

ALIENATION AMONG INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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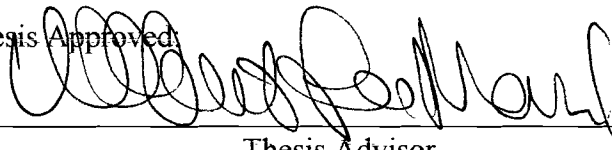
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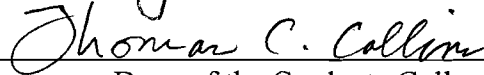
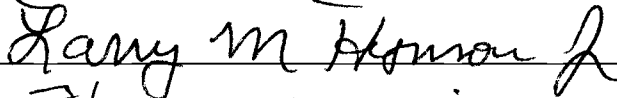
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Living in a foreign country can be exciting and full of new experiences. However, it can also be fraught with anxiety and isolation. Individual preparation for an overseas experience can help only so much. There are always unexpected situations and occurrences that can unsettle even the most adjusted individuals¹.

If living abroad is stressful for the average individual, the added role of student creates new stresses. International students are often thrust into new situations and expected to adjust quickly. If their language skills are sufficient, they are placed directly into classes and expected to perform efficiently as students. While most schools offer intensive orientation sessions, gaps can occur in the students' understanding of what is expected of them. This can lead to internal conflict and what Church (1982) calls culture, or role, shock. In trying to adjust to life in the new culture, international students may experience feelings of homesickness, loneliness, powerlessness and isolation. These feelings can lead to or be a part of the students' feelings of alienation.

Need for the Study

This study is intended to explore the manifestations of alienation in international students at a southwestern university. Previous research suggests that alienation does

¹ This was learned by the author during nine months spent living and teaching English overseas.

exist among the international student population (Owie, 1982; Schram and Lauver, 1988; Carey, 1989; and, Dodge, 1990). In fact, research from Marx to Seeman to Schact points to the idea that it exists in everyone to some extent.

What has not been made clear in all of the research is the extent to which alienation is personally experienced by international students. Surveys have been successful at gaining information about the various types of alienation experienced by individuals, but not at gaining a fuller understanding of the individual nature of those experiences.²

This study attempts to address this need by combining both quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches. The former is used to determine the extent of the experienced alienation and the latter is used to discover both the reasons behind the felt alienation and the individual experiences of it. For the purposes of outlining the hypotheses and reviewing the literature on alienation, the construct will be broadly defined as *separation from something or someone*.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the present study is to explore the concept of alienation as it is manifested in international students. This phenomenon emerged during a pilot project conducted on the acculturation of African students. While never named as such outright, many of the feelings expressed and experiences discussed rang clearly of alienation. The pilot project will be further discussed below. It is hoped that as a result of this research, counselors, teachers and researchers can develop more effective ways of identifying,

² Although the current social psychological focus on alienation stresses the individual, the data gathered is actually analyzed in the aggregate. This will be further discussed later in the chapter.

determining the seriousness of, and dealing with experienced alienation. This is important because individuals need to identify it themselves and deal with it in constructive ways.

It is the intent of the researcher to contribute to the immense body of literature that currently exists on a topic that has interested researchers since the time of Marx and Hegel. This study differs from previous research in that it seeks to expand on both the emotional and structural aspects of the concept. It focuses on the affects of the expectations of international students and their acceptance of American values (as they perceive them) on alienation. By looking at expectations of international students, whether they are met or not, the perceived values of Americans, and the personal experiences of the students, the researcher intends to focus on the precipitating factors that enter into the concept called alienation.

This study does not suggest that the factors discussed here are in any way conclusive. The intent, as suggested, is to add to the body of literature in a way that has not been thoroughly explored. It is doubtful that any study of the individuality of alienation could encompass all of the individual manifestations of the concept.

Objective vs. Subjective Alienation

The concept alienation has been studied with regards to many aspects of life. Originally, it was considered to be an objective state that was unavoidable because of the nature of capitalism. Humans became alienated from the objects that they created due to the mechanized and distancing nature of industrial work. No longer did individuals see the products of their labor as objects that they produced. Rather, the payment for work

became the visible symbol of labor (Ollman, 1975). This type of alienation can be objectively measured through the identification of existing conditions.

It can also be contrasted to the subjective manifestations of alienation. Schaff (in Schweitzer, 1981) calls this self-alienation, "a subjective social relation in the sense that it is man who alienates himself from a world that he has socially created, from other people, and from his own 'ego' (526)." Rather than being a state brought about by the structural conditions of society, subjective alienation is personal and variable, depending more on the individual's perception of his or her situation and less directly on the structural conditions. This type of alienation can only be observed through the experiences, feelings, and attitudes of individuals.

Objective dimensions of alienation include measures of the conditions of the workplace, degree of responsibility, opportunities for self-direction, the amount of control that individuals have over the process of production, and the complexity of the work. Subjective dimensions include attitudinal measures of political powerlessness, meaninglessness, separation, isolation, and lack of realized expectations. As can be seen, studying one aspect of alienation often precludes studying the other. Thus, the conflict between the two approaches to alienation are both epistemological and methodological. Those who follow the psychological aspects of alienation are inclined to gloss over the behavioral and structural indicators in favor of individual feelings, perceptions and attitudes. This forces us to make a paradigmatic choice that "determines not only the way questions and answers about alienation are formulated and researched, but also the strategies for change, action, and de-alienation³."

³ Schweitzer, 1981:531.

The Positive and Negative Connotations of Alienation

Alienation generally carries negative connotations. Marx's alienation of man from the products of his labor and from himself was a lament that would be quieted with the emergence of communism. Seeman's (1961) political powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, and social isolation were individual problems arising out of a person's place in society.

However, there can also be positive connotations for alienation. The individual's realization of his or her alienation is considered liberating in that it allows for a realistic appraisal of his or her situation and the beginnings of de-alienation (Schweitzer, 1981). In addition, Ludz (1981) points out that alienation can be a conscious decision made by an individual in order to distance him or herself for self-preservation. For example, alienation in the 1920s was viewed as a positive way to enhance creativity (Taviss, 1969). For the international student, alienation can be either positive or negative. While the trend is to think of it in a negative way because of the social isolation and meaninglessness that it implies, it can also be a positive experience when used to refine one's self-definition or accomplish a goal requiring isolation and focused effort.

Psychological Reductionism in Alienation Studies

Schweitzer (1981) suggests that the study of alienation has moved from the domain of critical theory into the realm of "rigid positivistic inquiry." By focusing on the psychological aspects and attitudinal measures of the concept, researchers shift from "normative evaluation to descriptive analysis." Schweitzer purports that this is due to the

use of survey research methods which require empirical reduction and value neutralization.

It could be argued that this psychological reduction takes alienation away from its Marxian and Hegelian roots. This, in turn, means that alienation has been removed from its critical theory origins and the impetus it carried for radical change. Instead, it has been transformed into a concept that emphasizes individual experiences of and adaptation to structural conditions. What has become important in modern alienation studies is the aggregated individual's experience of alienation rather than the structural factors that cause it and could be changed.

Schweitzer (1981) suggests that this move from a critical theory view of alienation to a positivist empirical view overpsychologizes the concept and makes it difficult to study by utilizing any macrosociological research methods. Rarely do studies manage to get both the attitudinal and structural aspects of alienation, as accomplished in Marx. What appears to be lacking from modern alienation studies is the thread that ties the individual to the larger socio-historical world. With the application of survey research to alienation, interest has focused on the limitations of the method and how to properly measure alienation on an individual level (Schweitzer, 1981).

It is not the researcher's intent to suggest that either side of the objective-subjective debate is correct. Rather, the goal here is show both sides of the debate in order to better understand the topic. This study takes an admittedly social psychological view of alienation. While caught up in the intricacies of the survey, it also attempts to listen closely to the individuals. Recognizing that alienation is inherent in the

very fabric of our lives, the researcher still feels that it is important to listen to individual voices. Only through the individual experiences of alienation, whatever the intensity of that experience, can we begin to put together a coherent understanding of the socio-historical concept.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

For the purpose of this research, it is important to understand the theoretical background of the concepts of alienation. A multitude of meanings and interpretations have been associated with alienation since its inception. Ludz (1973) offers the Latin derivation from the *Thesaurus linguae latinae*, alienatio. Three meanings can be identified from the latin. First, alienation refers to the transfer of property rights. Second, it refers to the sense of estrangement of man from "other men, his country or the gods." Third, it refers to the "sense of derangement of mental faculties or mental illness⁴."

Melvin Seeman has been one of the more prolific authors on the subject of alienation. According to Seeman (1959), "the concept of alienation dominates both the contemporary literature and the history of sociological thought⁵ ." Seeman (1959) developed five variants of alienation; 1) powerlessness, 2) meaninglessness, 3) normlessness, 4) isolation, and 5) self-estrangement. He later added a sixth variant to the list, social isolation (1972). Seeman's goals in discussing alienation were twofold. First, he wanted to organize the "great traditions in sociological thought (1959)." Second, he wanted to offer a typology more conducive to empirical analysis. It is obvious that he succeeded because his six variants have been used as the bases for numerous studies by

⁴ p. 11
⁵ p. 783

other scholars (Dean, 1961; Clark, 1961; Dodder, 1969; Burbach, 1972; Seeman, 1975; Ray, 1982; Seeman, 1983; Roberts, 1987; Morah, 1990; and others).

For Seeman, powerlessness originated in Marx's view of the worker's condition and in Weber's later work on bureaucracy⁶. However, Seeman is quick to point out that he is taking a social-psychological view of this variant. While the objective conditions of society are important, Seeman prefers to leave them out of his typology and allow them to be focussed on by others as their research demands. Powerlessness can be defined as "the expectancy or probability held by the individual that his own behavior cannot determine the occurrence of the outcomes, or reinforcements, he seeks⁷ ." Dean (1961) adds to this variant the idea of helplessness. He offers the description given by Kris and Leites (1950), that "'ordinary' individuals have ever less the feeling that they can understand or influence the very events upon which their life and happiness is known to depend⁸ ."

Meaninglessness is derived from Mannheim's discussions of the 'substantial' and 'functional' rationality and also from research on the 'authoritarian personality.' Seeman defines meaninglessness as "a low expectancy that satisfactory predictions about future outcomes of behavior can be made⁹ ." Unfamiliarity with the culture would inhibit an individual's ability to predict outcomes of behavior and some international students may experience this.

