

Internationalization of Education & Culture Adjustment The Case of Chinese Students in Japan

Cecilia IKEGUCHI
Tsukuba Gakuin University, Japan

Abstract: This paper focusses on cross-cultural exchange through international studies program, and the problem of foreign students' adjustment to Japanese culture. First, it reviews and outlines existing international programs and national educational policies in response to the increasing number of foreign students in Japan. Data were collected from a survey and analysis of the International Programs of National as well as Private universities. It likewise validates personal comments collected from personal conversation with Chinese students through a questionnaire conducted on 100 students enrolled in the different universities. The results hope to offer insights as to whether the responses of the host institutions were successful in dealing with the adjustment problems of the international students. Based on analysis of host-student relations, it proposes a more intensive system of intercultural education of foreign students based on the different stages of adjustments (Lin, 1997).

Keywords: Internationalization, adjustment & adaptation, instrumental adjustment

1. Introduction

The unprecedented scale and depth of China's participation in a variety of intercultural activities calls for a systematic study of the agents involved in such interchange. The increased cross-border cooperation between China and Japan has been carried out in various fields like tourism, business, education, culture and sports, and mass communication, providing an abundant data for such research (Mc Cullough, 1998).

The first section of this paper will trace national educational policies towards internationalization of Japanese schools and in so doing show the trend in the influx of foreign students into Japan. It hopes to answer the following questions. What are the policies adopted by the government towards internationalization of education? How are these policies translated into actual practice?

The second section will discuss adjustment situations of foreign students in Japan. It hopes to answer the following questions. Are the responses both at the government and school level sufficient to allow foreign students to cope with student life in the country? Do these initiatives satisfy the adjustment needs of the foreign population?

2. Internationalization of Japanese Education

In 1983, the Japanese government, under Prime Minister Nakasone established the "Council for Foreign Student Policy Toward the 21st Century" calling for a significant increase in the number of foreign students in Japan. McCullough (1998) expresses hope that foreign students

“would serve as a bridge between Japan and their own countries” (p. 160). Government statistics as of 1997 show that 51,047 foreign students enrolled in universities doubled in number within a decade (Horie, 2002). The overwhelming majority came from Asia, of which 50% were from China and Taiwan.

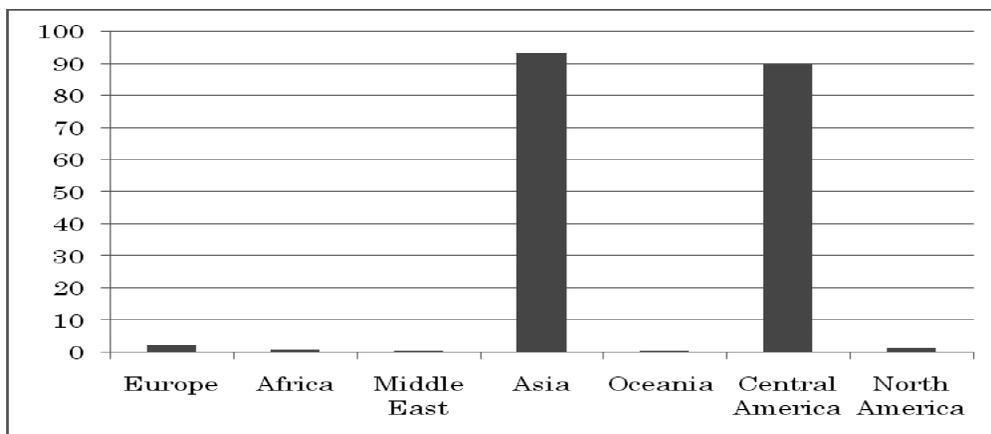
The literature makes it clear that since the 1990s Japan has taken a somewhat unchanged and even more focused approach by seeking to stimulate internationalization through a strong international student presence (Horie, 2002; Horie, 2003). The “100,000 Plan” launched in 1983 under the Council of Foreign Students Policy aimed at bringing the number of foreign students to Japan up to 100,000 by the year 2000. As a result of the effort of the Ministry of Education towards internationalization, particularly of Japanese higher education since the 1990s, the number increased to a total of 118,498 foreign students in Japanese universities as of 2007 (Paige, 2005). The trend in foreign students’ increase is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Increase in the Number of Foreign Students

