

Cultural Approach for Future Plan Orientation: Chinese Students Study Abroad

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Abstract

Many students prefer to study abroad to increase their chances of having a better future. While studying abroad they may encounter difficulties such as adapting to the culture of the country they are studying in. Chinese students coming to Korea are no exception to this, and when they are studying abroad, the new environment they are in may cause them hardships which may impact on their social life and even their academic performance. In order to develop their careers, they face many difficulties and challenges. Cultural differences they experience may change their attitudes, thoughts, and values. This research focuses on international students who are not yet certain about their future plans. In order to grasp levels of daily life satisfaction, ease of communication, and future planning orientation, this study conducted a survey of Chinese students who study in Korea. The empirical analysis showed that students with high level of life satisfaction have a tendency to enter graduate school. However, communication has no relation to future planning orientation.

Keywords: *Chinese Students, Plan Orientation, Career Orientation, Environment, Culture, Study abroad, Communication*

1. Introduction

In today's global society, a number of Chinese students have chosen to study in Korea [1]. They study and live in an unfamiliar cultural environment. Thus, they have to adapt to this new culture, perform as students while often trying to overcome stress, achieve personal goals, take part in special cultural learning problems,

and act as national representatives [2]. International students may encounter difficulties such as culture shock, a language barrier, coordination of habits, different value systems, different educational systems, loneliness, solitude, homesickness, and having to form new social networks [3]. International students may be more stressed than local students, and it is important that methods are found to minimize this stress [4]. In the future, there will be a big difference between national culture. This explains the differences between individuals and groups. Furthermore, understanding this difference may be of great help to those undertaking future research on human understanding, motivation, and achievement. Gaps between Chinese and Korean culture and education styles, may lead to inefficient exchanges with Korean teachers. This research will help Chinese students adapt to the educational environment in Korea, improve services available to them, and programs offered by Korean universities to international students [5]. Chinese international students will be affected in various ways in Korea. Therefore, their future viewpoints may be different from students who have undertaken all their study in China. We are going to explore what the future trends of Chinese students in Korea are.

The cultural milieu that someone is in may affect their future prospects. People such as international students who live in a different cultural environment will experience cultural differences that may also change their attitudes towards the future. We explored how international students' perception of the future may change.

2. Literature review

International students may experience problems such as being in an unfamiliar culture, language barriers, and a lack of university support, job information, and career counseling opportunities during course selection. Studies on the stresses that Chinese international students encounter show that they are also often concerned with employment, their future occupation and career paths [6][7][8][9].

The motivation for Chinese international students to enter university include (1) Preparation for future goals (2) the influence of family and other people close to them and (3) an interest in Korean culture and/or language. Common difficulties that Chinese students face in Korea include not having people they can trust around them, homesickness, loneliness, living expenses and a lack of emotional support. Students who stay in Korea for longer periods of time may also face issues such as insufficient Korean language ability, isolation from society, not being able to access familiar foods, loneliness, differing concepts of manners, communication problems, lack of information, and even climate problems. Even after adapting to college life, difficulties in taking classes due to language problems or a lack of understanding of Korean cultural mores, suggest the necessity of providing lectures on 'Korean History and Korea Traditions for Foreigners' [10]. The content of the stress students experienced in university life in Korea has been divided into (1) stress at school; (2) economic stress; (3) stress in relationships; (4) emotional stress; (5) concerns about the future and job stress; (6) complaints about the education system [9].

In order to communicate with Korean students, friends, or professors, international students need to have competent Korean language skills. Language skills are the most important condition for international students facilitating the acquisition of knowledge at school, cultural understanding, as well as in the social sphere. In addition, foreign language education improves students' intercultural competence [11]. Language skills can influence all areas of study abroad life and play an important role in capacity development concerning social interaction [12]. As such, Korean language ability can play a key role in helping international students integrate into Korean society. The Korean Language Proficiency Test (TOPIK) conducted in Korea to assess the Korean language ability of international students covers the basic skills of listening, writing and reading.

While studying abroad, international students may experience many social activities such as cultural exploration, museum tours, making and meeting friends, and travel. Social activities are linked to a variety of accreditation results [13]. When international students participate in social activities and form good social relations, they tend to adapt better to life in their host country and learn more about the country's culture. Therefore, the frequency of participation in social activities will improve cultural adaptation and social

confidence while living aboard [14].

Career orientation is a concept used in [16] based on the concept of career anchors developed in [15]. [16] used the concept of career orientation as a self-concept of motivation, desire, attitude, and value of one's personal career. Career orientation is a factor that influences career decision making such as individual career development and career goals [17], and it has been confirmed that it helps an individual to grasp the direction of their career development. Therefore, understanding career orientation will help individuals to make better career choices and be more aware of their career behavior. In the future, policy support for career development and career counseling will be effective.

In this study, employment and future life direction after graduation should be considered. The purpose of this study is to investigate international student's career decision factors and career directions, specifically their employment path after graduation.

