country ($p=.035$) were significant. Transportation was clearly less of a problem for students from Taiwan as compared to the students from the other citizenship groups (Table 36). According to the students' responses, Immigration officials in Canada were more of a problem for Taiwanese students and, generally, no problem for students from Hong Kong (Table 37). Japanese students had somewhat of a problem with immigration officials in their home country which is significant as compared to the experiences of the other groups of students (Table 38).

Social Issues and Country of Citizenship

The only social issue in this subject area which was nominally significant was "Being treated poorly because of religion" ($p=.055$). This statistical significance is related to the Japanese students perception that this was somewhat of a problem for them (Table 39).

Overall Experience and Citizenship

In this survey, students were asked to rate their overall experience as "very positive", "somewhat positive", "mixed", "somewhat negative" or "very negative". It is disturbing that almost half of the respondents rated their overall experience at VCC as "mixed" (Table 14). There are no significant differences related to country of citizenship evident in the responses to this question. In fact, the students' opinions in this matter are, surprisingly consistent (Table 40) with the exception that Japanese students tended to give a "positive" response a little more frequently than other students.

Summary

On balance, the findings of the VCC survey are consistent with those of other studies; that is, educational issues, particularly English language proficiency and instructional methods, as well as social interaction with local students (*e.g.*, making friends) have previously been identified to be most problematic for international students. In addition, academic stress, separation from family and homesickness have been noted as difficult for these students (Mickle 1984; Hull 1978; Klineberg and Hull 1979; Burns 1991; Holdaway, Bryan and Allan 1988; Stafford, Marion and Salter 1980; Perkins *et al.* 1977; Fletcher and Stren 1989; Surdam and Collins 1984; Heikinheimo and Shute 1986; Zelmer and Johnson 1988).

The results of the VCC survey differ from previous reports in at least two areas: financial resources and overall sojourn satisfaction. In most research financial issues have been noted to be of great concern to students. However, the VCC students did not report a great deal of difficulty with finances. As well, earlier Canadian studies suggest that international students have generally been pleased with their overall educational experience (Holdaway, Bryan and Allan 1988; Fletcher and Stren 1989; Neice and Braun 1977; Zelmer and Johnson 1989). But, clearly, VCC internationals are not satisfied with their overall experience.

Discussion of the survey results continues in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIX:

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

In this final chapter, the characteristic profile of the international students represented by this survey is presented. The views and opinions of the respondents regarding their personal, educational, financial, logistical and social experiences while attending the College are discussed and, as appropriate, compared to previous research on adjustment issues. By reporting the student's concerns in this way, it may be possible to identify some of the difficulties these students have encountered as a result of those experiences, and place the experiences of the VCC students in perspective.

Respondent Profile

The VCC students represented in this study are primarily citizens of Hong Kong and countries of the Pacific Rim. The Provincial Government's Pacific Rim Initiatives Program, the British Columbia Selection Offices in Southeast Asia and VCC's marketing activities in Hong Kong appear to have contributed to attracting large numbers of students from this area to Vancouver Community College. Most of the respondents are female and between the ages of 20 and 24 years. These students are most often funded by their parents and consider themselves to be from families of average wealth.

The largest percentage of students completing this survey had been in British Columbia two years or less and, for the most part, had previously completed twelve or more years of education. Students surveyed represented enrollment at all of the College campuses. And, the respondents were distributed among most of the VCC programs available to international students. However, the majority of responses were from those students enrolled at the King Edward Campus in English as a Second Language programs. Improving English language skills was considered to be an important reason for studying at VCC. Nevertheless, the students surveyed indicated that their main reason for choosing to study at VCC was to gain admission to university.

Discussion of the Respondents' Views and Opinions of Adjustment Issues

The majority of students participating in this study rated their overall experience at VCC as only "somewhat positive" or "mixed". This pattern was consistent over all groups. Furthermore, in the students' opinion their VCC experience was only "somewhat" as they had expected it to be. But, perhaps the most alarming of all of the responses was the students' perception that studying at VCC was either not worth the cost, or that they were unsure that studying at VCC was worth the amount of tuition charged. A number of difficulties identified by the international students in this survey may have contributed to this view. Therefore, it may be possible to improve the students' outlook by addressing some of the difficulties they have experienced.

Personal Issues

Stress of academic work and family pressure were most problematic for all of the students surveyed. However, academic stress appears to be less of a problem for students from Japan. It is widely recognized that Japanese students are subject to intensive schooling in their home country. These students' well-disciplined study habits may be carried forward to their international studies and result in academic stress being less of a problem than it is for those students who do not receive such rigorous training. Or, it is possible that the absence of family pressure enables the students' to feel less stressful toward their studies.

Generally, the respondents did not view issues such as "Eating Canadian Food", "Getting the kind of food I'm used to" and health as very difficult issues. But, there are some differences among national groups in regard to these issues.

Overall, loneliness and homesickness tend to be either somewhat of a problem or not a problem with equal frequency. But, when the issue of loneliness is cross-tabulated according to citizenship status, apparently it is viewed as more of a problem for students classified as "other". It is not difficult to suggest an explanation for this finding. It has been noted that the "other" group comprise smaller numbers of students from several countries. It is reasonable to conclude that these students would feel more "isolated" than would those who are surrounded by larger numbers of peers from their home countries. It is then predictable perhaps, that these students would respond differently.

The perceptions expressed by the VCC students do not appear to agree with the results of a Canada-wide survey conducted in 1988. In the earlier survey, loneliness and being separated from family was rated as more problematic, with 80% of the students from Hong Kong indicating that they perceived loneliness to be severe (de Vries and Richer 1988). The demographics of the greater Vancouver area reflect a substantial population of individuals from Hong Kong. It is probable, therefore, that the Hong Kong International students feel more at home in Vancouver.

As well, most of the students responding to this survey have been in British Columbia a relatively short time. In fact, almost 50% had just begun their studies during the term the survey data were collected. It is likely, therefore, that many of the students in this study were still in the initial stages of the adjustment process, that is, in the "honeymoon" phase (Oberger 1960). Some issues may tend to become more problematic the longer the student is associated with the college.

Educational Issues

Examination of the questions concerning the students' expectations and experiences reveal three recurring themes. Two of these are educational: English language ability and issues related to instructional matters; the third is social: "making friends with Canadians". Almost an equal number of the students claimed that their experiences with instructors and instruction have been either their best or their worst experience.

Most of the students surveyed indicated that they were attending VCC to gain access to university. It is probable that this goal influenced the students' views of their College experience. For example, attendance at VCC could be seen as a means of gaining access to a university. Therefore, given the opportunity, students may have preferred to enter university directly but were not qualified to do so. In other words, attending VCC is a "second" choice.