YEAR	No. of Foreign Students in Tertiary Level
1983	10,428
1985	15,009
1987	22,154
1988	25,643
1991	45,066
1994	53,787
1997	51,047
2000	64,011
2003	109,508
2006	117,302
2007	118,498

The movement towards internationalization of education in Japan, including Higher Education, has been analyzed mainly from two main points of view.

The first is from the standpoint of increased openness to students from any cultural background, while the other is from the viewpoint of improved quality and efficiency of education. Graph 1 below shows evidence on the first. The data shows that Japan opened its doors to students from several cultural backgrounds.



Graph 1: Geographical Composition of Foreign Students in Japan at All Levels of Education, Based on Data Provided by Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO). December, 2006

Second, from the viewpoint of quality, the government's stand on internationalization does not focus on "making education of Japanese students conform to international standards (Ebuchi, 1997). Rather it includes first and foremost "making education of foreign students in Japan conform to such standards" (p. 39).

2.1. Performance Indicators and Assessment of Internationalization

The tremendous increase in the number of international students in Japanese universities has led to attempts in identifying major adjustment problems and solving them. Michael Paige (2005) summarized a set of performance indicators for assessing internationalization of higher education in Japan.

Side by side with the aim of increasing the number of foreign students in the country, the Japanese government took initiatives on curricular developments with an international flavor, and the development of several graduate schools with a focus on international development (Paige, 2005).

Ideally, internationalization of education will have to make every effort to devise a system that can accommodate existing differences among the linguistically and culturally diverse number of students (Ebuchi, 1997). For example, how can the system and its rules be more flexible and in what ways can the programs be diversified to meet the challenge? Michael Paige (2005, p. 108) provides a conceptual overview of internationalization and presents a set of performance indicators for assessing internationalization, some of which are summarized below:

- 2.1.1 Improvement of infrastructure for foreign students: Infrastructure for international education refers to the presence of professional staff and units responsible for specific aspects of internationalization

- 2.1.2 Provision of financial services: Financial services must be included in the budget plan necessary to carry out the goals of internationalization.
- 2.1.3 Provision of academic advice and support: This is included in the Internationalization Strategic Plan that provides teachers, staff and personnel to meet the needs of foreign students.
- 2.1.4 Expansion of language programs: Foreign Language Programs are a part of specific internationalization activities by which foreign students can fit in the culture and attain their study goals in Japan.
- 2.1.5 Provision of international exchange programs: Exchange programs for foreign students include homestays and community-oriented activities that help international students cope with the new culture.
- 2.1.6 Internationalization of education for foreign students: This aspect of the Plan assures integration of international students into university life, utilizing international students as learning resources.
- 2.1.7 Provision of employment seminars for graduating students: A part of performance indicators is the Monitoring Process that includes performance reviews of the employment support given to foreign students after graduation.

In order to trace how these efforts have been translated into practice according to the set of performance indicators for assessing internationalization set forth by Paige (2005), a web survey was conducted by the present author on 10 universities (5 national and 5 private) in the year 2008. School websites are a useful and powerful tool to attract foreign students, and therefore give a clear and valid picture of the school's internationalization effort (Astani & Elhindi, 2008). The Sections (2.1.1.1 – 2.1.1.7 below summarize the results of this survey, categorized according to Paige's (2005) performance indicators as given above.

2.1.1.1. Improving Infrastructure for International Students

Improving infrastructure for foreign students is accomplished by most universities through diverse ways. Aside from the most common response of most schools of providing a set of competent staff, teachers, most schools provide a thorough system of medical support and legal advice. Many universities provide housing and/or increased accommodation, as well as facilities for immigration support alongside first-aid psychiatric treatment.