3. Method

3.1 Sample

In this study, 116 questionnaires were sent by internet to Chinese students studying in Korea. The data were collected from 15 November ~ 20 November, 2017. Information about the respondents includes: there were 66 male students (56.9%) and 50 female students (43.1%). 21 students (18.1%) were aged between 17 and 19 years, 61 students (52.6%) were aged between 20 and 22 years, 26 students (22.4%) were aged between 23 and 25 years, 7 students (6.0%) were aged between 26 and 28 years, and 1 student (0.9%) was older than 28. 30 students (25.9%) had lived in Korea for between 0-6 months, 18 students (15.5%) had lived in Korea for between 7-12 months, 31 students (31%) had lived in Korea for between 1 and 2 years, 25 students (21.6%) had lived in Korea for between 2 and 3 years, 7 students (6.0%) had lived in Korea for between 3 and 4 years, 4 students (3.4%) had lived in Korea for between 4 and 5 years and 1 student had lived in Korea for over 5 years. There were 93 university students (80.2%), 12 graduate students (10.3%), and 11 language school students (9.5%). The respondent's Korean Language Proficiency Test (TOPIK) scores were 10 students in grade 1 (8.6%), 23 students in grade 2 (19.8%), 42 students in grade 3 (36.2%), 18 students in grade 4 (15.5%), 7 students in grade 5 (6.0%), 12 students in grade 6 (10.3%), and 4 students did not have a score in any of these 6 grades. 97 students (83.6%) classified themselves as Han-Chinese, 16 students (13.8%) classified themselves as Korean-Chinese and 3 students (2.6%) were from other ethnic backgrounds. 35 students were living in a dormitory, 81 students were living in other types of accommodation; 29 students (25%) were living alone, 60 students (51.7%) were living with friends, 11 students (9.5%) were living with parents, 5 students (4.3%) were living with relatives and 11 students (9.5%) were living with other people.

3.2 Measures

The survey includes 7 items. Sample items included communication related items such as "I am experiencing difficulties in my daily life because of my poor Korean language skills," "When I go to the hospital, it is difficult to communicate with the doctor," "It is difficult for me to communicate with my professor," "I really want to make friends with Korean classmates, but the language problem has created obstacles." And items about college life satisfaction like "I am generally satisfied with my daily life," and "I am generally satisfied with my university life," "After graduating from college, I want to continue studying for a graduate degree."

4. Analysis

According to the results of the exploratory factor analysis, Table 1 displays the results of Cronbach's Alpha for reliability and correlation analysis. All values of Cronbach's Alpha are above .60 (communication= .854,

and satisfaction= .677). These results show that the reliability of this article is acceptable. Further, the results display high reliability.

Table 1. Factor analysis

KMO=.729	Component			Reliability
	1	2	3	Cronbach's Alpha
Communication 1	.854	-.060	-.124	.824
Communication 2	.798	.212	.078	
Communication 3	.783	.224	-.182	
Communication 4	.782	.110	.301	
Life satisfaction 1	-.140	.839	-.112	.677
Life satisfaction 2	-.173	.756	-.459	
Future plan orientation	-.211	.620	.684	
Total	2.646	1.548	1.096	
% of Variance	37.804	22.118	15.664	
Cumulative %	37.804	59.922	75.586	

Table 2 shows the results of the correlation analysis. The results show that life satisfaction was positively related to future plan orientation ($r=.346, p<.01$). However, communication was not related to future plan orientation.

Table 2. Correlation analysis

	Mean	Std. Deviation	communication	Life satisfaction	Future plan orientation
Communication	4.5431	1.57672	-		
Life satisfaction	4.6940	1.09101	-.082	-	
Future plan orientation	4.50	1.686	-.087	.346**	-

***: $p<.001$, **: $p<.01$, *: $p<.05$

5. Conclusions and discussion

The purpose of this research is to investigate the level of cultural adaptation stress experienced by Chinese students in Korea. The results show that levels of college life satisfaction can influence how stressful cross-cultural adaptation is. Thus, how well students can communicate with Koreans and how much they feel satisfied about their college life are extremely important indicators of how well they will adapt to the new culture and how much stress they will have.

This research can help international students understand the unique perspective of the future of Chinese students and has several implications. First, it can help understand the future plans of Chinese international students and their future inclinations. Second, for Chinese students' plan orientation, it can explain what factors are necessary for their career development. Finally, it can be better understood what type of support needs to be provided in Korean schools in order to best assist Chinese students' career development, future satisfaction, and expectations. Educators may help these students by better understanding their cultural background, different learning styles, necessity of having to adjust to the frustrations of school life, how they can overcome culture shock, and by doing more to help them adapt to the Korean education system and better understand Korean culture.

This study has several implications. First, it is necessary to pay more attention to the needs and desires of international students'. Second, Universities should provide more cultural events designed to help international students understand the culture of the host country. Third, the school should provide international students with a range of social activities and develop related programs. Sometimes consideration for foreign students who have lived in a different cultural environment, understanding of Korean culture and efforts for adaptation are carried out together [13].

Our study also has limitations, most pertinently in that it focused solely on Chinese students, so that any conclusions that may be drawn from it may not necessarily be relevant to students from other backgrounds. On this point, we suggest future studies should investigate students from different countries. Additionally, in this study we focused on international students' university life. Future research should also examine the social life of international students and focus on suggesting ways to improve the levels of satisfaction that international students have with their social lives.

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