Students reported their disappointment with English language level placements within the college, the rate at which their English skills improved, and that there were too many students from their home country in their classes. The dissatisfaction with language level placement may be attributed to the process used by the college to place the international students into courses and programs. The Test of English as a Foreign

Language (TOEFL) score is used as part of the admission criteria, but final acceptance into courses or programs is based on results of the English Language Assessment (ELA). The ELA was developed by VCC staff and determines a student's placement level within the VCC ESL curriculum.

All international students are required to take the ELA. Students from Hong Kong have the opportunity to take the ELA through the VCC Hong Kong office prior to departure. However, students who apply from other countries must take this assessment shortly after arrival in Vancouver. The students' perception of their English language abilities do not always agree with their English language assessment results. In fact, the students' views of their English language proficiency differed among citizenship groups. Overall, writing and speaking skills were considered to be the most problematic. On the whole, however, almost half of the students surveyed rated their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as good to very good.

In some cases students who intend to enter the high school completion or university transfer programs are required to improve their language skills before they can qualify for that program. This may be especially disconcerting for students who perceive that they are qualified to access directly the university transfer program. These students are required to enroll in English as a second language courses either concurrently with entry, or before they can enter the university transfer program. This can have a major impact on students in terms of time and money, and can be viewed as important because a full-time English program can cost over \$3600 per term.

Overall, the international students' informal comments regarding instructors and instructional methods were, by far, the most numerous. Their remarks reflect dissatisfaction with many aspects of their educational experience. However, one might expect similar compliments and complaints from the average Canadian student. Other research has suggested that international students have problems in common with "local" students (*e.g.*, Burns 1991). And, in many instances, what was perceived by some students to have been their worst educational experience was viewed by others as their best educational experience. For example, some students felt that the course work was too heavy; others felt there was not enough school work. The students' generally remarked positively or negatively on matters concerning "marks" (grades), assignment workload, length of time in classes and individual instructors.

Many students' did indicate that the instructional method in their home country differed from the VCC instructional method, and this may have affected their view of the VCC system. It is likely that the students were more comfortable with their previous instructional method and that adjustment to a new or different teaching approach is difficult. In addition, two events may have influenced the students' opinions concerning these topics: a five-week strike by the instructors, and on settlement of that strike, a reduced instructor workload. In fact, some students listed the strike as their worst experience.

Financial Issues

Living expenses and tuition fees were not identified as major problems for the students in the survey. However, the fact that students were not convinced of the value of the VCC experience clearly implies that it is a concern. Students frequently included the cost of tuition as one of their worst experiences. This outcome may be the result of the way the questions concerning money were presented to the students. For example, the students were asked to indicate how much of a problem various costs were for them. However, most of these students received money from parents for their fees. Therefore, it is possible that financing an education is a problem for the parents, but not for the students.

A review of the "Benefits versus Costs" of an international education in British Columbia was addressed in Forsythe's study of Provincial post-secondary institutions. Although it is difficult to compare the populations surveyed because of the breadth of her study, similar concerns are noted regarding the students' uncertainty of the benefits of studying in British Columbia as compared to the financial costs (Forsythe 1992). Forsythe reports that the majority of students who indicated that the benefits were not worth the costs were college students.

Logistical Issues

Although transportation and interaction with immigration officials presented problems for some students, logistical issues in general do not appear to be the source of important concerns. It is possible that the international students from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan are accustomed to large cities. Therefore, adapting to the Vancouver area would not be problematic for these students.

Social Issues

A few of the students surveyed experienced "signs and hints" of racism and discrimination, but, clearly, the students are most disappointed with their inability to make "Canadian" friends. This is a complex issue because it involves the foreign student's expectations of what is considered to be a "Canadian", the organization of VCC and the design of the VCC international education program.

The majority of the students responding to this survey were enrolled in English as a Second Language programs. Presently, ESL training is only available at the King Edward Campus, and this campus provides one of the largest ESL programs in Canada. Most of the "Canadians" attending classes at KEC are "new Canadians" representing many cultures, but the majority of students are from Southeast Asian countries. Typically, these new Canadians are adults with jobs and families and they attend school part-time. As a result, the international students do not get the opportunity to interact with what they perceive to be "Canadians". In other words, the international students expect to become acquainted with "western" Canadians, but are not given the opportunity to do so in their ESL classes.

Furthermore, the international students enrolled in the King Edward Campus ESL classes are not usually integrated into classes with new Canadians. They are registered into classes designated for international students only. As a result, the international students do not have the opportunity to meet other students that they consider to be "Canadian". Attempts at integration of international students into domestic ESL classes have been unsatisfactory. The new Canadians tend to be part-time students, who are more mature and with interests and/or jobs, so they do not usually mix with the international students.

Internationals are, however, integrated into high school completion classes, technical programs and university transfer courses. Therefore, one might expect international students enrolled in these programs to have more opportunity to make friends with what they consider to be "western" Canadians. Although the students enrolled in these programs are Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, many of them come from diverse ethnic backgrounds, often countries of the Pacific Rim. So even in these programs Asian students may still find themselves surrounded by others of Asiatic origin.

Perhaps the multicultural nature of the greater Vancouver area should be emphasized and promoted in the marketing of VCC's educational programs. In addition, local students and college staff could be encouraged to interact with the international students. The "hosts" must first be made aware of the international students' needs and concerns. Then, programs could be introduced to integrate educational, social and athletic events such as field trips, clubs, team sports, *etc.* This presents student groups and staff with the opportunity to share experiences and establish friendships, and, hopefully, learn to understand and appreciate cultural similarities and cultural differences.

Summary

As previously mentioned, some of the questions included in this project were adapted from two other studies: the 1988 Survey of International Students in Canada (de Vries and Richer 1988), and the B.C. Government sponsored survey of Public Post-Secondary International Students (Forsythe 1992). And, in the relevant subject areas, the results of the VCC survey are, for the most part, consistent with the results of those studies. For example, students Canada-wide claimed that making friends with Canadians was a big problem and expressed concern regarding financial aspects of their educational experience.

There are, however, some differences particularly with the findings of the nation-wide survey. For example, the authors of the 1988 survey of Canadian Universities found "that students generally assessed their experience in Canada so far as positive" (de Vries and Richer 1988, p. 18). This differs from the overall rating of students in the B.C. and VCC surveys. Based on information from her survey, Forsythe (1992) suggests that the students' overall experience is less than positive because "the needs and expectations in the area of cultural experiences are not being met" (p. 22). She attributes this to a lack of integration of international students into campus life in particular, and Canadian culture in general. Perhaps the college should review its practice of segregated (international vs domestic students) classes and implement social and educational activities that encourage participation of all VCC students.