2.1.1.2. Provision of Financial Support

Financial support consists largely of provision and expansion of scholarships, a system of fees exemption, increased part-time job opportunities on and off campus, and a creation of the University International Students Fund.

2.1.1.3. Provision of Academic Support

All universities provide intensive academic care by assigning students to academic advisors

whose major task is to look after foreign students in matters related to studies, social life on and off campus and even personal problems. Most schools adopt a tutoring system whereby every foreign student is assigned a tutor to assist in school work, assignments and language-related problems.

2.1.1.4. Expansion of Language Programs

Creation and expansion of the Japanese Language Programs is one area where government effort at internationalization is largely felt. This is accomplished in most universities through a provision of language study support and tutorial services. Tsukuba University and Yokohama International Students' House are examples of schools that pioneer such initiatives.

2.1.1.5. Provision of International Exchange Programs

This has been accomplished through several ways: by establishing intercultural programs, by providing home stays and sponsoring off-campus events. Off-campus events usually include cultural and social activities between community members and foreign students. The latest and pioneering effort can be seen in Nagoya University's effort of providing mixed dormitories for both Japanese students and foreign nationals.

2.1.1.6. Internationalization of Education for Foreign Students

Universities have also tried intercultural exchange by putting up volunteer intercultural classes in the community and allowing foreign students to introduce their language and culture. Similarly foreign students are allowed to visit nearby elementary or junior high schools to introduce their culture and conduct classes allowing for intercultural exchange. Some schools are active in developing exchange programs offered by local civic organization. These activities allow foreign students' exposure to the local people and their culture, providing opportunities for intercultural exchange.

2.1.1.7. Provision of Employment Seminars for Foreign Students

With the increase in the number of foreign students who work in Japan after graduation, employment seminars for graduating students have become a need and an essential system of support. Pioneered by the Yokohama International Students House, these seminars give legal advice on working conditions in Japan, and orient foreign students on laws and regulations regarding visa and working status of foreigners in the country. Unfortunately, these seminars do not provide much information on doing business in Japan.

The above web survey of major universities indicates that Japanese universities are doing a good job in meeting the physical and academic needs of foreign students. The next questions that come to mind are: Are these efforts sufficient to allow foreign students to cope with practically difficult issues like an extremely different language and lifestyle in the host culture? Do these initiatives satisfy the needs of the foreign population? Is Japan, as a host

culture, providing culturally sensitive campus programs and educational support? Otherwise, “by inviting more international students and leaving them unsatisfied, Japan is creating more enemies.” (Mc Cullough, 1988, p.22) The following section will discuss adjustment situations of foreign students in the country. The first section provides a review of literature on foreign students’ adaptation pattern and adjustment situation. The second section focusses on adjustment situation of international students in general and of Chinese students in particular based on questionnaire results.

3. Adjustment and Adaptation of International Students

Based on existing literature that discusses difficulties and variables that predict effective adjustment of international students in general, this section will present results of a study on foreign students in Japan. Data are based on personal comments derived from the writer’s informal talks with foreign students and a validation of these observations based on questionnaire results.

3.1. Instrumental Motivation

Adjustment and adaptation has occupied the bulk of research in intercultural studies. The terms have been defined and discussed extensively. For the purpose of this paper, instrumental adjustment will be discussed along Brislin’s concept of adaptation and adjustment.

Brislin (1981, p. 168) defines adjustment and uses the term interchangeably with adaptation in this manner. “Adjustment to another culture is dependent upon people’s traits and skills. Since adjustment is the ability to function during everyday activities without severe stress, it includes the core elements like people’s satisfaction, perceived acceptance of hosts”. Brislin’s definition clearly categorizes people who use instrumental adaptation as “having clear goals concerning tasks to be accomplished (in the host culture). Any changes in the behavior of the sojourner are designed to serve their needs, to be instrumental in task accomplishment.” This implies that with instrumental adjustment “we do not expect foreign students to accept the entire repertoire of host cultural behaviors and discard their own. Rather we assume that with their limited duration of stay abroad, most of them are likely to achieve this level of adjustment to the foreign culture.” This concept of psychological and socio-cultural adjustment falls into one recent development in cross-cultural research.