⁶ Seeman, 1959. He refers to Gerth and Mills' (1946) book, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*.

⁷ Seeman, 1959:784

⁸ in Dean, 1961:754

⁹ Seeman, 1959:178

The third variant, normlessness, comes from Durkheim's concept of anomie. For Seeman (1959) normlessness is discussed in terms of expectancies. The anomic situation is one in which there is a "*high expectancy that socially unapproved behaviors are required to achieve given goals*"¹⁰. For this, the individual must believe that his actions will enable him to achieve his goal. In addition, individuals must feel that they exist in an "intellectually comprehensible world"¹¹. Normlessness also suggests a "separation from group standards, a feeling of pointlessness or that no certain goals exist"¹². Dean suggests that there are two subtypes, purposelessness and conflict of norms. The first can be described as the loss or absence of values that give life purpose. Conflict of norms refers to the internalization of competing values. For example, an international student may experience conflict between the idea that scholarly activity is a shared experience and the competition inherent in American universities.

Isolation is generally used in connection with intellectuals and their estrangement from society and cultural standards. Those who are alienated in this sense generally "*assign low reward value to goals or beliefs that are typically highly valued in the given society*"¹³. This type of alienation would seem to fall in the category of voluntary alienation, much as Taviss suggested was common in the 1900's (1969). In the case of international students, isolation can either be voluntary or involuntary. If the isolation is voluntary, the international student is likely to reject the goals and values of the host society. However, if it is involuntary, the student is likely to experience loneliness and

¹⁰ ibid, p. 788

¹¹ ibid, p. 788

¹² Degrazia in Dean, 1961:754

¹³ Seeman, 1959:789

hopelessness in his or her inability to attain the goals or cultural standards set up by society.

The final variant, self-estrangement, is most succinctly stated by C. Wright Mills. He suggests that people are alienated from each other because they try to make instruments of each other. Instead, man "makes an instrument of himself and is estranged from It also (in Seeman, 1959:789)." Fromm, in The Sane Society, suggests that self-alienation occurs when man comes to see himself as alien (Seeman, 1959). From this, Seeman concludes that self-alienation means "to be something less than one might ideally be if the circumstances in society were otherwise - to be insecure, given to appearances, conformist (1959:790)." Another way to look at this is to consider self-alienation as a loss of ability to find meaningful activity or work (Seeman, 1959). This goes back to Marx's idea that man is a creative being and, as such, is alienated from the product of his labors in a capitalist society. For the international student, this applies only in situations where the student feels that his or her course of study, or time in the host country has become meaningless and reflects this onto his or her ideas about the self.

Research Using Seeman's Variants

Feuer (in Scott, 1965) criticized Seeman's five variants, pointing out that some individuals take pride in their isolation (e.g., artists). In addition, some individuals, particularly intellectuals, found meaningfulness and social determinism more distasteful than a state of low meaning or predictability. Feuer also criticized Seeman's choice of 'five' variants suggesting that one could find numerous others.

Dean (1961) used three of Seeman's variants in his research: powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation. He constructed a scale to measure each variant that has been used in subsequent research (see Dodder, 1969). The importance of his research is his suggestion that alienation is not so much a "phenomenon of Society" as a "situation-relevant variable." Dean pointed out that a person could be alienated with regards to politics, but not with regards to religion.

Dodder (1969) pointed out the weaknesses in Dean's Alienation Scale. His factor analysis of the scale did not highlight any differences in the three variants chosen by Dean (1961). Dodder suggested instead that Dean's scale is measuring "unanticipated latent dimensions rather than the three a priori dimensions defined by Dean (p. 255)."

Alternative Social Psychological Studies of Alienation

Scott (1965) pointed to Homans in his discussion of alienation from values. For Homans, modern society is breaking up the small units of humanity upon which people depended for their connection to the larger society. The small group is essential in keeping people from feeling alienated. For Homans, "alienation from values seems to occur in those situations where the small group has been destroyed; ... (Scott, 1965:250)."

Ray (1982) attempted to gather all of the scales designed to measure alienation and condense them into one central scale that retained the reliability of the others. He gathered 168 items and administered them, first to a group of students, and then later to a group of teachers and a group of factory workers. An item analysis identified the most highly correlated items, the best 20 of which were chosen. The result was a scale with "high internal consistency" that offered an operational definition of alienation (p. 68).

Taviss (1969) made an interesting distinction in more recent research on alienation. She looked at the differences in the concept in two time periods, the 1900s and the 1950s. She suggested that alienation in the 1900s was voluntary, chosen and directed toward other people, whereas alienation in the 1950s was involuntary and directed toward social norms and roles (p. 48). In the 1900s, alienation was a result of personal preferences for seclusion and isolation from others. However, in the 1950s, alienation resulted from feelings of oppression relating to work and life roles. Disillusionment and self-delusion were common among workers of the 1950s according to Taviss (1969). For the purposes of this paper, alienation is considered involuntary and directed more toward social norms and roles. It is experienced in a negative way by the individual.

Research on Alienation in Students

A great deal of literature exists dealing with alienation and students. What follows is a summary of the works considered most pertinent to this research. For more further sources refer to bibliography. Burbach (1972) developed a University Alienation Scale as a context-bound scale. He argued that the university contained all of the alienating features of the larger social system and, thus, was an appropriate place to measure alienation (p. 226). He chose the powerlessness, social isolation, and meaninglessness variants developed by Seeman. Ma (1985) looked at alienation among college students in Taiwan. Similar "to studies with American samples," he discovered only community of origin and mother's education to be significant for alienation (p. 672). Owie (1982) studied alienation among foreign students in the United States. He used the

social alienation subscale of Dean's Alienation Scale. In his research, he noted that "incongruence between social expectations and social reality may force some foreign students into social isolation (p. 163)." Owie found that social alienation was positively correlated with the three variants from Seeman (1959) that he selected; powerlessness, meaninglessness, and normlessness.

For Hajda (1961), alienation was "an individual's feeling of uneasiness or discomfort which reflects his exclusion or self-exclusion from social and cultural participation (p. 758)." He described it as a feeling of "non-belonging" and agrees with Ollman (1971) that it cannot be understood apart from its opposite, unalienation. Hajda (1961) looked at alienation among graduate students, dividing them into four categories: alienated intellectuals, integrated intellectuals, alienated non-intellectuals, and integrated non-intellectuals. He found that intellectuals were not all alienated and that alienation was affected by the kinds of relationships that the students formed with "non-academic" people and those individuals' reactions to the students' work.

Much of the research on international students has focussed on their needs and the problems that they face, in particular their acculturation and counseling. Pedersen (1991) suggested that "(i)nternational students are more likely to experience more problems than students in general and have access to fewer resources to help them (24)." He also suggested that international students are faced with learning a series of sometimes contradictory roles. If these roles are not recognized and correctly learned, students will experience stress and role conflict. This can adversely affect their well-being.

General Research on Internationals

Adler (in Church, 1982) identified five stages that internationals go through. First, the contact phase is where the individuals are excited, euphoric, and more attune to the distinctions between the home and host cultures. Second, the disintegration phase is where individuals experience tension, confusion, depression, and withdrawal. In the third phase, the reintegration phase, the individuals reject the host culture, turn more to nationals for socializing and face the choice to grow or regress to earlier stages. During the fourth stage, the autonomy stage, individuals become more sensitive to host nationals. In the fifth and final stage, the independence stage, individuals begin to revere cultural differences, engage in mutually trusting behavior, and become more culturally- and self-aware (541).

Many studies suggest that international students who speak fluent English, are single, and have many American friends are better adjusted (Weinstock, 1957; Church, 1982; Kagan and Cohen, 1990). Spiro (1955) suggested that international students who do not accept the values and attitudes of the host society will face internal conflict and conflict in their interactions with others. Brein and David (in Church, 1982) suggested that effective "cross-cultural communication and understanding" is a key to sojourner adjustment. Arnove (1971) took a different approach to adjustment and examined the techniques institutions could utilize to lessen student alienation. His study was conducted in an experimental school in Venezuela. His primary concern was how institutions can affect their students' feelings of competency and control over their futures. He found that positive training experiences and the prestige of the chosen field positively correlated

with increased feelings of competency and control that resulted in low feelings of alienation.

Acculturation and Alienation

Acculturation is the process by which a nonnative comes to resemble the host country's members in dress, speech, and action, and, in addition, begins to feel a sense of belonging in that country. Much of the research on acculturation has been done on immigrants, but some looked at the acculturation of international students¹⁴. The general findings of acculturation research suggest that there is an inverse relationship between acculturation and alienation.

Kagan and Cohen (1990) followed the Mendoza and Martinez model of acculturation in their study¹⁵. Their predictors of acculturation were factors like marital status, occupational level, satisfaction with career, English ability and previous study, number of American friends, number of friends from one's native country, decision-making and values. By doing a random sample of university students, they found that those students who were single, English-speaking at home, had many American friends, and made decisions based on internal values were the most culturally adjusted. While not all of these factors will be looked at in this study, it is clear that there is a relationship between cultural adjustment and feelings of separation from that culture and its members. As individuals gain confidence in their English, make American friends, begin to consume American foods, and become more satisfied with their career

¹⁴ For examples, see Knight & Kagan, 1981, Mendoza & Martinez, 1981, and Kagan & Cohen, 1990.
¹⁵ in Baron, 1981

or academic position, they are going to become *increasingly* acculturated and *decreasingly* alienated.

Alienation is, therefore, a factor in the acculturation of individuals, one that is often hinted at without being openly acknowledged¹⁶. Any of the same predictors of acculturation can be used to predict alienation, although the direction would be reversed. Thus, it can be seen that any study of acculturation will hint at the extent of alienation regardless of whether the concept is ever directly mentioned.

Alienation in Internationals

Although most of the research just discussed deals with the acculturation of international students, and not directly with their alienation, the connection cannot be ignored. Students who are well-adjusted to the host culture are less likely to feel alienated. Additionally, many of the same variables that have been tested in acculturation studies (age, gender, marital status, fluency, and country of origin) have also been used in studies of alienation (Hajda, 1961; Seeman, 1972; Owie, 1982; Barber, Altbach, & Myers, 1984; and Kagan & Cohen, 1990).