The results of this study suggest that the international students attending Vancouver Community College share many of the same difficulties that have been identified through comparable Canadian research. English language proficiency, instructional methods and making friends have all previously been

recognized as problematic for international students. For example, in a study of international students enrolled at an eastern Canadian university, Heikinheimo and Shute (1986) reported that language skills and social interaction were identified as difficult adjustment problems. Students surveyed at the University of Alberta in the late '80s noted "difficulties such as speaking and writing English and coping with different teaching methodologies...Social problems such as loneliness, making friends with the local people and discrimination" (Holdaway, Bryan and Allan 1988, p. 20).

The respondents viewed many of the issues presented on the questionnaire as somewhat problematic. However, it appears that the students identified their principal concerns through comments in the open-ended questions about their expectations and their best/worst experiences. These comments are, generally, related to educational and social experiences. Specifically, the students' most often noted that English language proficiency, instructional matters, and making friends with Canadians were not as they had expected. They also considered matters within these topic areas (language level placement, examinations, classroom experiences and interaction with teachers and classmates) to be either their best or worst experience. As well, within the five subject areas of the study, students of different national origins perceive some of the issues to be lesser or greater problems than did their peers from other countries.

At least two American studies have researched differences among cultural groups. In their extensive study of over 700 international students representing 71 different countries, Stafford, Marion and Salter (1980) conclude that "students from different parts of the world experience different types of adjustment difficulties..." (p. 44). Perkins, *et. al.* (1977) identified some significant differences between Chinese and Indian students on a number of variables relating to adjustment problems. Based on this study it is suggested that "international students have problems in common and also problems peculiar to their national groups" (p. 387).

Neither of these studies suggest what the host institutions may learn from the international students. The purpose of the Stafford, Marion and Salter (1980) study was "to determine the level of adjustment of international students" in order "to design programs and services for international students based on assessed needs rather than on assumptions about what the adjustment needs" might be (p. 40). Similarly, Perkins *et. al.* (1977) concluded that "identification of significant differences in adjustment problems

experienced by different national groups" (p. 387) would provide their institution with the information necessary to meet students' needs through appropriate planning and services.

Implications

This study has identified at least three important aspects of the VCC International Education program: 1) that these students have not experienced serious adjustment problems, nor do they appear to have been affected by the stresses attributed to "culture shock"; 2) that these students claim to be disappointed with their ability to make Canadian friends; and, 3) they are dissatisfied with their overall educational experience. Previous research suggests that all three findings may be related.

One reason for the apparent absence of serious adjustment problems has been suggested by Brislin (1981). He explains that adjustment may be less stressful in pluralistic societies: "In contrast to a monistic society, where a single set of norms is enforced, pluralistic societies encourage or at least tolerate heterogeneity with respect to the values and customs of different groups" (p. 288). The population of the greater Vancouver area and particularly the VCC student body is pluralistic, composed of individuals from many different cultures. Thus, the results of the current survey appear to support Brislin's assertion.

Other explanations can be found in the literature on foreign student adaptation and social interaction. As reported, the majority of the college's international students are from Southeast Asian countries. As well, a large number of the "domestic" student body at VCC, and in particular those attending English language training, are also from Southeast Asia. It is likely, therefore, that the international students have experienced a limited degree of interaction with non-Asian ("Canadian") students. According to Oberg (1954) "culture shock is precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse" (p. 1). And, Furnham and Bochner (1982) suggest that "the core of what has been labelled culture shock is the reaction of sojourners to problems encountered in their dealings with host members" (p. 172). The VCC international students do not appear to be "dealing with host members" because they claim not to have made Canadian friends.

Previous research has also shown that students coming from more similar cultures experience fewer difficulties and adapt more easily to their new environment (Fletcher and Stren 1989). Given the cultural

background of the VCC student population, it is possible that these students are culturally and socially "isolated" within the host culture (Furnham and Bochner 1986; Heikinheimo 1986). In other words, they are able to socialize with students from similar cultural origins, speak their native language, find accommodation in ethnic neighborhoods, eat the foods they are use to, *etc.* These international students are surrounded by a familiar Asian environment and can avoid contact with the host culture.

Because the students appear to have insulated themselves with others of similar circumstance, it is likely, that they have been protected from experiencing many of the adjustment difficulties and cultural stresses associated with experiencing a new culture. They are, as described in the literature, "spectators" or "observers" of, rather than "participants" in the host culture (Dunnett 1977). In other words, it appears that the students in this study have yet to experience the "impact of a new and different culture" (Oberg 1960; Bennett 1977, Brislin 1981; Furnham and Bochner 1986).

Research also suggests that satisfactory contact with a host community is more likely to result in a positive experience. Studies have shown that international students who have made more Canadian friends tend to be more satisfied with their overall sojourn experience (*e.g.*, Dunnett 1981; Hull 1978; Klineberg and Hull 1979; Fletcher and Stren 1989; Mickle 1984). According to Klineberg and Hull (1979) "the more contact there is with local people, the more satisfying the overall sojourn experience is likely to be" (p. 53). Unfortunately, one result of the students "isolation" is that they do not have the opportunity to "make Canadian friends".

It is possible, therefore, that because these students have not had much contact with the local "Canadian" community, they have not experienced adjustment difficulties or "culture shock". And, because they have not made satisfactory contact with local people, they are also claiming to be dissatisfied with their overall sojourn experience. However, since most of the students indicated that their main reason for attending VCC was to "gain admission to university", it is likely that once the students reach this goal and leave the comfort of the familiar VCC environment, they will have to become involved with the host culture. They may experience problems of adjustment and "culture shock". But, they probably will be forced to have more contact with the local community, and in the long term, become more satisfied with their overall international experience.

Members of the college community should be made aware of the views and opinions expressed by the international students in this study. They must be presented with and introduced to the opportunity for a mutually beneficial and rewarding cultural learning experience. Students and staff can be encouraged to actively participate with international students through educational, social and athletic activities designed to integrate all groups. If necessary, specialized cross-cultural training can also be made available. By treating the international students as a cultural resource, it should be possible to gain an understanding and appreciation of cultural similarities and differences which may "enhance academic, cultural and economic links with the world community and in particular with the Asia Pacific nations (Province of B.C., 1988c, p. 1).

Conclusion

The results of this project pose important questions. Is the Provincial mission for international education being fulfilled? And, are the goals and objectives of the College being accomplished? Too many students appear to be disappointed with their social interrelationships and dissatisfied with their overall educational experience. As well, it is very disconcerting to discover that the majority of students are unconvinced that their experience at the College is worth the cost of the tuition.

As stated, "effective delivery of educational services to enhance academic, cultural and economic links with the world community and in particular with the Asia Pacific nations" (Province of B.C., 1988c) is the mission for International Education in British Columbia. The strategy to pursue opportunities offered by increased cultural contact and the ability to compete in Pacific Rim trade demand a growing number of graduates from our schools who understand and appreciate the languages and cultures of the world.