Previous research reveals that psychological adjustment is predicted by personality factors, amount of social support, contact with fellow nationals and hosts, and attitude towards the host. Socio-cultural adjustment on the other hand is influenced by cross-cultural contact, culture distance, cross-cultural training and experiences, and length of stay in the foreign culture. Each of these is strongly related, each affecting and is affected by the other.

Ward and Kennedy (1994) describe effective adjustment in terms of psychological adjustment to the new environment. Psychological adjustment denotes the sojourner’s feeling of well-being and satisfaction in a new environment, while sociocultural adjustment denotes the ability of an individual to fit in and to negotiate interactive aspects of the new culture. Psychological adjustment is best understood within the stress and coping framework .

Furthermore, Ward, Bochner and Furnham (2001) suggest that effective adjustment is measured in terms of social adjustment to the new environment. The findings of Ward, Bochner and Furnham (2001) indicate that social adjustment entails the abilities to express attitude, feelings and emotion, understand the gaze pattern of the people, carry out the ritualized routines such as greetings, leave taking, disclosure, making and refusing requests, and asserting themselves.

3.2. Foreign Students in Japan

The tremendous increase in the number of international students in Japanese universities, as seen in Section 1 above, has led to attempts to identify major adjustment problems and solving them. Research on adjustment and adaptation of foreign students in Japan regularly cites not only problems they face concerning living conditions, but also, more importantly, problems within the context of increasing international understanding, difficulties in being accepted in Japan's often rigid and closed society, and difficulties in making friends among the Japanese. These adjustment problems are a result of culture differences.

The adjustment situations and adaptation pattern of foreign students in Japan is analyzed through the concept of instrumental adjustment from both the theoretical and practical point of view, discussed in the previous section. In order for foreign students to attain a satisfying level of instrumental adjustment, there is a need to develop guidance and orientation programs capable of teaching them the host culture as well as the host university culture without undermining their own culture or value systems. This is a prerequisite for every international student to live every day without stress and achieve their task goals successfully.

This section hopes to find answers to the following questions. What are the attitude, the needs and culture adjustment problems of Chinese students in the country? What are the national and school policies and practices implemented in response to these needs? How can schools provide a culturally sensitive campus to students of foreign nationals? What are examples of cultural orientation programs necessary to sustain the socio-cultural needs of foreign students, particularly Chinese nationals in Japan?

3.2.1. Personal Observations

The first section presents a collection of candid comments from conversations as well as formal talks with foreign students. The most common responses, based on questions asked by the researcher, are reported here. Results of candid talks and discussions indicate that a great number of foreign students would like to live and work in Japan after completing their university education in the country. To a certain extent, they try to keep up with daily norms of life, and language. It seems that given the current situation, the Chinese students are instrumentally motivated to adjust. However, effective cultural orientation programs combined with social support systems will enhance their motivation and lead to success. Some of the comments are listed below.

Table 2. Report of Foreign Students' Candid Statements

Q: What would you like to do after graduation? A: I'd like to work in Japan after finishing my studies.
Q: Are you happy / satisfied in your life in Japan now? A: I'm trying to.
Q: Do you have enough friends? A: I have some foreign friends, but few Japanese friends.
Q: Are you well adjusted in the language? A: I try to study the language because I need it in school and part-time job

As the author found a pattern of thoughts and a thread of ideas that consistently appear in the comments of the students, a survey was deemed necessary to validate these comments. The results are presented below.

3.2.2. Questionnaire Survey

In order to validate personal observations on the attitudes and feelings of foreign students from China, and in an effort to duplicate earlier findings on attitudes and perceived needs of foreign students, a survey was conducted by the author among 100 students enrolled in both private and public universities in Japan. The objective was to examine whether institutional responses which were started in the 1990s have been successful in dealing with the current life needs of Chinese students in the country.