For example, Scram and Lauver (1988) conducted a study of alienation among international students at a large southwestern university. The purpose of the study was twofold. In addition to identifying the best predictors of alienation for international students, the research also directed them in making suggestions for the improvement of programs designed to assist international students in the United States. Based on their survey of the literature, they predicted that students would be less alienated when they: a) are married and live with their spouse; b) are graduate students; c) are from urban areas;

¹⁶ for exceptions, see Parr, Bradley & Bingi 1992; Pedersen, 1991: and, Church, 1982

d) have a great deal of contact with members of the host culture; e) are older; f) are from Europe; g) are male; and h) have been in the US. for an extended length of time (p. 147). They used the Social Contact Scale and Burbach's (1972) University Alienation Scale. Social Contact was found to be the best predictor of alienation. They also found that graduate students and students from Europe were less likely to be alienated.

Parr, Bradley, and Bingi (1992) conducted a study regarding the concerns and feelings of international students. They noted that "acculturative stress increases when the gap between the student's traditional culture and the host culture is greatest (p. 20)." It was also noted, from previous research, that language competency and prior travel experience is also helpful in the adjustment of international students. They discovered that international students were most concerned about cultural differences, their extended families, school, and finances.

Alienation and Anomie

Finally, in addition to the studies exploring alienation among different populations, research has been conducted which links alienation and anomie. Heaven and Bester (1986) go so far as to say "Alienation (or Anomie)" as the first words of their study of alienation among workers in South Africa and Australia. Seeman's use of normlessness and isolation as two of his variants of alienation and his reference to Merton's rebel and innovator suggest that he felt that the two constructs are closely related. Dean (1961) pointed out that Seeman's variant, social isolation, can be traced to Durkheim's anomie (p. 755). Ludz (1973) suggested that those social scientists who use

the term alienation share the "field of investigation" with their colleagues who study anomia and anomie.

CHAPTER III

THEORIES OF ALIENATION

A Critical Theory View

Karl Marx brought alienation to our attention with his discussions of the worker in the capitalist system (Mizruchi, 1975; Ollman, 1971). Ollman suggests that Marx posits alienation in terms of "unalienation". The absence of alienation is unalienation. For Marx, alienation is negative, something that should not be. He sees humans as active, appropriating and initiating. Anything that interferes with their action, appropriation and initiation is considered something which separates humans from their essential nature (Ollman, 1971). In this light, he identified four types of alienation that arose from the workers' situation (Ollman, 1971 suggests only three types). In the first workers are alienated from the process of work; in the second they are alienated from the products of their work; in the third, they are alienated from themselves; and in the fourth, they are alienated from other workers. Marx was concerned with the affects of the Industrial Revolution on man and his difficulties in attaining meaningful, productive experiences (Mizruchi, 1975).

For international students, it is more the separation from others that require attention. However, it is true that this separation can hinder them from meaningful, productive experiences. With the reduction of alienation, there is a simultaneous

increase in international students' ability to act, appropriate, and creatively interact with others and with their environment (Mizruchi, 1975).

Durkheim saw the same processes of the Industrial Revolution creating strains between the relations among humans and their hopes and goals for themselves in Marx's emphasis on separation as a result of industrialization. Durkheim developed the concept of anomie to explain the "loss of effectiveness in the normative and moral framework that regulates collective and individual life¹⁷." Anomie results when society fails to provide an adequate framework for interaction, or when the norms of the group provide no limits to individual's goals and aspirations. When released from the confines of norms, individuals do not know what to expect or how to behave (Encyclopedia of Sociology). In the same way, international students are at a loss when they find themselves in a culture where they are unfamiliar with the norms and behavioral expectations. They are in a state of anomie. Merton expanded further on Durkheim's concept of anomie introducing the ideas of goals and means. For Merton, anomie is "a result of the disjunction between socially mandated goals and the structurally available means for the attainment of these goals (Mizruchi, 1975)." Again, international students may be unaware of the culturally-proscribed goals and means of the society, thus finding themselves in an anomic situation.

A Social Psychological View

Seeman offers a social-psychological theory of alienation that he considers "roughly consistent" with Rotter's theory of social learning (Ludz, 1973). As described above, Seeman (1972) is concerned with expectancy and reward (or reinforcement

¹⁷ from the Dictionary of Sociology

value). Each of his six variants is linked in some way with the individual's expectancy (high or low) that their behavior will induce some response (desired or undesired). It is also possible to see the influence of Merton in Seeman's ideas, especially with regards to his variant, normlessness.

However, it is the theoretical background offered by Scott (1975) in his article, "The Social Sources of Alienation", that provides the stepping stone for the theoretical foundation of this paper. Scott (1965) looks at alienation in terms of the conscious behavior of individuals. Basing his ideas on Smelser (1962), all meaningful behavior is composed of values, norms, organization of roles, and situational facilities. Individuals are committed to values, conforms to norms, are responsible in his or her roles (meets the expectations that society has for his or her performance), and has control of situational facilities. For Scott, then, the sources of alienation are a lack of "a) commitment to values, b) conformity to norms, c) responsibility in roles, and d) control of facilities (p. 241)."

Alienation as a Result of Structural Conditions in Society

Scott's (1975) ideas can be linked with structural functionalism and Talcott Parsons' AGIL and action schemas. The 'theory chain' used in this study can be expressed in the following manner. Parsons' AGIL and action schemas will be used as a general foundation for this research. They provide the base upon which the theory is built. Smelser (1962) expanded on Parsons in his Theory of Collective Behavior and offered insights on the role of the individual in Parsons' work. This is important because the individual is the primary focus of this study. and Scott took Smelser's framework and

applied it to alienation. He looked at factors that lead to alienation, such as social isolation, anomie, role awareness, and stock of knowledge. It is on this 'theory chain' that the research will be linked.

Parsons was concerned with the large-scale social structures and institutions, the relationships between them, and their constraining effects on actors (Ritzer, 1992). Parsons believed that each system must perform four basic functions in order to survive. He laid out these functions in his AGIL scheme which is composed of adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency. The four functions will first be explained in a general sense. Adaptation involves the way the system copes with externals in the environment. Goal attainment concerns the definition and achievement of goals. Integration involves the regulation of the interrelationships between the other three parts. Latency entails the furnishing of motivations for individuals and cultural patterns for the social system (Ritzer, 1992).

The AGIL scheme performs its functions for Parsons' theory of action. There are four systems in his action theory; the social system, the cultural system, the personality system and the behavioral organism. This last system will not be discussed for two reasons. First, Parsons himself accorded little discussion to it, and second, it does not apply to the study at hand. Each system offers something to the maintenance of order and can be broken down to many different levels. For the purposes of this study, we will concentrate on how Parsons' action theory applies to an individual level.

The social system consists of groups of actors interacting with each other, seeking an "optimization of gratification" and basing their relations in terms of "a system of

culturally structured and shared symbols (Parsons in Ritzer, 1992)." The social system socializes the actors into internalizing culturally accepted norms and values. In this way, the social system attempts to ensure that the actors are pursuing socially appropriate goals in socially appropriate ways. International students are not socialized into the values and norms of their host country. Thus, they are often not pursuing the same goals as the other members of the society. This increases the chances of feelings of alienation emerging.

The cultural system is the social stock of knowledge of the society. It contains the ideas, symbols, and values that the social system tries to internalize in the individual actors. Culture is seen as

a patterned, ordered system of symbols that are objects of orientation to actors, internalized aspects of the personality system, and institutionalized patterns in the social system (Ritzer, 1992:247).

It is this system that perhaps international students are least familiar with. Their unfamiliarity leads to actions that often do not fit within the socially prescribed boundaries of the host country. Thus, the unfamiliarity with the culture of a society is often a causal factor in their feelings of alienation.

The personality system contains the orientations and motivations of the actors. The actor is motivated to act by his need-dispositions. The need-dispositions are drives that are defined by the social system. Parsons identifies three types of need dispositions: those that lead to emotional gratification; those that impel the actor to follow cultural norms; and those that involve the role expectations that structure the actions of the actors and tell them what to do in certain situations. Parsons and Shils (1951) presented a passive view of the personality system and suggested that the actors must see themselves

in a way that fits their place in society. They do not control the roles that they occupy, rather the social system defines the role expectations for the variety of positions that they may take. Also, they must learn the norms, values, and goals of the society they live in in order to be successful in it. For international students, this is difficult because they enter a society with need-dispositions that have been shaped by another social system. Thus, their behavior is often unlikely, at first, to be directed toward the goals of the host country as discussed above.

Parsons defines behavior from the point of view of the actor. He and Shils (1951) offer four points in their conceptualization of behavior:

(1) Behavior is oriented to the attainment of ends or goals or other anticipated states of affairs. (2) It takes place in situations. (3) It is normatively regulated. (4) It involves expenditure of energy or effort in 'motivation (which may be more or less organized independently of its involvement in action) (p. 53).

It is at this point that Smelser (1962) finds the base for his theory of collective behavior. As discussed above, Smelser sees meaningful behavior as containing values, norms, organizations of roles, and situational facilities. Values are the broad, general ideas of a society about desired ends. Norms are the general rules governing behavior. Roles are organized in such a way that the actors know the structure and expectations of each role. Situational facilities refer to the knowledge that the actor holds about the roles and goals of society and his or her confidence in his or her ability to control the environment in pursuit of those goals.

Scott (1975) applies Smelser's (1962) ideas to alienation in the following way. First, alienation from values is a sign of a lack of contact with social groups. Groups enable individuals to maintain connections with the larger society, and when they are

isolated from this connection, the values of society are not reinforced. For international students, this is not so much an isolation from the values of a particular society as an unfamiliarity with them.

Second, he suggests that alienation from norms can also be called anomie. Because an individual feels separated from the rules governing society, he distrusts the motives of others who interact with him believing that they are using him for their personal gains. Thus, he does the same to them, beginning the cycle. This does not directly apply to international students as Scott has laid it out. Rather, international students are in a state of anomie upon arrival to the host country, but this disappears as the students learn the rules of the society.