However, judging from the experiences reported by the VCC international students, it does not appear that this goal has been achieved. If these students return home without "making Canadian friends", then the "educational experience within the classroom and the social activities" of the VCC student body will not be "enriched" (VCC Operations Manual, 1988). Nor, will the college "benefit" from the "valuable public relations which inform the countries of the world about the College's programs and expertise" (VCC

Operations Manual, 1988). International students who remain "isolated" within their own culture will not only fail to experience a new culture, but will also fail to provide Canadian students the opportunity to understand and appreciate their language and culture.

The government of British Columbia has a commitment to forging stronger links between the Province and the international community...international reputations are fragile and their importance should not be underrated. Issues affecting the quality of a student's stay have a long-term effect on the number of students likely to be interested in Canada as a place to study. The quality of the student's experience has an incalculable impact on future flows, since word of mouth is a major means of generating interest in Canada as a place to study.

(Forsythe 1992).

It is critical, therefore, that the College address the issues identified by this study and make every attempt to improve the international students' experience and, by the same token, involve the settled Canadian student body in ways that are educational for them.

Recommendations

The information obtained through this study provides the college with a number of areas of opportunity in which to improve the overall international student experience. First, the College community should be made aware of the concerns and complaints as well as the compliments expressed by the students in this survey. A better appreciation of the difficulties the international students encounter may lead to a greater sensitivity toward adjustment issues.

Second, the Provincial mission for international education and the goals and objectives of the college should be evaluated and compared to the students' views and opinions. Statistical reports on retention and program completion could also contribute to the analysis of the existing program and the procedures which are currently employed. For example, the practice of segregating rather than integrating international students into ESL classes may require modification.

Third, the College should consider implementation and support of educational, social and recreational activities which would encourage and assist international students to interact with Canadian students. Improving the orientation program to include all students not just internationals, peer mentoring, scheduling of events or field trips for Canadians and international students and organizing multicultural celebrations have been suggested to promote student contact.

Fourth, it is important to follow up on the results of this project to determine whether or not the students' views and opinions regarding their overall experience change over time. Do they ultimately "make Canadian friends", and does their opinion of their overall experience eventually improve? These questions can only be answered through continued research.

All individuals hosting international education activities have a responsibility to ensure that the sojourner's experience is satisfactory. Programs and services must be appropriate and beneficial (Hull 1978; Symons and Page 1984; Barber, Altbach and Myers 1984) because there is an inherent obligation "to provide first-rate education and positive cultural experiences for international students" (Holdaway, Bryan and Allan 1988, p. 16). As stated by Fasheh (1984):

Foreign students are not empty vessels to be filled with information and theories. Their needs cannot be reduced to technicalities...They need to be recognized as people whose experience and culture are crucial in building any progress, any understanding, any dialog. Interaction is a basic need that cannot be ignored without a huge loss (p. 317).

Administrators, educators and student services staff must be made aware of and become sympathetic toward problems faced by students unfamiliar with this country, the Province and the College. They must be challenged to create programs which provide opportunities for sojourners and "hosts" to interact more effectively.

In conclusion, existing conceptualizations regarding international student adjustment and adaptation reviewed in Chapter Three reflect a perspective in which the host culture/institution expects sojourners to bear the burden to change their behavior, attitudes, perceptions, *etc.*, and adapt to the host culture/institution (*e.g.*, Pruitt 1981; Dunnett 1981; Furnham and Bochner 1986). In these models of the international student experience and sojourner-host relationship, regardless of whether the process is called "adaptation", "assimilation", "adjustment", "accommodation" or "learning", it is presupposed that the end result is one in which the sojourner "learns", "accommodates", "adjusts to", "assimilates" or "adapts to" the host culture. This conceptualization implies a one-way, non-reciprocal process that does not capitalize on the potential for cross-cultural learning and mutual opportunity.

Global realities now require that our conceptualizations be expanded in such a way that the sojourner-host relationship is viewed as a two-way relationship from which both sojourner and host benefit. In B.C.

this perspective is reflected in many of the Provincial government's statements about international education. The larger questions then, are those that revolve around the strength of the B.C. Government's commitment to international education. And, whether or not educational institutions can find the means of restructuring and reorienting their programs and services to meet the needs of international students so that an environment can be created that will enrich the experience of domestic students, sojourners and others involved in international activities.

Camosun College International Student Survey

The information requested below can be used to compare your experiences with those of other international students at Camosun College.

1. I am currently attending (check all campuses you attend):
 (1)___ Lansdowne (2)___ Interurban (3)___ Carey Road

2. When were you born? Year _____

3. What is your sex? (1)___ Male (2)___ Female

4. In what country were you born? (write the name of the country):

5. Of what country are you a citizen? (write the name of the country):

6. When did you first arrive in Canada? year _____ month _____

7. When did you first arrive in British Columbia? year _____ month _____

8. From which country did you apply for admission to Camosun College?
 1)___ Hong Kong
 2)___ Japan
 3)___ Singapore
 4)___ Malaysia
 5)___ Other (Please write the name of the country): _____

9. When did you start school at Camosun College? year _____ month _____

10. What Camosun College program are you currently enrolled in?
 1)___ English as a Second Language (ESL) only
 2)___ College Preparatory
 3)___ ESL and College Prep
 4)___ Career Program
 5)___ University Transfer
 6)___ Other: (write the name of the program) _____

11. My primary reasons for attending Camosun College are (check as many as apply):
 1)___ to learn the English language
 2)___ to improve and upgrade my English language skills
 3)___ to complete high school
 4)___ to gain admission to college or university
 5)___ because I want to become a landed immigrant or Canadian citizen
 6)___ other (explain)

APPENDIX 1

12. What were your reasons for selecting Camosun College rather than another school? (check as many as apply):

- 1) _____ quality of education at Camosun College
 - 2) _____ cost of studying at Camosun College
 - 3) _____ a student exchange agreement with Camosun College
 - 4) _____ one or more relatives attended or is attending Camosun College
 - 5) _____ one or more friends attended or is attending Camosun College
 - 6) _____ a Camosun College or B.C. government representative told me about Camosun College
 - 7) _____ the number of other students from my home country attending Camosun College
 - 8) _____ factors associated with the location of Camosun College (climate, city, size, etc.)
 - 9) _____ other (please give reasons)
-

13. Please circle the total number of courses you are currently enrolled in: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 more than 7

14. Please circle the total number of years that you have attended school:
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 more than 17

15. Please circle the total number of years that your father attended school:
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 more than 17
___ Don't know

16. Please circle the total number of years that your mother attended school:
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 more than 17
___ Don't know