The questionnaire consisted of four parts. The first part asked questions to elicit the attitudes and feelings of foreign students regarding academic and social life in general, while the second part asked questions that report feelings and attitudes regarding language and communication. The section consisted of self-assessment questions, and although self-assessment surveys are subjective measures, they nevertheless provide valuable information necessary to gauge students' own perceptions of their lives as foreign students in Japan. The third part asked the respondents to Agree or Disagree with a list of statements. Responses were meant to assess their current adjustment situation. The last set of questions asked the respondents to rank items in the order that they think are the most needed to the least needed. Responses were meant to give information on the needs assessment of the foreign students' population. A copy of the questionnaire may be obtained from the author upon request.

3.2.2.1. Attitude and Feelings about Academic and Social Life

The foreign students were asked to choose from seven sets of complimentary statements, either the Positive and Negative item, that they feel apply to them. The majority of the respondents chose the Negative statements, such as that they feel "foreigners are not liked in Japan" (i.e., the Negative choice in item 1) ; they are "disappointed with classes" (item 7) and they feel "Asian students are rejected in part-time jobs" (item 5). The responses are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Attitudes and Feelings on Academic and Social Life

Questionnaire Items	Percentage of Negative Responses
1. Foreigners are disliked in Japan. Japanese like foreigners.	55%
2. Japanese don't show their true feelings. It's hard to make friends w/ them. It is easy to make friends with Japanese people.	75%
3. I feel a profound sense of disappointment in many aspects of life in Japan." I am generally happy with my life in Japan.	56%
4. I have persisting difficulties in understanding and using the language. Japanese language is easy to understand.	81%
5. Asian students were often rejected in part-time jobs. It is easy to get a part-time job in Japan.	67%
6. Japanese people don't see things from another point of view. Japanese people understand foreign students' point of view.	78%
7. I am disappointed with classes; they are boring; students don't study hard. Classes are interesting, fun and enjoyable.	77%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Statements are opposite items on a scale. ● Items with the opposite choice receive the complementary percentage (%). ● No blank responses were left. 	

3.2.2.2. Attitude and Feelings about Language and Communication

The respondents were asked to choose from a list of 10 statements as self-assessment about their feelings and attitude toward their life in Japan. The most frequent responses reveal the general feeling of social dissatisfaction with the language, their inability to communicate and the differences in the character of the people. The most frequently chosen responses are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Attitudes and Feelings on Language and Communication

1	"Japanese are hard to understand."
2	"I do not know how to interact with them."
3	"Communication style: They don't say what they really feel and think."
4	"I feel they are not honest."
5	"I have lived here many years, but I can't understand them yet."
6	"They tell me I'm self-centered & opinionated when I honestly express my feelings and opinion."

3.2.2.3. Assessment of Adjustment Situation

The survey questions asked the foreign students if they agree or disagree with statements about their current adjustment situation. Responses were grouped according to their adjustment stage. Foreign students who have stayed in Japan for three to six months were classified in Stage 1, those who have spent more than 6 months but less than two years were classified in Stage 2, while those who have lived in the country for more than two years were classified in Stage 3. Only the highest average responses for each group are shown. The responses indicate that most Chinese students who have lived in the country longer assess their socio-psychological adjustment more negatively compared to the other two groups. Those who are new in the country are apparently unsure of most of the situations. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Student Assessment of Current Situation