Third, Scott (1975) discusses the individual's responsibility to his or her role in terms of whether he or she identifies with it. This can come about because of mental illness, a "failure to understand what is expected of him (or her)", or other reasons. For international students, alienation in terms of role responsibility is most likely to occur because the students do not understand what is expected of them (Scott, 1975:244). Parsons offers one explanation for why people fail to take responsibility for their roles. He uses the example of a girl who grows up in a masculine society that stresses self-sufficiency, strength, and independence for men and dependency and weakness for women. This induces feelings of insecurity, anxiety and deprivation in the girl, and inhibits her ability to identify with her societal role of "wife-mother." (Scott, 1975). For international students, their initial frames of reference are their own cultures. As they

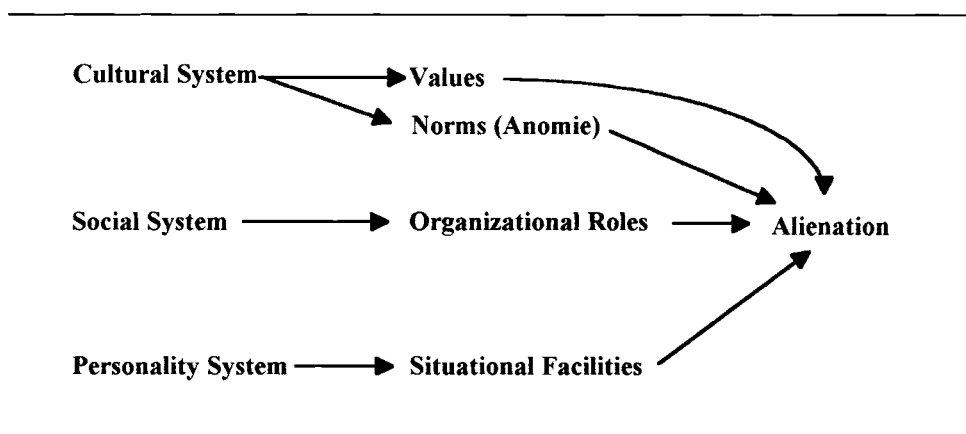
become more familiar with the culture and roles of their host country, they will probably feel less alienated.

Finally, alienation from facilities is similar to Marx's workers being alienated from the means of production. They have no control over the means of production. This separation leads to a sense of powerlessness, feelings that individuals have no control over their futures. Alienation from facilities is also related to the stock of knowledge that individuals have about the society that they live in (Smelser, 1962). International students do not have the same knowledge about a society's roles and expectations that a native does and so will have less confidence in their ability to control the facilities that enables them to achieve their individual goals. This, then, leads to feelings of alienation.

Thus, international students who feel alienated do so, in part, because of an unfamiliarity with the values, norms, roles, and means of control of situational facilities of the host society. The following figure combines the ideas of Parsons, Smelser and Scott in order to illustrate the theoretical connections.

Figure 1

Linking Parsons, Smelser and Scott



Alienation is separation. In a Marxian sense, individuals are separated from the products of their labor and from their innate creativity. In a social-psychological sense, individuals are separated from the "normative moorings of society"¹⁸ (Encyclopedia of Sociology)." Alienation has long been considered a negative state, one that should not be. Because of this, much research has gone into attempting to determine the causes and synchronous states (anomie, for example) of alienation.

Individuals who feel disassociated from their surroundings are considered alienated. Individuals, especially intellectuals, who are dissatisfied with much of their lives are considered to be alienated. Individuals who find themselves lost in a world without meaning or rules are also thought to be alienated. Anytime individuals feel separated from some aspect of their lives, this feeling can be identified as alienation. This suggests that everyone, at one time or another, is alienated. The difficulty for researchers then is to develop a measure of alienation that is general enough to encompass all aspects of social life. Unfortunately, this has proven impossible. Researchers have instead chosen to focus on various groups of people (workers, students) and various aspects of life (work situation, politics, education) in order to discover the manifestations of alienation in each in the hopes that it will lead to a greater understanding of the construct as a whole.

¹⁸ from the Encyclopedia of Sociology

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Statement of the Problem

From Marx to Seeman to Geyer, the study of alienation has flourished. Research has covered many social groups, including immigrants, students, workers, and minorities. Work has been done to uncover both objective and subjective dimensions of alienation. Yet, while much of the social psychological research focuses on the individual, little of it actually takes individual experiences into account.

A great deal is known about alienation and the factors that contribute to it. The next logical step is to begin to look at individual experiences of the phenomenon. By looking at each individual, in light of the aggregate, alienation takes on a more personal nature. While it is recognized that many people experience alienation to some degree, there has been little research on 'how' individuals experience it. By understanding how individuals experience alienation (what in their environment contributes to their experience), researchers can begin to understand the structural conditions surrounding alienation.

The Pilot Project

The pilot project was a preliminary exploration of the acculturation of a group of international students. It was conducted utilizing the qualitative methodology of in-depth interviews. Twenty interviews were completed to determine the effect that English

ability, contact with Americans, and resemblance to Americans (in dress and action) would have on the acculturation of those students.

Acculturation was defined as the process by which a nonnative comes to resemble the host country's members in dress, speech, and action and was expressed (for the purposes of the project) in the students' opinions of their experiences in the US. As discussed in Chapter 2, acculturation was found to be related to many factors.¹⁹

The findings of the pilot project in general corresponded to the expected findings, for the most part. However, a factor emerged in the interviews that had not been previously considered. In the course of talking with several respondents, it became apparent that the individual's attitudes toward their experience actually had more of an impact on their acculturation than the variables under consideration. A negative attitude on the part of the student overshadowed any positive affects of age, gender, marital status and number of American friends. It was this finding that led to the current study. It is accepted that alienation exists in everyone to some extent, but perhaps there are factors that influence the degree of alienation that have not yet been observed. With this idea in mind, the current study was developed.

Hypotheses

In looking at the construct, alienation, several possible hypotheses emerge. First, however, two assumptions need to be stated. First, it is expected that international students will experience alienation to some degree. It has been well documented that international students experience a period of adjustment upon entering a new country (Alexander, Kline, Worknch, and Miller 1991; Dillard and Chisolm 1983; Dodge, 1990;

¹⁹ See Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Baron, 1981; Knight & Kagan, 1977; and, Fong & Peskin, 1969.

and Carey, 1989). This period of adjustment can keep international students from joining organizations and making friends in the host country, which in turn can be crucial in the establishment of social ties that decrease the possibility of alienation.

Second, it is known that these experiences of alienation will decrease in intensity the longer that students are in the host country. The longer that students are in the host country, the more familiar they will become with the 'rules of the game.'

Correspondingly, the feelings of separation will decrease as feelings of familiarity increase.

Following these assumptions, five hypotheses emerge. First, it is hypothesized:

H₁: *Those students from more similar cultures will feel less alienation than those from Eastern, primarily Asian and Pacific, countries.*

It would seem self-evident that the more comfortable a person is with something, be it a subject, a person, or a culture, the less chance they have of feeling separated from it.

However, it is possible, given that this study deals with individuals, that H₁ may not be supported.

The second hypothesis is:

H₂: *Those with close ties to organizations will feel less alienation than those with few close connections with others.*

Feelings of separation from society and others have been attributed to intellectuals, students and immigrants (Hajda, 1961; Seeman, 1959). As international students develop friendships and social ties, either with nationals of the host country or people from their own country, feelings of separation are likely to decrease. Becoming involved in organizations with people from their own country, international students may find themselves buffered against the expectations of the larger culture. At the same time,

these associations with people from their own country may increase the amount of alienation felt in relation to the host country.

By appearing to 'fit in' with the host culture, international students are more likely to be accepted by members of that culture. Acceptance would lead to a decrease in the feelings of separation. Thus, the third hypothesis is:

H₃: *It is expected that those who are more fluent in English, have lived in the US longer than others, and are at least tolerant of the values of the host country will feel less alienated than those who hold to the language and values of their home country.*

This will not apply where the language and values of the international student's home are similar to those of the host country.

The expectations that international students have before they arrive about the United States will affect the amount of alienation that they feel. The higher their expectations and the less the students feel that they are met, the greater the sense of alienation. Conversely, the higher or lower the expectations and the better the students feel that they are met, the lower the sense of alienation. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is:

H₄: *When expectations are met, alienation will be lower.*

Ludz (1973) suggests that the construct, alienation, requires the desire to conform to norms. Without this desire, there will be no alienation experienced by the individual. Past research by the author suggests that some international students do not wish to 'belong' to the mainstream culture. They are concerned with completing their education and returning home. Thus, they have no problems with feelings of belonging because they do not care to belong. Thus, the fifth hypothesis is:

H₅: *It is expected that those who do not wish to conform to the expectations of the host country with regard to language, norms, customs, values, and actions (who are not concerned with 'fitting in'), will show less alienation, if any at all.*²⁰

A negative relationship is expected between expectations and alienation; acceptance and alienation; and, membership in organizations and alienation. It is also expected that the closer the international students' own cultures resemble that of the host country, the less alienated the students will be. The secondary focus will be on how age, gender, marital status, presence of spouse, and classification interact with the primary variables to affect alienation.

Because of the magnitude of research that exists on alienation, the more obvious hypotheses, those dealing with the relationships between age, gender, classification, and marital status, were left out of this study. It was instead decided that a clearer focus on the individual manifestations of the phenomenon would be more effective.

The Research Design

This research was a cross-sectional study of international students at a southwestern university (State University, or S.U.) from whom data were collected by the researcher in the form of surveys and in-depth interviews. Subjects were selected for inclusion in this study in a non-random manner. Initially, contact was made with the president of an on-campus organization for international students. Through this individual, the officers of 20 area organizations (clubs for the different countries) were contacted. Each officer was asked to fill out a survey voluntarily and take a number of blank surveys to the members of their respective clubs. Three officers agreed to deliver

²⁰ An alternate view is that suggested by Taviss (1969) in her reference to the concept of alienation in the early 1900's. It is possible that international students chose to isolate or buffer themselves from the host culture. It is not so much that they do not care, more that they do not wish to get involved.

questionnaires. When this method failed to bring in the desired number of responses, three other approaches were used. First, a teaching assistant in the English department who was teaching an international freshman composition class was contacted; he agreed to deliver surveys to his class. Second the researcher approached 50 international students in the university library, of which 43 agreed to fill out surveys. Third, the director of the campus English language school was contacted and agreed to give surveys to the two advanced classes. Twelve students from the school returned surveys. Each survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The characteristics are discussed in the section on the research subjects. Table 1 offers a brief summary of the sample.

In addition to the main body of the study, a reliability check was also done. This section of the study was conducted using a two general education classes composed primarily of Americans. This study will be further discussed in the section on statistical analysis.

Finally, two surveys were chosen at random and were checked against the raw data to ensure that it was typed in correctly. Another survey was chosen and the alienation score was calculated by hand and checked against the computer's score. The data was also checked for impossible codes.