17. Did either of your parents receive any of their education in British Columbia?

Father

- (1)___ yes
- (2)___ no
- (3)___ don't know

Mother

- (1)___ yes
- (2)___ no
- (3)___ don't know

18. What language did you yourself *first* speak in childhood? (Write the name of the language):

19. Write the name of a second language if you spoke two languages about equally well in childhood:

20. What languages were used for teaching your courses at secondary school in your home country (do not include *Language* courses)? (Write the names) of the languages):

21. If more than one language was used, which was used most often?

22. How would you rate yourself in the following language abilities in English?

	Not Very Good	Good	Very Good
Understanding	1	2	3
Speaking	1	2	3

APPENDIX 1

Reading	1	2	3
Writing	1	2	3

23. Which of the following are a problem to you as a result of your English Language Skills?

- 1) ___ coping with the teaching method at Camosun College
- 2) ___ understanding my instructors
- 3) ___ understanding class lectures
- 4) ___ taking notes in class
- 5) ___ answering questions in class
- 6) ___ participating in class discussions
- 7) ___ writing class essays
- 8) ___ writing course examinations

24. How would you compare instructional (teaching) methods of your home country to the Camosun College instructional (teaching) method (choose one only)?

- 1) ___ The instructional method in my home country is different from the Camosun College method
- 2) ___ The instructional method in my home country is similar to the Camosun College method

25. Which of the following are a problem to you as a result of the instructional (teaching) method used at Camosun College?

- 1) ___ understanding my instructors
- 2) ___ understanding class lectures
- 3) ___ taking notes in class
- 4) ___ answering questions in class
- 5) ___ participating in class discussions
- 6) ___ writing class essays
- 7) ___ writing course examinations

26. How much has each of the following been a problem for you since your arrival in B.C. and while attending Camosun College?

	No Problem	Somewhat of a Problem	A Big Problem	Does Not Apply
1) Transportation	1	2	3	4
2) Eating Canadian Food	1	2	3	4
3) Getting the kinds of food I am used to	1	2	3	4
4) Making friends with Canadians	1	2	3	4
5) Making friends with other international students	1	2	3	4
6) Finding suitable housing	1	2	3	4
7) Coping with the B.C. climate	1	2	3	4
8) Coping with Canadian social customs	1	2	3	4
9) Pressure from my family to do well in my studies	1	2	3	4
10) Loneliness	1	2	3	4
11) Homesickness	1	2	3	4
12) Being treated poorly because of race or national origin	1	2	3	4
13) Being treated poorly because of my religion	1	2	3	4
14) Problems with my own health	1	2	3	4
15) Being separated from my family	1	2	3	4
16) Being separated from friends in my home country	1	2	3	4
17) Stress of academic work	1	2	3	4
18) Homestay	1	2	3	4
19) Speaking English	1	2	3	4
20) Writing English	1	2	3	4

27. How would you describe your experience with Canadian immigration officials in your home country?

- 1) ___ Not Applicable
 - 2) ___ I had no difficulty at all
 - 3) ___ I had some difficulty
 - 4) ___ I had considerable difficulty (Please specify below)
-

28. How would you describe your experience with immigration officials in Canada?

- 1) ___ Not Applicable
 - 2) ___ I had no difficulty at all
 - 3) ___ I had some difficulty
 - 4) ___ I had considerable difficulty (Please specify below)
-

29. Please indicate whether or not you attended the orientation program at Camosun College, and if so, whether it was useful to you:

- 1) ___ I did not attend
- 2) ___ I did attend and did not find it useful at all
- 3) ___ I did attend and found it somewhat useful
- 4) ___ I did attend and found it very useful

30. On the whole, how would you rate your experience at Camosun College thus far?

- 1) ___ Very positive
- 2) ___ Somewhat positive
- 3) ___ Mixed
- 4) ___ Somewhat negative
- 5) ___ Very negative

31. From which of the following sources do you receive funds for living or for paying college costs? (Check as many as apply)

- 1) ___ Parents
- 2) ___ Spouse
- 3) ___ Other Relatives
- 4) ___ Friends
- 5) ___ Savings
- 6) ___ Loans
- 7) ___ Work-study
- 8) ___ Scholarships
- 9) ___ Grants
- 10) ___ Other (please specify): _____

32. In my home country my family is considered to be: (Check one only):

- 1) ___ very wealthy
- 2) ___ above average wealth
- 3) ___ average wealth
- 4) ___ below average wealth
- 5) ___ very poor
- 6) ___ I have no immediate relatives
- 7) ___ I have no idea about my family's wealth
- 8) ___ I do not wish to answer this question

33. Have you had to interrupt your education at Camosun College because of financial problems?

- 1) ___ Yes

APPENDIX 1

2) ___ No

34. Do you feel that your financial situation affects your studies?

1) ___ Yes

2) ___ No

If yes, please explain:

35. It is more expensive to live on Vancouver Island than in your home country?

1) ___ Yes

2) ___ No

3) ___ Don't know

36. Is it difficult for you to obtain money to pay your tuition fees?

1) ___ Yes

2) ___ No

37. Is it difficult for you to obtain money to pay your living expenses?

1) ___ Yes

2) ___ No

38. Do you have to worry about running out of money for tuition?

1) ___ Yes

2) ___ No

39. Do you have to worry about running out of money for your living expenses?

1) ___ Yes

2) ___ No

40. How much has each of the following been a problem for you since your arrival in Vancouver?

	No Problem	Somewhat of a Problem	A Big Problem	Does Not Apply
1) Paying rent	1	2	3	4
2) Paying tuition fees	1	2	3	4
3) Paying for books and school supplies	1	2	3	4
4) Paying for food	1	2	3	4
5) Paying for transportation	1	2	3	4
6) Paying for clothes	1	2	3	4
7) Paying for leisure activities	1	2	3	4
8) Getting money from home	1	2	3	4

41. Are the benefits of studying at Camosun College worth the financial costs?

1) ___ Yes

2) ___ No

3) ___ Not sure

42. Did you receive a scholarship or grant to study at Camosun College?

1) ___ Yes

2) ___ No

If yes, what organization or agency gave it to you?

43. How often during the past year have you helped other Camosun College international students by lending food, money, or accommodation?

- 1) ___ Never
- 2) ___ Once
- 3) ___ Two or three times
- 4) ___ Four or five times
- 5) ___ Six or more times

44. How often do you spend time with students from your home country?

- 1) ___ almost always
- 2) ___ often
- 3) ___ occasionally
- 4) ___ rarely
- 5) ___ never

45. Are you now living with a homestay (host home) family?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No

46. If you are living with a homestay (host home) family, are you satisfied with your current homestay arrangement?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No
- 3) ___ No Comment

47. Have your experiences at Camosun College been what you expected them to be? (Check one)

- 1) ___ Definitely what I expected
- 2) ___ Somewhat as I expected
- 3) ___ Not at all what I expected

48. If your experiences at Camosun College have been not at all what you expected please tell us why (write your answer below).