Item	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Not Sure (%)
Japanese people are kind.	(39%) (1)	30 (%) (3)	31 (%) (2)
Japanese people are easy to make friends with.	40%) (2)	35 (%) (3)	25 (%) (1)
I can trust Japanese friends.	25 (%) (2)	44 (%) ³ (3)	1 (%) (1)
It is hard to understand what Japanese people are thinking.	55%) (3)	31 (%) (1)	14 (%) (2)
It is hard to understand why Japanese behave in certain ways.	46 (%) (3)	19 (%) (2)	35 (%) (1)
We need to learn more about Japanese culture and the people.	70%) (3)	12 (%) (1)	18 (%) (2)
There should be more classes that teach Japanese Culture.	63 (%) (3)	18 (%) (2)	19 (%) (1)
I think the Japanese do not understand people from my culture.	43 (%) (3)	18 (%) (2)	39 (%) (1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lower () indicates average response according to length of stay • (1) = 0 to 6 months (2) = 6 months to 2 years (3) = more than 2 years • N=100 M= 45 F= 55 			

3.2.2.3. Needs Assessment

Questions in the next part of the questionnaire asked to collect data on the most pressing felt needs. The respondents generally agree that the most urgent need seems to be more opportunity for interaction with members of the host culture, followed by more culture classes. Medical and health problems as well as scholarship problems rank 3 and 4, respectively. Discrimination against foreign students from Asia ranked last. The responses are summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Needs Assessment Results of Foreign Students in Japan

	Items	%	Rank
1.	More interaction between Japanese and international students	86	1
2.	More intercultural classes	75	2
3.	Medical and health problems	52	3
4.	More scholarships	41	4
5.	Japanese language classes	34	5
6.	More part time jobs for foreign students	29	6
7.	More English classes	24	7
8.	Cheaper housing and accommodation	21	8
9.	Less discrimination against Asian students	20	9

4. Discussion of Results

4.1. Major Difficulties

Responses to the questionnaire provided information that gauge international students', including Chinese nationals, attitudes toward living and studying in Japan and determine which areas they need help in. As in the survey conducted by Uehara and Hicks (1989) the students admit that the major difficulties during their stay in Japan consist of the following: 1) Japanese language, 2) Japanese indirectness or euphemistic expressions, 3) needing help and guidance with their study, 4) academic (lack of academic progress in studies), 5) Japanese closed group orientation, 6) lack of knowledge of the character of Japanese people, 7) homesickness, 8) inability to communicate with advisor and/or instructors, and most of all, 9) financial problems.

Similarly, the needs and problems presented by foreign students in this study can be grouped into the three general areas which McCullough (1998) classified as: 1) physical – the need for affordable and decent housing, food and other basic necessities; 2) personal – the need for a support system of friends and the need for leisure time; and 3) societal – the need to adjust to the demands of their new environment, including developing a degree of competence in the new language, as well as the need to be respected and feel accepted in the new environment. It can be argued with McCullough that despite the increasing amount of financial aid in the form of scholarships and part-time jobs, other social factors such as the increase in yen value and price increases in everyday life in Japan is a serious financial burden for foreign students.

The fact that the results are congruent to the findings of previous studies on foreign students in Japan suggests these to be major areas of difficulty that need attention. The next section will describe some of the institutional responses and culture orientation programs aimed to answer these problem areas.

4.2. Institutional Responses: Infrastructure, Social & Financial

Institutional responses were noted as part of Japanese universities' commitment and responsibility towards providing social-cultural support for the increasing number of foreign students resulting from the internationalization effort. Although notable progress has been made in health care, housing and Japanese language education, there is a need for school administration to improve social and cultural support to students of foreign culture. The big number of students who come on private funds creates a serious problem and creates a magnitude of other adjustment problems. Institutional responses include an expansion of scholarships and financial aids to help privately sponsored foreign students. It is in the area of interpersonal communication where Japanese schools have taken initiative in promoting relations between host country students and foreign students. As was pointed out above, very few universities have initiated courses which could explain cultural differences to alleviate adjustment problems. With regard to psychological problems, some institutions have provided information to newly arrived students on mental health check, how to deal with culture shock, and providing counselors to talk to upon arrival to Japan.