The Instruments

The dependent variable in this study is alienation. All of the questions in the survey were designed to explore this concept and address the five hypotheses. Questions 1-9 are considered demographic questions, relating to age, gender, country of origin, major, classification, marital status, length of time in the US., and membership in

organizations. Questions 1-20 on the second page constitute the alienation scale. The scale was adapted from Dean's (1961) Alienation Scale. Based on Dodder's (1969) factor analysis of Dean's Alienation Scale, 11 items were chosen and reworded to make them applicable to international students. Eight of those items were stated twice, once with State University as the focus, and once with the U.S. as the focus. The adapted scale, like Dean's is composed of three subscales; powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation. Questions 4, 6, 9, 15, 17, and 18 are designed to measure powerlessness. Questions 3, 10, 11, 12, and 19 are designed to measure normlessness and questions 1, 2, 5, 13, 14, and 16 are aimed at measuring social isolation. Question 21 was omitted from the analysis because it accidentally duplicated question 2. The entire instrument can be found in the Appendix.

Questions 22 and 23 ask about the students' perceptions of American values and whether they accept them or not. The more individuals identify with the host culture, the more likely they are to be better acculturated (Spiro, 1955). Because alienation is inversely related to acculturation, it follows that the more accepting an individual is of the host country's values (as they perceive them) the less alienated they will be. Questions 24 and 25 ask about the expectations the students had about the US and the University before coming here and whether they were met or not. Based on impressions gained from the pilot project, if expectations are high and unmet, students are likely to feel dissatisfied with the host country and thus feel alienated. Finally, question 26 asked the respondents to personally assess their ability to speak English. The intent was to get a measure of language ability, and, as the researcher was unable to personally assess each

respondent, an individual assessment was decided upon. Additionally, how well the individual feels that they speak English can have a bearing on their perception of their own situation, thus influencing their feelings of alienation.

A statement of confidentiality accompanied the questionnaires, signed by the researcher, assuring the respondents of the confidentiality of their responses. It should be pointed out that the researcher did not know who the respondents are because the officers of the various national clubs handed out the questionnaires to their members. An executive meeting of the umbrella international organization was attended in order to present the research personally to the area club officers. This was done in order to make the research more understandable and to give the international students a person to associate with the research. It has been suggested by those that work with international students that this would ensure a greater response rate. Those who were willing to be contacted for a face-to-face interview at a later date were asked to write their name and phone number on a separate card included in the questionnaire (see the Appendix).

Research Subjects

In this study, the researcher sought to gain a greater understanding of the manifestations of alienation in international students. As mentioned above, subjects were selected in a purposeful manner from the population of international students at State University for 1993-94. According to the ISS office at State University, the population of international students was 1690 students in the fall of 1993. For the surveys, the total number of subjects was 131 and for the in-depth interviews, 29. Table 1 presents the

Table 1
General Characteristics of the Sample

Characteristic	Sample	University Population
Gender:	N(131)	N (1,690)
Male	91 (69.5%)	1282 (76%)
Female	40 (30.5)	408 (24)
Age ¹		
18 - 20	29 (22.7)	not available (na)
21 - 24	63 (49.2)	na
25 - 30	25 (19.5)	na
31 +	11 (8.6)	na
Marital Status ²		
Married	20 (16)	389 (23)
Single	108 (84)	1252 (74)
Major ³		
Agriculture	5 (4.1)	119 (7)
Arts & Sciences	12 (9.8)	396 (23)
Business	62 (50.8)	403 (24)
Engineering	38 (31.2)	693 (41)
Home Economics	4 (3.3)	17 (1)
Undecided	1 (0.8)	33 (2)
Classification ⁴		
Freshman	14 (10.9%)	145 (9)
Sophomore	19 (14.7)	179 (11)
Junior	39 (30.2)	218 (13)
Senior	19 (14.7)	264 (16)
Masters	24 (18.6)	553 (33)
Ph.D.	12 (9.3)	303 (18)
ELI	2 (1.6)	na
Spouse Lives With		
Yes	13 (10)	na
No	6 (5)	na
Months lived in US ⁵		
3 - 12	43 (34)	na
13 - 24	43 (34)	na
25 - 36	17 (13)	na
37 +	23 (18)	na

1 - missing = 3; 2 - missing = 3; 3 - missing = 9; 4 - missing = 2; 5 - missing = 5

Table 1
General Characteristics of the Sample

Country of Origin	N (sample = 131)	N (total pop = 1690)
Algeria	1 (0.8%)	2 (0.1)
China	5 (4)	171 (10)
Costa Rica	3 (2)	8 (0.4)
Ecuador	1(0.8)	1 (0.05)
India	12 (9)	218 (13)
Indonesia	21(16)	216 (13)
Iran	2 (1)	18 (1)
Ivory Coast	1 (0.8)	2 (0.1)
Jamaica	1 (0.8)	na
Japan	6 (5)	85 (5)
Korea	7 (5)	99 (6)
Malaysia	45 (34)	253 (15)
Pakistan	5 (4)	72 (4)
Peru	1 (0.8)	3 (0.2)
Singapore	1 (0.8)	23 (1)
Sri Lanka	1 (0.8)	30 (2)
Sudan	2 (1)	2 (0.1)
Taiwan	4 (3)	124 (7)
Turkey	3 (2)	18 (1)
Venezuela	4 (3)	9(0.5)
Vietnam	1 (0.8)	na
Yemen	1 (0.8)	5 (0.2)

Table 2
Characteristics of the In-Depth Interviews

Characteristic	N
Gender	
Male	19 (65%)
Female	10 (35%)
Classification	
Freshman	4 (14%)
Sophomore	6 (21%)
Junior	3 (10%)
Senior	3 (10%)
Masters	11 (38%)
Ph.D	2 (7%)
Major	
Agriculture	1 (4%)
Arts & Sciences	3 (10%)
Business	16 (55%)
Engineering	9 (31 %)
Country of Origin*	
Africa	1 (4%)
Eastern Europe	3 (10%)
East Asia	2 (7 %)
Southern Asia	7 (24%)
Southeast Asia	10 (34%)
Southwest Asia	4 (14%)
South & Latin America	2 (7%)

* the regional designations were taken from an atlas and used instead of countries in order to ensure the anonymity of the respondents

general characteristics of the survey sample. Of the 130 survey respondents 89 (69%) were male and 40 (31%) were female. Their ages ranged from 18 to 46. The students came from 22 countries, with the largest number of students coming from Malaysia (N=45) and Indonesia (N=21). Forty-two majors were listed by the respondents. these were collapsed into the eight colleges of the university. The College of Business Administration contained the greatest number of respondents, 63 (52%). Each classification was offered as a possible response with the exception of special student. The classifications were then collapsed into lowerclassmen, upperclassmen, graduates, and ELI (students from the English language school). Upperclassmen constituted 46 % of the respondents.

Table 2 shows the characteristics of the interview respondents. The in-depth interviews were composed of 19 (65%) males and 10 (35%) females. The greatest number of them came from the College of Business with 16 (55%), with Engineering containing the majority of the rest of the respondents (9 or 31 %). Eleven (37%) of those interviewed were masters students, while 6 were sophomores and 4 were freshmen. Ten (35%) of the respondents came from Southeast Asia and 7 (24%) came from Southern Asia.

Sampling Frame

A sample of 150 international student in the spring of 1994 was targeted for this study. Questionnaires were distributed as described above. A total of 175 surveys were delivered. The primary intention of the sample was to get students from as many different countries as possible. An attempt was made to contact as many area club officers as

possible in order to get a representative sample of countries. Countries represented by the population include Malaysia, Japan, China, Ethiopia, Cyprus, Morocco, Kuwait, Columbia, Costa Rica, Vietnam, Algeria, Iran, Ecuador, Venezuela, Jamaica, Yemen, Sudan, Peru, Sri Lanka, Korea, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Canada, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Ghana, Zaire, Malawi, Tanzania, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, and Kenya. The intent was to obtain an equal number of students from each country so that each was represented. Because the sample was a convenience sample, there was no attempt to control for equality in age, gender, major and classification.

Response Rate

Of the 170 surveys handed out to international students, 136 were returned either by mail or in person. Four of the questionnaires were discarded because they had been filled out by Americans. One was considered unusable because of missing data. Thus the total response rate was 77 %.

Variables

The study will be primarily concerned with two sets of variables. For the questionnaire, the survey will focus on three of Seeman's variants; powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation, in addition to the listed expectations of the respondents. The independent variables will include age, gender, marital status and presence of spouse, and membership in social groups. The interviews will focus on the expectations and knowledge of the respondents upon their arrival at SU and on their

experiences at the university. The primary focus will be on the relationships between 1) expectations and whether they are met (hypothesis 4), 2) international students' acceptance of American values (hypotheses 3 & 5), country of origin (hypothesis 1), and 4) membership in organizations (hypothesis 2), and alienation.

Scales of Measurement

Categorical data was used in ascending order and averaged to assess the alienation score of each respondent. The scale was composed of three parts; powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation. Each part had an independent score, but was part of the overall alienation score. The scale followed a Likert format, asking respondents to indicate varying amounts of agreement or disagreement to the scale items.

Statistical Analysis

In determining the relationships between the primary and secondary independent variables and alienation, several statistical tests were run. First, correlations were run on expectations (met or not), acceptance of values, age, gender, classification, marital status, length of time in the US., presence of spouse, and alienation to determine whether any relationships exist. A factor analysis was used to test the validity of the alienation scale. It was performed on the adapted version of Deans (1961) Alienation Scale to see whether the adapted questions still loaded on certain factors. Simple AOVs were run on country of origin, number of organizations a student is a member of, and expectations met to see if they had any significant impact on alienation. A two-way analysis of variance was run on English fluency and acceptance of values to see if they affected alienation both

together and alone. Multiple analyses of variance were run using the above variables and controlling for age, classification, marital status, gender, and major. A regression was done on length of time in the US. to determine whether staying in the US. longer increases or decreases alienation.

The primary focus was on the relationships between acceptance of values, English ability and whether students' expectations were met or not. These are the variables that were further explored in the qualitative section. The relationships between age, gender, country of origin, marital status, major, classification, and membership in organizations were also explored.

A reliability check was also performed using students from two general education classes. The surveys were administered twice, two weeks apart, to the same students in order to verify the reliability of the instrument. Because the classes were composed primarily of American students, this was also an opportunity to (1) determine whether the instrument works equally well with international and American students and, (2) observe how American students compare to international students in the degree of alienation.