49. What has been your best school experience since beginning classes at Camosun College?

50. What has been your worst school experience since beginning classes at Camosun College?

51. What would have helped make your experience at Camosun College better?

52. If a friend or relative from your home country were thinking of coming to Camosun College to study, what advice would you give him or her?

APPENDIX 1

53. If you were asked to advise officials of Camosun College about possible changes to the programs or services available to international students, what would you recommend?

54. List any additional comments you wish to make:

55. Did you understand all the questions on this questionnaire?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No

56. Which question(s) did you *not* understand? List the number(s) or topic(s) of the question(s):

57. What other questions would you ask?

58. Do you think other international students will have difficulty in completing this questionnaire?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No

If you answered "Yes" above, why do you think they will have difficulty?

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January 18, 1992

Vancouver Community College International Student Survey

The information requested below can be used to compare your experiences with those of other international students at VCC to identify ways in which international programs can be improved. Your assistance in completing this questionnaire is sincerely appreciated.

1. Please check (✓) all campuses you are attending now:
 (1)___ Langara (2)___ King Edward (3)___ City Centre
2. When were you born? Year _____
3. What is your sex? (1)___ Male (2)___ Female
4. In what country were you born? (Write the name of the country):

5. Of what country are you a citizen? (Write the name of the country):

6. When did you arrive in Canada? year _____ month _____
7. When did you arrive in British Columbia? year _____ month _____
8. From which country did you apply for admission to VCC? (Please (✓) the right country)
 - 1)___ Hong Kong
 - 2)___ Japan
 - 3)___ Singapore
 - 4)___ Malaysia
 - 5)___ Other (Please write the name of the country): _____
9. When did you start studying at VCC? year _____ month _____
10. Put a check (✓) beside the VCC program(s) you are currently enrolled in:
 - 1)___ English as a Second Language: ELS only (e.g., UI)
 - 2)___ English as a Second Language: CPE only (e.g., 059)
 - 3)___ High school completion: College Foundations (e.g., Math 09?)
 - 4)___ ELS *and* HSC (CF)
 - 5)___ CPE *and* HSC (CF)
 - 6)___ University transfer (UT)
 - 7)___ Other: (Write the name of the program) _____

APPENDIX 2

11. Put a check (✓) beside your *main reasons* for studying at VCC:

- 1) _____ to improve my English language skills (ESL)
 - 2) _____ to complete high school (HSC)
 - 3) _____ to gain admission to college or university (UT)
 - 4) _____ because I want to become a landed immigrant or Canadian citizen
 - 5) _____ other (Please explain)
-

12. What were your reasons for selecting VCC rather than another college or institution? (check as many as apply):

- 1) _____ quality of education at VCC
 - 2) _____ cost of studying at VCC
 - 3) _____ one or more relatives attended or is attending VCC
 - 4) _____ one or more friends attended or is attending VCC
 - 5) _____ a VCC or B.C. government representative told me about VCC
 - 6) _____ there are other students from my home country attending VCC
 - 7) _____ the location of VCC (climate, city, size of VCC, etc.)
 - 8) _____ other (Please give reasons)
-

13. Please circle the total number of courses you are currently enrolled in:

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 more than 7

14. Please circle the total number of years that you have attended school:

- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 more than 17

15. Please circle the total number of years that your father attended school:

- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 more than 17
____ I don't know

16. Please circle the total number of years that your mother attended school:

- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 more than 17
____ I don't know

17. Did either of your parents receive any of their education in British Columbia?

Father

- (1) _____ yes
- (2) _____ no
- (3) _____ I don't know

Mother

- (1) _____ yes
- (2) _____ no
- (3) _____ I don't know

18. What language did you yourself *first* speak in childhood? (Write the name of the language):

19. Did you speak a *second* language in childhood? If yes, write the name of the language:

APPENDIX 2

20. What language(s) were used for teaching your courses at secondary school in your home country?
(Write the name(s) of the languages; Do not include language *courses*):

21. Did you use more than one language at secondary school? If yes, which language was used most often?

22. How would you rate yourself in the following English language skills? (Please circle the right number)

	Not Very Good	Good	Very Good
Listening	1	2	3
Speaking	1	2	3
Reading	1	2	3
Writing	1	2	3

23. Which of the following are a problem for you because the level of your English?

- 1) ___ coping with the teaching method at VCC
- 2) ___ listening to my instructors
- 3) ___ understanding the content of class lectures
- 4) ___ taking notes in class
- 5) ___ answering questions in class
- 6) ___ participating in class discussions
- 7) ___ writing essays
- 8) ___ writing course examinations
- 9) ___ none of the above

24. How would you compare instructional (teaching) methods of your home country to the VCC instructional (teaching) method? (Choose one only)

- 1) ___ The instructional method in my home country is *different* from the VCC method
- 2) ___ The instructional method in my home country is *similar* to the VCC method

25. Which of the following are a problem for you because of the instructional (teaching) method used at VCC?

- 1) ___ listening to my instructors
- 2) ___ understanding the content of class lectures
- 3) ___ taking notes in class
- 4) ___ answering questions in class
- 5) ___ participating in class discussions
- 6) ___ writing essays
- 7) ___ writing course examinations
- 8) ___ none of the above

APPENDIX 2

26. How much has each of the following been a problem for you since your arrival in B.C. and while attending VCC? (Please circle the right number)

	No Problem	Somewhat of a Problem	A Big Problem	Does Not Apply
1) Transportation	1	2	3	4
2) Eating Canadian Food	1	2	3	4
3) Getting the kinds of food I am used to	1	2	3	4
4) Making friends with Canadians	1	2	3	4
5) Making friends with other international students	1	2	3	4
6) Finding suitable housing	1	2	3	4
7) Coping with the B.C. climate	1	2	3	4
8) Coping with Canadian social customs	1	2	3	4
9) Pressure from my family to do well in my studies	1	2	3	4
10) Loneliness	1	2	3	4
11) Homesickness	1	2	3	4
12) Being treated poorly because of race or national origin	1	2	3	4
13) Being treated poorly because of my religion	1	2	3	4
14) Problems with my own health	1	2	3	4
15) Being separated from my family	1	2	3	4
16) Being separated from friends in my home country	1	2	3	4
17) Stress of academic work	1	2	3	4
18) Homestay	1	2	3	4
19) Speaking English	1	2	3	4
20) Writing English	1	2	3	4
21) Listening	1	2	3	4
22) Reading English	1	2	3	4