4.3 Institutional Responses: Cultural Orientation Programs

Results of the online survey of university websites, described in section 2.1 above, shows that International Programs are an important part of National and Private Universities that accept foreign students and offer International Courses and Programs. However, internationalization efforts in Japanese universities, specifically those geared towards the inclusion of culture training and orientation courses to better understand the host culture, are very much lacking. A few examples have been noted in some universities. Among these is the example of Intercultural Education conducted by Gifu University. This program offers Japanese Language Studies and Culture Programs, and foreign students are required to take these classes. Examples of Culture Subjects include Contemporary Japanese Society, Japanese Traditional Culture, Modernization and the Japanese and Culture of Gifu. The students are encouraged to compare Japanese culture with their own cultures in order to appreciate the differences and similarities between different cultures. Acknowledgement and recognition of the cultural differences and similarities are further enhanced by discussion with Japanese students in the "Cross-cultural Communication" class. Awareness of the importance of cultural understanding leads to selection of a thesis topic. Unfortunately the program suffers from some constraints, most important of which are brevity, insufficiency, and language proficiency problems. Classes are conducted for a couple of months; the content of the course is not wide enough to provide a thorough culture education, and the classes are conducted in Japanese. Only students who have developed a certain proficiency level can attend the courses. Furthermore, very few universities pay close attention to this area

of foreign students' education.

The survey on the institutional responses to the increasing number of foreign students offers insights on the tremendous effort Japan has put into internationalization and greater inter-cultural exchange. However, the institutional responses which were started twenty years ago have not been thoroughly successful in dealing with the current life needs of the foreign students' population in the country.

Most of the survey respondents in this study came to Japan with a clear goal of hoping to find a job after graduation. Instrumental motivation (Brislin, 1981) allows the individuals to deal with everyday aspects of life, temporarily and superficially. For example, forming a line, greeting, and bowing are changes in behavior that are designed to be instrumental in accomplishing their daily tasks. But it does not seem to build a bridge to a deep and long-lasting relationship with host members, as seen in the responses to the questionnaire. In this sense, instrumental motivation alone, which refers to the career-related motives of studying in Japan, is not enough in order to cope with the demands of psychological and social adjustment. Instrumental motivation does not help foreign students to understand the deep culture of the country, which is important for students to function effectively in their new environment.

The students surveyed and interviewed fall into the different stages of adjustment: from the honeymoon to the hostility stage. After having passed the first stage of excitement and euphoria (honeymoon), a sense of confusion and alienation develops during which cultural differences become increasingly noticeable (with increased contact with host members). Thus to successfully conduct themselves in the social community, they have to change behavior patterns and carry on the ritualized routines of the host country. The process of acculturation and adjustment can be very stressful, for each of the different stages of adjustment. Foreign students go through different stages of adjustment, each requiring a different set of support systems. In the first stage, the pre-arrival stage, there is a need to provide necessary information in order to reduce anxiety and possible culture shock. The second stage, the initial adjustment stage, starts with students' arrival and lasts for a period of six months. There is a need for continued orientation to reduce culture shock through socio-cultural support programs of the universities. The third stage, the ongoing adjustment stage, begins six months after arrival until graduation. A coordinated and effective system of Intercultural Education (ICE) and support for foreign students is necessary to sustain the needs at the different stages of adjustment. Most students come with the intention of staying long in Japan, finding a job after graduation, or probably sending the rest of their life in the host country. Culture knowledge, gained through an effective ICE will enable them to establish a health local support network (Li & Gasser, 2005) of mutual understanding unstained by stereotypes, prejudices and ethnocentric perspectives. Culture orientation will lead to positive contact with host members and is critical to effective and successful adjustment.

5. Conclusions

The results of this investigation throw light to previous findings on the government's efforts on internationalization. Congruence of these comments and those of previous research, discussed above, indicates a need for a stronger emphasis on Intercultural Education focusing

on Japan and the psychology of its people, to help in the successful adjustment of international students in the country.

Although the concept of instrumental adjustment claims that foreign students are not expected to accept the entire repertoire of host cultural behavior, changes are necessary in their typical ways of behavior in order for foreign students to accomplish their goals. These changes are not only instrumentally designed to serve their needs; more importantly, they are psychological changes in attitudes and feelings without which sociocultural adjustment, a key to success in life in Japan, cannot take place.