Qualitative Data

For the purposes of this study, the qualitative data was used to expand on and explain the information from the surveys. The questionnaire for the in-depth interviews can be found in the Appendix. The first three questions were for general information. Questions 4 and 5 related to hypothesis 4. Questions 6 and 7 related to hypothesis 3. Question 9 referred to hypothesis 5, and questions 10 and 11 were derived from hypothesis 2. Question 8 was designed to elicit information that would elaborate on the

individuals' experiences. It addressed the issue of alienation in a more general and personal manner. The in-depth interviews were intended to highlight the individuality of international students' experiences of alienation.

The interviews were conducted according to the wishes of the respondent. The time and place were chosen by the interviewee, although every effort was made to ensure that the interviews were conducted in quiet locations. Most often the interviews occurred in the university library or in the respondents' homes, although some were conducted in a campus gathering place. The intent was to make the respondent as comfortable and as relaxed as possible. The interviews were recorded by the interviewer by hand in a notebook. The questions were presented as written with as little explanation as possible. The purpose of this was to get the respondents to define the questions for themselves. When explanations were required, an attempt was made to give the same examples to each respondent.

It was found in the pilot project that individuals who outwardly appeared to be acculturated, or met many of the conditions thought necessary to acculturation, were not because their personal experiences and feelings often overrode the affects of marital status, age, and number of American friends. This finding was one of the primary reasons that a qualitative section was added to this study. Alienation is more than just a score from a scale. It also involves individual feelings, experiences, and perceptions.

Validity and Reliability

It is important to establish the validity and reliability of an instrument so that its strengths and weaknesses can be considered when reviewing the results of a study.

Validity refers to the degree to which the tests of the researcher measure what they are intended to measure (Smith, 1991). Construct validity is the degree to which the instrument of measurement fits the construct of interest to the researcher.

As suggested earlier, the validity of the adapted alienation scale has been assessed through factor analysis. A factor loading of 0.30 was initially deemed necessary in order for the item to be considered.²¹ The problem of validity was addressed by carefully wording each item on the instrument. The questions were reviewed by an international graduate student for simplicity and comprehensibility. It was expected that some variation will occur from respondent to respondent, and that some of the respondents might find some of the questions difficult. However, these are problems found in much social research and they were consciously addressed in the formulation of the instrument.

There is also the possibility that the scale being used does not actually measure alienation. Although it was adapted from scale that has been used several times, the rewording and simplification of the items might have changed it significantly. Additionally, the wording, although reviewed by more than one international student, may still be too complex.

In in-depth interviews the researcher has greater control over the information that is obtained. If a question is asked that elicits an unexpected answer, the researcher is free to probe the respondent in order to get the needed information. The validity of the interview section of this study was addressed through the use of clarification with the respondents and the notation of as many direct quotations as possible.

²¹ The results will be further discussed in the chapter on presentation and analysis of the data.

Reliability implies that the instrument will generate the same responses over different periods of time (Babbie, 1992). The reliability of this study was measured using the test-retest method. Two general education classes were given the survey twice, two weeks apart. Correlation coefficients were obtained by comparing both the separate questions and the alienation scores for each time to each other.

The reliability of qualitative research is difficult to measure and is one of the problems faced by all researchers. Katz (in Emerson, 1983) points to the enormous amount of data collected in the course of qualitative research and suggests that researchers must choose what to include in the analysis. This could lead some readers to question what is left out of the report. The researcher attempted to carefully guard the reliability of this study but, as Katz suggests, it is always difficult to verify the reliability of the interpretations of the data.

Ethical Considerations

The research was conducted with the most stringent ethical standards possible. The respondents were assured of their anonymity repeatedly throughout the study and in a statement of confidentiality attached to the survey. Participation was voluntary and the study was in no way intended to harm the respondents in any way (psychologically, physically, or emotionally).

The survey was done in such a way that as few names were known as possible. Any names that were known were kept on a single sheet of paper and destroyed at the end of the study. No true names were used in the discussion of the interviews.

Because of concerns voiced by people who work with international students, all efforts were made to convince the respondents that the intent of the study was not to use them, but is for truly scholarly purposes. No one was forced to participate and nothing can happen to those who chose not to.

As the study involves in-depth interviews, there was the possibility of reactive bias. It was feared that the respondents would react to the physical presence of the interviewer and try to give favorable responses. In order to attempt to make this a more valid study, the researcher avoided leading questions and/or comments and remained professional throughout the study. However, it was difficult to control for this completely.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study, relating both to the instrument and to the population. The first is the lack of generalizability. The nature of the sample selection, a non-random, convenience sample, limits the generalizability of the study. The fact that individuals chose whether or not to take and return the survey meant that the sample is composed of students who were willing to participate. The sample selection was also affected by the fact that the research was conducted in the middle of the semester when students become busier and more pressed for time. In addition, not all of the countries were represented in the sample, again because of the self-selection inherent in the sample.

The in-depth interviews were intended to be representative only in the sense that an understanding of individual experiences of alienation can aid researchers in better

conceptualizing it. They are not intended for generalization to the larger population. This study is, therefore, limited in its generalizability.

Another limitation is inherent in survey methods. Those respondents who filled out surveys in the presence of the researcher were able to ask questions about the instrument. However, approximately half of the surveys were filled out without the presence of the researcher. Thus, any questions about the items went unanswered and some of the responses may be based on erroneous assumptions.

The in-depth interviews were designed to be defined by the respondents themselves, but the presence of an interviewer may have elicited answers that were socially desirable or based on the individual's assumptions of what the researcher wanted. There was also the possibility that the explanations of the researcher biased the answers of the respondents. Finally, one of the questions required that the respondents remember their expectations before coming to the United States. This meant that the answers could have been biased by hindsight and colored by the experiences of the individuals during their time in the U.S.

A final limitation that arises from the sample is one of acquiescence. Respondents often give answers that differ from their true opinions. An Asian graduate student warned the researcher that Asians tend to give neutral responses to surveys out of a desire to remain average. Either they do not want to seem extreme, or they do not want to give offense with a strong answer. Thus, it is expected that the responses may understate the reality of the students' situations.

CHAPTER V

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, the results of the statistical analyses are presented and summarized. The main purpose of the data analysis is to determine if any of the independent variables in the hypotheses -- country of origin, membership in organizations, English ability, acceptance of American values, time in the United States, and expectations -- account for a significant amount of the variation in alienation. The Pearson correlation coefficients are presented for all of the variables in addition to the descriptive statistics. Finally, the results of the analyses of variance and regression are presented. Before presenting the results of the statistical tests, general information regarding the mean scores on the items will be examined and the results of the factor analysis on the 20-item scale will be reported.

In the second section, an analysis of the data from the in-depth interviews will be presented. The purpose of this data is to offer insights into the experiences of individual international students. The data will then be tied to the hypotheses in the final chapter.

Means of the Scale Items

It is necessary to look at the mean scores on all 20 of the items in the alienation scale. The means could range from 1.0 to 5.0, where 1.0 is the lowest alienation score and 5.0 indicates the highest alienation score. Table 3 shows the mean and standard

Table 3
Means and Standard Deviations for the Adapted Alienation Scale

Items	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. Real friends are as easy as ever to find in the US	3.51	1.00
2. People are just naturally friendly and helpful at S.U.	2.74	0.89
3. With so much information available, a person cannot know what to believe in.	2.90	0.96
4. I am overwhelmed by the number of decisions there are to make at ..	2.91	0.96
5. Sometimes I feel all alone in the US.	2.92	1.34
6. Life in the US. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	3.38	1.34
7. Most people in the US. rarely feel lonely.	3.29	1.08
8. My future at S.U. looks hopeless.	1.79	1.04
9. I feel like a piece of machinery in the US.	2.42	1.17
10. There is nothing people can depend on at S.U.	2.19	0.97
11. What you get in life is more important than how you get it.	2.87	1.44
12. The only thing that one can be sure of in the US. is that one can be sure of nothing.	2.52	1.04
13. Most people at S.U. rarely feel lonely.	3.17	0.95
14. Real friends are as easy as ever to find at S.U.	3.43	0.92
15. I am overwhelmed by the number of decisions there are to make in the US.	2.98	0.96
16. Sometimes I feel all alone at S.U.	3.28	1.29
17. I feel like a piece of machinery at S.U.	2.59	1.08
18. Life at S.U. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	2.61	1.10
19. There is nothing people can depend on in the US.	2.43	1.17
20. My future in the US. looks hopeless.	2.02	1.08

deviation for each question. On average, all of the items show low to medium levels of alienation, some lower than others. This suggests that the total alienation scores will be low to mid-range. In fact, the average alienation score, using all 20 of the items, is 2.73. It is important to keep in mind throughout the analysis of the data that, on average, alienation scores were fairly low for this study. It was expected that international students would experience high alienation for the most part, but the data (using all 20 questions) demonstrates that this was not the case.

Factor Analysis on the Adapted Alienation Scale

The factor analysis was conducted to test the validity of the scale being used. Based on Dean's findings, it was expected that three factors would emerge from the factor analysis. The first factor, powerlessness, refers to the students' feelings that they do not control the events of their lives in this country. The survey differentiated between the United States and State University. The second factor, normlessness, concerns the feelings of confusion and lack of structure that the students face while in this country. The third and final factor, social isolation, refers to the students' perception of their social situation. Students who feel that they do not have any friends or social contacts are likely to score higher on this factor than those who feel that they have a strong social network. Table 4 shows the factor loadings for both the principle components as well as the rotated factors on the alienation scale. Sixteen of the twenty items loaded above 0.30 on the first factor. This prompted the use of the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha in order to insure the highest internal consistency possible. Table 5 shows the alpha correlations for all of the items. Computing alpha