27. How would you describe your experience with Canadian immigration officials in your home country?

- 1)___ I did not meet or speak with Canadian immigration officials in my home country
 - 2)___ I had no difficulty at all
 - 3)___ I had some difficulty
 - 4)___ I had considerable difficulty (Please explain below)
-

28. How would you describe your experience with immigration officials in Canada?

- 1)___ Not Applicable
 - 2)___ I had no difficulty at all
 - 3)___ I had some difficulty
 - 4)___ I had considerable difficulty (Please explain below)
-

29. Please indicate whether or not you attended the orientation program at VCC, and if so, whether it was useful to you:

- 1)___ I did not attend
- 2)___ I did attend and did not find it useful at all
- 3)___ I did attend and found it somewhat useful
- 4)___ I did attend and found it very useful

30. On the whole, how would you rate your experience at VCC thus far?

- 1) ___ Very positive
- 2) ___ Somewhat positive
- 3) ___ Mixed
- 4) ___ Somewhat negative
- 5) ___ Very negative

31. From which of the following sources do you receive money for living or for paying tuition fees?

(Check as many as apply)

- 1) ___ Parents
- 2) ___ Spouse
- 3) ___ Other Relatives
- 4) ___ Friends
- 5) ___ Savings
- 6) ___ Loans
- 7) ___ Scholarships
- 8) ___ Grants
- 9) ___ Other (please explain): _____

32. In my home country my family is considered to be: (Check one only)

- 1) ___ very wealthy
- 2) ___ of above average wealth
- 3) ___ of average wealth
- 4) ___ of below average wealth
- 5) ___ very poor
- 6) ___ I have no immediate relatives
- 7) ___ I don't know about my family's wealth
- 8) ___ I do not want to answer this question

33. Did you ever have to stop studying at VCC because of financial problems?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No

34. Does your financial situation affect your studying at VCC?

- 1) ___ Yes

If yes, please explain:

- _____
- 2) ___ No

35. Is it more expensive to live in Vancouver than in your home country?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No
- 3) ___ I don't know

36. Do you have to worry about getting the money to pay your tuition fees?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No

37. Do you have to worry about getting the money to pay your living expenses?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No

APPENDIX 2

38. How much has each of the following been a problem for you since your arrival in Vancouver? (Please circle the right number)

	No Problem	Somewhat of a Problem	A Big Problem	Does Not Apply
1) Paying rent	1	2	3	4
2) Paying tuition fees	1	2	3	4
3) Paying for books and school supplies	1	2	3	4
4) Paying for food	1	2	3	4
5) Paying for transportation	1	2	3	4
6) Paying for clothes	1	2	3	4
7) Paying for leisure activities	1	2	3	4
8) Getting money from home	1	2	3	4

39. Do you think that studying at VCC is worth the money you have to pay for tuition fees?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No
- 3) ___ I'm not sure

40. Did you receive a scholarship or grant to study at VCC?

- 1) ___ Yes
- If yes, what organization or agency gave it to you?

- 2) ___ No

41. How often during the past year have you helped other VCC international students by lending them food, money, or accommodation?

- 1) ___ Never
- 2) ___ Once
- 3) ___ Two or three times
- 4) ___ Four or five times
- 5) ___ Six or more times

42. How often do you spend time with students from your home country?

- 1) ___ Never
- 2) ___ Rarely
- 3) ___ Sometimes
- 4) ___ Often
- 5) ___ Almost always

43. Are you now living with a homestay (host home) family?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No

44. If yes, are you satisfied with your current homestay family?

- 1) ___ Yes
- 2) ___ No
- 3) ___ I don't want to answer this question

APPENDIX 2

45. Describe your experiences at VCC: (Check one only)

- 1) ___ Completely as I expected
- 2) ___ Somewhat as I expected
- 3) ___ Not at all as I expected

46. If your experiences at VCC have been not at all as you expected please tell us why (Write your answer below).

47. What has been your *best* experience at VCC since you started studying here?

48. What has been your *worst* experience at VCC since you started studying here?

49. Could your experience at VCC have been better? (Please explain)

50. If a friend or relative from your home country wants to come to study at VCC, what advice will you give him or her?

51. How can VCC's services and programs for international students be improved or changed?

52. List any additional comments you wish to make:

53. Did you have difficulty completing this questionnaire because of the level of your English?

- 1) ___ yes
- 2) ___ no

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

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March 6, 1992

APPENDIX 3

CONTINGENCY TABLES

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	80.65	72.00	54.00	77.78	71.10	123
Somewhat a Problem	16.13	28.00	40.00*	22.22	26.01	45
Major Problem	3.23	.00	6.00	.00	2.89	5
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	62	25	50	36		173

Table 15. Cross-tabulation of 'Eating Canadian Food' with 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=14.217, df=6, p=.027; * significant deviation from expected; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	72.06	68.00	84.62	94.12	79.33	142
Somewhat a Problem	26.47*	24.00	11.54	5.88*	17.88	32
Major Problem	1.47	8.00	3.85	0.00	2.79	5
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	68	25	52	34		179

Table 16. Cross-tabulation of 'Health' with 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=14.126, df= 6, p=.028; * significant deviation from expected; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	28.36	38.46	53.85*	33.33	38.12	69
Somewhat a Problem	56.72	42.31	40.38	44.44	47.51	86
Major Problem	14.93	19.23	5.77*	22.22	14.36	26
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	67	26	52	36		181

Table 17. Cross-tabulation of 'Separation from Friends' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=12.181, df=6, p=.058; * significant deviation from expected; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	27.27	60.00*	47.06	11.11*	34.27	61
Somewhat a Problem	42.42	16.00*	35.29	52.78	38.76	69
Major Problem	30.30	24.00	17.65	36.11	26.97	48
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	66	25	51	36		178

Table 18. Cross-tabulation of 'Academic Stress' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=24.345, df=6, p=.000; * significant deviation from expected; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	52.24	50.00	45.10	30.56	45.56	82
Somewhat a Problem	38.81	42.31	41.18	44.44	41.11	74
Major Problem	8.96	7.69	13.73	25.00*	13.33	24
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	67	26	51	36		180

Table 19. Cross-tabulation of 'Loneliness' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=7.688, df=6, p=.262; * significant deviation from expected; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
Not Very Good	39.13	61.54	66.67*	25.00*	47.25	86
Good	57.97	38.46	25.49*	61.11	46.70	65
Very Good	2.90	0.00	7.84	13.89*	6.04	11
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	51	36		182

Table 20. Cross-tabulation of 'Writing Skills' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=27.174, df=6, p=.000; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
Not Very Good	30.43	30.77	40.38	8.33*	28.96	53
Good	60.87	61.54	44.23	44.44	53.01	97
Very Good	8.70*	7.69	15.38	47.22*	18.03	33
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	52	36		183