The institutional responses reported a couple of decades ago in response to the major difficulties experienced by foreign students, as discussed above, are insufficient to fully address the problems resulting from culture differences. There is a need for more intensive culture training so that foreign students, especially Chinese students in Japan, will understand the psychology of the Japanese and understanding differences in communication style, in order to build better interpersonal relationships based on honesty, openness and acceptance of these differences. It seems the universities are doing a good job in providing for the physical needs of international students. However, there is a need for continued orientation to deal with the new social context. This comes in the form of interacting with domestic students, or host members and creating a bond.

Foreign students play a large role in internationalization of Japanese education. This research has assumed that as the largest number of foreign students in the country, Chinese students play a very important role in internationalization through their interactions with the host country students inside and outside of the classroom. Given proper support and enough social and psychological assistance, as well as financial assistance in integrating into campus life, they will have a greater impact on the school and on the host country as a whole.

References

- Astani, Marzie & Elhindi, Mohamed. (2008). An empirical study of university websites. *Issues in Information Systems* 9(2), 460-465.
- Brislin, Richard. (1981). *Cross-cultural encounters*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Ebuchi, Kazuhiro. (1997). *Study of the internationalization of universities*. Tokyo: Tamagawa University Press.
- Ebuchi, Kazuhiko. (2001). *Foreign students and internationalization of the university*. A paper presented as a keynote report. Research Institute for Higher Education, Hiroshima University.
- Horie, Miki. (2002). Internationalization of Higher Education in Japan in the 1990s. Reconsideration. *Higher Education*, 43, 65-84.
- Horie, Miki. (2003). *International students and internationalization of higher education in Japan: interpretive study with policy makers and international educators*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Minnesota.
- Inoue, Nakahiko & Hazen, Michael. (2007). Intercultural adjustment of Japanese government

- scholarship for international students. *Kyushu Communication Studies*, 5, 61-74.
- Kitamura, Kazuyuki. (1984). *Daigaki no kokusaika* [Internationalization of the university] . Tokyo: Tamagawa University Press.
- Li, Andrew & Gasser, Michael. (2005). Predicting Asian students' sociocultural adjustment. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29, 561-576.
- Lin, Jun-Chi & Yi, Jenny. (1997). Asian international students' adjustment: Issues and program suggestions. *College Student Journal*, 31, 473-479.
- McCullough, James. (1988). Asian foreign students in Japan. *Journal of the Institute for Asian Studies*, 15, 141-160.
- Paige, Michael. (2005). Internationalization of higher education: Performance assessment and indicators. *Nagoya University Education Studies*, 5, 99-122.
- Uehara, Asako & Hicks, Joe. (1989). *Institutional responses to socio-cultural adjustment problems of foreign students in Japan*. In K. Ebuchi (Ed.), *Foreign students and internationalization of higher education: Proceedings of OECD/Japan seminar on higher education and the flow of foreign students, 1988* (pp. 129-143). Hiroshima: The Research Institute for Higher Education, Hiroshima University.
- Ward, Colleen & Kennedy, Arthur. (1994). Acculturation strategies, psychological adjustment and sociocultural competence during cross-cultural transitions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 18, 329-343.
- Ward, Colleen; Bochner, Stephen & Furnham, Adrian. (2001). *The psychology of culture shock*. Canada: Routledge.

Author Note

Cecilia B. Ikeguchi (Ph.D.) is currently a Professor at the Faculty of Management and Information at Tsukuba Gakuin University where she has taught ESL and Intercultural and International Communication, and has been an adviser in the committee for International students for years. She has served as assistant editor of various academic journals and conference proceedings. She has published widely in the practice and theories of language teaching as well as in the field of Intercultural and International Communication. Her recent publications include "Beyond Boundaries: Insights into Culture and Communication" (Pearson Longman, 2009) and "What Do You Mean" (Kinseido, 2012).