Table 4
Factor Loadings for the Adapted Version of Dean's Alienation Scale

Items	First Unrotated Factor	Unrotated Factors		
		1	2	3
1. Real friends are as easy as ever to find in the US	0.31	-	0.36	-
2. People are just naturally friendly and helpful at S.U.	0.43	-	0.54	-
3. With so much information available, a person cannot know what to believe in.	0.20	-	-	0.37
4. I am overwhelmed by the number of decisions there are to make at S.U.	0.27	-	-	0.74
5. Sometimes I feel all alone in the US.	0.45	0.62	-	-
6. Life in the US. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	0.61	0.62	-	-
7. Most people in the US. rarely feel lonely.	0.12	-	49.0 0	-
8. My future at S.U. looks hopeless.	0.40	0.45	-	-0.55
9. I feel like a piece of machinery in the US.	0.64	0.67	-	-
10. There is nothing people can depend on at S.U.	0.73	0.52	0.56	-
11. What you get in life is more important than how you get it.	0.29	0.36	-	-
12. The only thing that one can be sure of in the US. is that one can be sure of nothing.	0.77	0.64	0.43	-
13. Most people at S.U. rarely feel lonely.	0.17	-	0.38	-
14. Real friends are as easy as ever to find at S.U.	0.32	-	0.68	-
15. I am overwhelmed by the number of decisions there are to make in the US.	0.34	0.30	-	0.80
16. Sometimes I feel all alone at S.U.	0.58	0.67	-	-
17. I feel like a piece of machinery at S.U.	0.62	0.69	-	-
18. Life at S.U. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	0.72	0.67	-	-
19. There is nothing people can depend on in the US.	0.72	0.43	0.65	-
20. My future in the US. looks hopeless.	0.33	-0.38	-	-0.58

Table 5
Cronbach Coefficient Alpha for the Adapted Alienation Scale

Items	Standardized Variables	
	Correlation with Total	Alpha
1. Real friends are as easy as ever to find in the U.S.	0.25	0.80
2. People are just naturally friendly and helpful at S.U.	0.38	0.80
3. With so much information available, a person cannot know what to believe in.	0.16	0.81
4. I am overwhelmed by the number of decisions there are to make at S.U.	0.23	0.80
5. Sometimes I feel all alone in the U.S.	0.33	0.80
6. Life in the U.S. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	0.48	0.79
7. Most people in the U.S. rarely feel lonely.	0.09	0.81
8. My future at S.U. looks hopeless.	0.29	0.80
9. I feel like a piece of machinery in the US.	0.50	0.79
10. There is nothing people can depend on at S.U.	0.62	0.78
11. What you get in life is more important than how you get it.	0.20	0.80
12. The only thing that one can be sure of in the U.S. is that one can be sure of nothing.	0.70	0.78
13. Most people at S.U. rarely feel lonely.	0.12	0.81
14. Real friends are as easy as ever to find at S.U.	0.27	0.80
15. I am overwhelmed by the number of decisions there are to make in the U.S.	0.27	0.80
16. Sometimes I feel all alone at S.U.	0.46	0.79
17. I feel like a piece of machinery at S.U.	0.49	0.79
18. Life at S.U. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	0.62	0.78
19. There is nothing people can depend on in the U.S.	0.66	0.78
20. My future in the U.S. looks hopeless.	0.25	0.80

revealed that only eight of the items were strongly intercorrelated (correlations above 0.40). These eight items were then extracted and alpha was computed for those items alone (see Table 6). Finally, a factor analysis was run on the eight extracted items. Using Cattell's scree test of the plotted eigenvalues, two factors were extracted.²² Table 6 shows the factor loadings for the unrotated and rotated factors. Items 6, 10, 12, 18, and 19 load together on factor one, and items 9, 16, and 17 load on factor two.

Table 6
Factor Loadings on the Eight Extracted Items based on Alpha

Items	Correlation with Total	First Unrotated Factor	Rotated Factors	
			1	2
6. Life in the U.S. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	0.58	0.69	0.66	-
9. I feel like a piece of machinery in the U.S.	0.58	0.69	-	0.86
10. There is nothing people can depend on as S.U.	0.63	0.74	0.82	-
12. The only thing that one can be sure of in the U.S. is that one can be sure of nothing.	0.68	0.77	0.65	-
16. Sometimes I feel all alone at S.U.	0.46	0.56	-	0.55
17. I feel like a piece of machinery at S.U.	0.58	0.68	-	0.90
18. Life at S.U. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	0.66	0.76	0.65	-
19. There is nothing people can depend on in the U.S.	0.58	0.70	0.88	-

As discussed above, it was expected that three factors, powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation, would emerge from the data. Instead, only eight of the

²² Incidentally, this coincided with the Kaiser-Guttman rule of stopping when the last eigen value falls below one (Devellis, 1991).

items from the scale proved to be sufficiently intercorrelated and the rest were discarded for the final factor analysis. The correlations for the eight items were the only ones above 0.40 and their alpha coefficients were above 0.75. The final factor analysis showed two factors emerging from the data. An analysis of the eight items suggests that the two factors that emerged can be called normlessness/ambiguity and isolation. Questions 9, 16, and 17 make up the isolation component and questions 6, 10, 12, 18, and 19 make up the normlessness/ambiguity component.

Isolation Factor

- 9. I feel like a piece of machinery in the U.S.
- 16. Sometimes I feel all alone at S.U.
- 17. I feel like a piece of machinery at S.U.

Items 9, 16, and 17 all deal with feelings. Item 16 refers to feeling all alone (isolation) and items 9 and 17 refer to the lack of connection that comes with feeling like a piece of machinery (both in the US. and at State University). As will be discussed later, many of the international students in this study expressed the desire for more American friends. In addition, being a piece of machinery implies a lack of individuality. Some of the international students interviewed expressed the feeling that Americans generalized about internationals rather than viewing them as individual people.

Normlessness/Ambiguity Factor

- 6. Life in the U.S. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.
- 10. There is nothing people can depend on at S.U.
- 12. The only thing that one can be sure of in the U.S. is that one can be sure of nothing.
- 18. Life at S.U. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.
- 19. There is nothing people can depend on in the U.S.

Isolation and powerlessness can be thought to exist as parts of a whole. Questions 6 and

18 refer to the uncertainty of personal choice in the US. and at SU. Questions 10 and 19 envision the uncertainty of having nothing to depend on. Finally, question 12 refers outright to uncertainty in that one can be sure of nothing. International students are faced with an often bewilderingly new situation. In light of this, a degree of uncertainty is understandable. Thus, rather than measuring powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation as was originally expected, the revised adapted alienation scale appears to measure isolation and ambiguity instead.

Originally, questions 10, 12, and 19 were taken from the normlessness subscale in Dean's (1961) Alienation Scale. Questions 6, 9, 17, and 18 were taken from the powerlessness subscale, and question 6 came from the social isolation subscale. At this point, alphas were computed for each of the subscales, but the only items that were intercorrelated were those that emerged in the overall alpha computation. The eight items chosen were those with the strongest correlations with the total. Thus, the variable alienation that was used in the analysis of the data was revised and only included the eight items that were highly intercorrelated according to the alpha computation.

Statistical Analysis of the Data

Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Alienation and the Independent Variables

Table 7 shows the correlation coefficients between the variables alienation, normlessness/ambiguity, and powerless isolation and the independent variables. The figures designated by a single asterisk are considered significant at the 0.05 level. The figures designated by a double asterisk are considered significant at the 0.001 level.

The correlation of 0.3 for acceptance shows a strong relationship between that variable and the revised alienation variable. The correlations between acceptance and sublevels of alienation - normlessness / ambiguity and powerless isolation - are also significant. Thus, as acceptance of American values increases, alienation and its sublevels will also increase.

The only other relationship that is significant is that between English ability and the revised alienation variable. The coefficient of -0.17 appears weak, but is significant at the 0.05 level. This suggests that as students' abilities to speak English increase, their alienation will decrease. As the score for English ability was a self-reported one, this relationship actually suggests that as students feel that their English ability improves, their alienation will decrease.

The remaining independent variables showed no significant relationships with alienation or its sublevels. The correlation coefficients for gender, age, classification, membership in organizations, time in the United States, and expectations met or not are weak and insignificant. Nevertheless, the direction of the correlations, regardless of how weak, are as expected. However, it can be seen that some of them correlate significantly with each other (see Table 7).

Table 7

Pearson's Correlation Coefficients between Dependent and Independent Variables

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables		
	Normlessness / Ambiguity	Powerless Isolation	Alienation
Sex	0.07	-0.09	-0.11
Age	0.15	0.01	0.09
Classification	0.13	-0.02	0.07
Number of organizations student is a member of	-0.04	-0.03	-0.07
Months lived in the US.	-0.01	0.03	-0.01
Marital Status	0.00	0.06	0.02
Spouse lives with student	-0.02	-0.15	-0.11
Acceptance of values	0.22*	0.3*	0.3*
Expectations met	-0.13	0.00	-0.11
English Ability	-0.08	0.06	-0.17*

* = Significant at the 0.05 level

Analysis of Variance

Table 8 shows the results of the analyses of variance performed for country of origin, membership in organizations, time in the United States, English ability, acceptance of American values and expectations (met or not). The results show that only the variable acceptance of American values, with an F of 4.16, showed any significant difference in the means of alienation. There were no significant relationships between the other five independent variables and alienation. This held even when controlling for age, gender, classification, major and marital status. This reinforces the relationship found in

the correlation, suggesting that acceptance of American values does play a role in alienation, though perhaps not in the way expected.

Table 8
Analysis of Variance of Country of Origin, Membership in Organizations, Time in the United States, English Ability, Expectations, and Acceptance of American Values

	Degrees of Freedom	F - value
Country of Origin	20	1.17
Membership in Organizations	4	0.76
Months in the US.	37	1.47
English Ability	4	0.16
Acceptance	3	4.16*
Controlling for gender, age, class, major, marital status	44	1.47
Expectations	2	0.47
Controlling for gender, age, class, major, marital status	51	1.27

* = Significance at the 0.05 level

Table 9
Means on Alienation by Acceptance of American Values

Acceptance	Mean
Very Accepting	2.29*
Accepting	2.65
Not Accepting	3.19*
Not at All	2.88

*significantly different according to a t-test

Regression Analysis

Table 10 examines the relationship between the independent variables membership in organizations, time in the United States and acceptance of American values and the dependent variable, alienation. A multiple regression was run on the three independent variables and a joint hypothesis test assuming that these variables have no impact on alienation. This hypothesis was rejected at the 0.01 level. Individually, the only variable found to be significant was acceptance of American values. With a standardized score of 0.318, this variable was found to be significant at the 0.001 level. The R^2 shows that only 0.10 percent of the variation in alienation is, however, explained by the three independent variables.