Table 21. Cross-tabulation of 'Listening Skills' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=30.006, df=6, p=.000; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
Not Very Good	39.13	57.69	52.94	13.89*	40.66	74
Good	53.62	42.31	43.14	50.00	48.35	88
Very Good	7.25	0.00*	3.92	36.11*	10.99	20
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	51	36		182

Table 22. Cross-tabulation of 'Speaking Skills' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square = 35.492, df=6, p=.000; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
Not Very Good	26.09	50.00	47.06*	13.89*	32.97	60
Good	63.77	46.15	47.06	52.78	54.40	99
Very Good	10.14	3.85	5.88	33.33*	12.64	23
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	51	36		182

Table 23. Cross-tabulation of 'Reading Skills' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=26.020, df=6, p=.000; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	33.82	26.92	32.69	82.86*	41.99	76
Somewhat a Problem	58.82	38.46	55.77	17.14*	46.96	85
Major Problem	7.35	34.62*	11.54	0.00	11.05	20
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	68	26	52	35		181

Table 24. Cross-tabulation of 'Listening' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=43.646, df=6, p=.000; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	32.35	19.23	23.08	74.29*	35.91	65
Somewhat a Problem	51.47	42.31	63.46	22.86*	48.07	87
Major Problem	16.18	38.46*	13.46	2.86*	16.02	29
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	68	26	52	35		181

Table 25. Cross-tabulation of 'Speaking' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percent; LR Chi-Square=36.612, df=6, p=.000; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	39.13	11.54*	25.00	82.86*	39.56	72
Somewhat a Problem	56.52	61.54	61.54	14.29*	50.55	92
Major Problem	4.35	26.92*	13.46	2.86	9.89	18
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	52	35		182

Table 26. Cross-tabulation of 'Reading' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=48.843, df=6, p=0.000; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	21.74	7.69*	17.31	40.00*	21.98	40
Somewhat a Problem	62.32	46.15	53.85	54.29	56.04	102
Major Problem	15.94	46.15*	28.85	5.71*	21.98	40
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	52	35		182

Table 27. Cross-tabulation of 'Writing' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=22.468, df=6, p=0.001; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No	81.16	69.23	90.38	91.89	84.24	155
Yes	18.84	30.77*	9.62	8.11	15.76	29
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	52	37		184

Table 28. Cross-tabulation of 'Taking Notes in Class' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=7.711, df=3, p=0.052; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No	68.12	53.85	90.38	83.78	75.54	139
Yes	31.88	46.15*	9.62*	16.22	24.46	45
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	52	37		184

Table 29. Cross-tabulation of 'Participating in Class Discussions' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=16.716, df=3, p=0.001; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No	95.65	80.77	94.23	100.00	94.02	173
Yes	4.35	19.23*	5.77	0.00*	5.98	11
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	52	37		184

Table 30. Cross-tabulation of 'Listening to Instructors' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=10.227, df=3, p=0.017; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No	92.75	73.08	90.38	83.78	87.50	161
Yes	7.25	26.92*	9.62	16.22	12.50	23
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	52	37		184

Table 31. Cross-tabulation of 'Taking Notes in Class' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=6.766, df=3, p=0.080; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
Different	85.51	96.15	90.20	64.86	84.15	154
Same	14.49	3.85*	9.80	35.14*	15.85	29
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	51	37		183

Table 32. Cross-tabulation of 'Instructional Method' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=13.715, df=3, p=0.003; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	78.57	60.00	89.58	74.19	78.13	125
Somewhat a Problem	19.64	28.00	10.42*	22.58	18.75	30
Major Problem	1.79	12.00*	0.00*	3.23	3.13	5
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	56	25	48	31		160

Table 33. Cross-tabulation of 'Paying Rent' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=13.229, df=3, p=0.040; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	67.65	34.62*	82.00	55.88	64.61	115
Somewhat a Problem	17.65	26.92	14.00	35.29	21.35	38
Major Problem	14.71	38.46*	4.00*	8.82	14.04	25
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	68	26	50	34		178

Table 34. Cross-tabulation of 'Paying Tuition' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=25.127, df=3, p=0.000; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	68.75	42.31*	81.25	72.73	69.01	118
Somewhat a Problem	23.44	34.62	18.75	24.24	23.98	41
Major Problem	7.81	23.08*	0.00*	3.03	7.02	12
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	64	26	48	33		171

Table 35. Cross-tabulation of 'Getting Money from Home' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=19.529, df=3, p=0.003; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	57.35	61.54	88.24*	61.76	67.60	121
Somewhat a Problem	36.76	38.46	7.84*	32.35	27.93	50
Major Problem	5.88	0.00	3.92	5.88	4.47	8
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	68	26	51	34		179

Table 36. Cross-tabulation of 'Transportation' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=20.342, df=6, p=0.00; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Difficulty	72.22*	18.18*	45.24	51.85	52.41	76
Some Difficulty	27.78	68.18*	50.00	33.33	41.38	60
Considerable Difficulty	0.00*	13.64	4.76*	14.81	6.21	9
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	54	22	42	27		145

Table 37. Cross-tabulation of 'Difficulty with Immigration Officials in Canada' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=28.342, df=6, p=0.000; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Difficulty	71.05	18.18*	59.09	53.85	57.73	56
Some Difficulty	26.32	81.82*	31.82	38.46	37.11	36
Considerable Difficulty	2.63	0.00	9.09	7.69	5.15	5
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	38	11	22	26		97

Table 38. Cross-tabulation of 'Difficulty with Immigration Officials in Home Country' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=13.681, df=6, p=0.033; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
No Problem	100.00	85.71	90.00	100.00	94.87	148
Somewhat a Problem	0.00	14.29*	8.00	0.00	4.49	7
Major Problem	0.00	0.00	2.00	0.00	0.64	1
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	53	21	50	32		156

Table 39. Cross-tabulation of 'Poor Treatment because of Religion' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=14.400, df=6, p=0.025; * significant deviation from expectation; HK = Hongkong

	H K	Japan	Taiwan	Other	Total	n
Very Positive	5.80	23.08	9.62	18.92	11.96	22
Somewhat Positive	37.68	30.77	32.69	24.32	32.61	60
Mixed	47.83	42.31	50.00	43.24	46.74	86
Somewhat Negative	7.25	3.85	7.69	10.81	7.61	14
Very Negative	1.45	0.00	0.00	2.70	1.09	2
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
n	69	26	52	37		184

Table 40. Cross-tabulation of 'Overall Experience' by 'Citizenship'; Cell frequencies expressed as column percents; LR Chi-Square=11.532, df=12, p=0.484; HK = Hongkong

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