Table 10
Multiple Regression Analysis of Membership, Months, and Acceptance

	F value	Standardized Scores
Regression	4.053*	
Membership in Organizations		0.00
Months in the US.		-0.03
Acceptance of values		0.318*
$R^2 = 0.101$	* = Significance at the 0.05 level	

The Qualitative Analysis

This section presents the results of the in-depth interviews with international students. Table 11 shows the names assigned to the respondents and the regions of the world that they come from. Categories based on the information gained from the

Table 11
Regions of Origin for the In-depth Interview Respondents

Region	Names
North Africa	Mohammed
Eastern Europe	Tomas, Anna, & Magda
East Asia	Cho & Li
Southern Asia	Pirsada, Ravi, Shoba, Aziza, Apu, Zahra, & Nur Asia
Southeast Asia	Surika, Zafar, Gek, Kee, Jiun, Hendrick, Susanto, Cheng, Hadi, & Ifan
Southwest Asia	Engin, Umit, Mehmet, & Abdul
South & Latin America	Julio & Maria

questions are presented with the appropriate data. The interviews are not tied to a particular alienation score because they are designed to offer insight into the students' experiences that might shed light on alienation.

Organizations and Their Benefits

Organizations play a role in many of the lives of the international students interviewed. Seventy-two percent of the students reported that they were involved in at least one organization. Unlike the surveys, the interviews revealed only a small number of different organizations. The majority of the respondents reported that they were involved in their national area club. Seven of the respondents also listed clubs relating to their majors, and five respondents reported that they were members of the international student club (ISC).

What is more interesting than the frequencies of club membership are the benefits of membership that were offered by the respondents. Referring to her area club, Surika said, "It has helped me feel more comfortable in this place. Though by nature, I'm happy

and feel good around people. It's good to know there are people like me. I can feel secure." Engin suggested that he can "go talk with the members - even if I'm not a member." Cho, who is involved in both the area club and two organizations that deal with his major, pointed out that "...it is great leadership training, one of my most important skills is interpersonal communication...to look at things differently, that has broadened my views...It has changed the way of my thinking." In a similar vein, Zafar, a member of his area club, the ISC and a club in his field, said that "The benefit is that it gives you more confidence in dealing with people. I got to meet so many different people from different countries and different departments. It (the club in his major) gives me more academic knowledge. It provides me with a chance to meet with professors and researchers from other schools. It helps me." Gek made an interesting comment when she said, "Sometimes easier than joining American clubs and trying to get to know Americans." Susanto pointed to the more practical benefits of his area club when he said, "If you have any problems and if you need any guidance about passports, I-20 - you can ask...When I first came here there's always a meeting at the beginning of the semester so all new students get introduced to old students..." He alluded to the social benefits with "They sometimes organize parties and stuff. It's kind of fun." Surika also mentioned dances and festivals organized by her area club. Kee spoke of the home-cooked food that was often prepared by his area club. "It's just a national club. Some of the ladies, they can cook home foods, so we crowd around." Pirsada, Abdul, and Ravi all mentioned the religious benefits of their area clubs. For Pirsada, "...basically it is keeping in touch with the festivals...We don't have a means to keep up with all of that." For Ravi, "I look at (his

area club) as a small (home country) for me. Like people from my own culture, people like me...When there is an occasion, you look for people to share it with. It gives Abdul a sense of identity. "Especially being Muslim...As a result of cultural differences...that's the only place to remind you of who you are. It's the only place that gives you news about Muslims all over the world." Finally, Umit added that his area club made him "feel more responsible, more nationalistic."

However, not every respondent had positive things to say about being involved in organizations. Jiun initially said that there were no benefits to belonging to her area club. She later suggested that maybe she could make more friends, but said that the majority of her friends were from another country. Shoba, when asked if she wanted to be a member of his area club, merely responded "Not really." Mehmet was quite vociferous when he responded that "What it means to me was like I spent too much time on things for this organization, and it cost me some on my grades." Some responses were mixed, like Aziza who first said, "I think actually its basically nothing." She later went on to list all of the benefits of her area club, like; meeting other countrypeople; talking about her country; and getting access to an old test file. Hendrick said that his area club "has been nothing to me because they never have meetings or parties." But his organization in his major "has helped me to understand the American way of doing business. I really enjoy it."

Finally, there is the problem of time. Tomas said that "I wanted to enter in one club but I hadn't time." Kee was only a member of his area club. When asked if there were any others, he replied, "Not yet, maybe next semester. This semester is too busy." Apu simply said, "Everyone has that urge to do something, but we don't have the time."

Expectations about the United States and State University

There were a wide variety of expectations offered by the respondents, from "beautiful women" to "life like *Beverly Hills 90210*" to "an easy education." Five respondents said that they had had no expectations before coming to the United States. For Tomas, it was because he found out he was coming, and about twenty days later he was here.

School

Many respondents had some expectations about school, though they varied between thinking school would difficult or easy. Anna expected "that I will have to work hard, although I don't do that at all." "Before I came here I thought that this was a difficult university, but it is not. The classes here are easy. I can make better grades here than at home," was Engin's expectation. Cho "expected the education here was going to be easy. Easy going and the materials are not that tough." Jiun was full of praise for the university. She expected a good school with good education programs, and added that "the facilities and professors are better than in my country. Professors can be very helpful and help other students." Shoba's expectations were centered on her goals. "My primary aim was studies and I believed the classes would be very demanding, professors very good, and students very intellectually stimulating." Only the last expectation was not met. She has not found American students to be as stimulating as she would have liked. Hendrick was told by friends back home that American universities are easier than universities in his country. "But I try hard to study and sometimes it's hard." Pirsada expected better lab facilities, and was not disappointed. Cheng expected professors "to

give us the outside knowledge that we cannot get from the book. This is the only one that I expected that I get." Zahra studied in a missionary school that was run by the American system. Therefore, she had no problem adjusting to SU and had no expectations about the university.

American Friends - American People

About half of the respondents mentioned some expectation about American people. Many expected to have a great deal of American friends. Others thought exactly the reverse, that Americans were not nice. Still others expected Americans to be friendly, helpful, crazy, beautiful, rich, or glamorous. Finally, a minority of the respondents expected to be discriminated against because they were Asian, while one expected Americans to want to be friends with international students.

Surika thought "Americans would be a lot more friendlier." Engin painted an even gloomier picture when he said, "People's relations are different here. You pass people and they smile, but it is artificial. I know they won't help. I know this." On the opposite end is Cho who said that "I did not expect at first that most people I met are very nice. Maybe it is because I am mostly in contact with Christians. They are very willing to help." Zafar underlined the importance of personality, but showed how it can be overshadowed by saying "I am a very friendly person and I thought would have more friends. It's easy to get acquainted, but it is hard to make good friends." Gek echoed that sentiment when she said, "I expect to have American friends but it's very hard to make close friends with Americans." Hendrick commented that he had found friends in his dormitory, and added that "maybe they are educated" because they were not as

discriminatory as he had been led to expect. Li said he expected that "people are going to...don't like...they were not that nice to me. It's true." Superficiality was mentioned again by Mohammed who seemed to expect that it would take a long time to get to know Americans. He and Nur Asia both mentioned the need to take the first step with Americans. Nur Asia expected that Americans would want to be friends with internationals. "But in class if I don't ask questions, make the first step, they won't talk. I don't know why." Finally, Apu said, "The girls, I expected them to be beautiful and they are, very charming. The men, I haven't any particular expectations for them because maybe I was more inclined to watch the girls."

Tall Buildings, Rich People, and a Glamorous Lifestyle

Several respondents mentioned that they expected the United States to be advanced, have a higher standard of living, and have tall buildings and big cities. They expected the university to be big and have good facilities. They expected Americans to be wealthy and live movie-star lives.

Cho listed advanced technology, wealth, diversity, and greater choices. He found all that he expected and said, "The first time I arrived in Wichita...I looked out the truck window and I said, 'My God, how can this country not be rich.' The land was so beautiful. They have so much land and they don't use it all. They must be rich." Jiun expected similar things. She said, "I expect US. is very free country, a land full of opportunity." However, she also commented on the violence saying, "There are a lot of gangsters who will shoot anyone anytime and I was sometimes afraid will they do this to me?" Magda relied on the television shows that she had watched in her country. "We watched Beverly

Hills 90210 and I thought I could go to high school like that. I thought life would be very exciting. I had no idea." Aziza, Cheng, and Abdul also mentioned the impact that movies had on their expectations. Gek laughed at the question and said, "I thought US. would be very developed and when I came here I saw (this state) was like some parts of my country with farms." Finally, Li expected a successful country full of blondes, whereas Kee expected a boring, quiet place to study.

Differences

Though in a minority, two respondents mentioned that they *expected* America and State University to be different. Shoba talked about the social life saying, "I knew it would not be like my country where everybody is related to everybody, or friends. I knew it would not be like that." Abdul said, "I was expect it to be different. I expect it to look 100% different, but I accepted that. People are people and you can get along. The only barrier between people...unless you have a barrier in your mind...you can get along with anyone. All humans are the same and they have the same feelings. I found all that." He added, "I have feeling that that's how it was created. Being in another country, you can never expect what you have back in your own country. I don't care what's the thing." He seemed to accept that things would be different and was prepared to deal with them.

Unexpected Phenomena

Many respondents expressed surprise at finding things in the United States that they did not expect. For example, Cho, as mentioned earlier, did not expect people to be so nice. Susanto was surprised by the cowboys, "their accent, the way they speak." Kee

was pleasantly surprised to find a girlfriend. He also said, "I never knew I could socialize well." Apu did not expect people to express their emotions in public "like hugging, it was kind of new to me." Mehmet did not expect the car to be such a big deal. Ravi did not expect there to be so much information available. He mentioned the fact that the "job prospects in the field" were so numerous that you could not know about them all. Finally, Nur Asia appeared to take it all in stride, saying, "I didn't expect a lot of things. I just go and we will see what we will see. But I was positive."

Understanding the Customs - Recognizing Differences

When asked if they felt that they understood the customs (the way things were done) in the United States, sixty-three percent of the respondents said that they did. Very often, they felt comfortable with the way things were done, but did not agree with everything. Seventeen percent of the respondents said that they did not understand the customs here, and the rest were mixed in their answers. In addition to stating what customs they felt comfortable with, many of the respondents offered insights into the differences between their cultures and the United States. First, we will look at some of the responses regarding the aspects of American culture that respondents were comfortable with. Afterwards, we will focus on the differences that emerged.

Cho said that he was comfortable because he "read a lot of American literacy before (he) came here." However, he did complain about the lack of clear goals that Americans seem to have. "People have had it so easy, they don't have to face the difficulties of going hungry, being homeless." Magda said, "I feel that I know them (customs) and I know what to expect from people. I feel that I know what to do and how

to get along. Sometimes its not what I want to do." There were also many things that she did not understand, like the lack of deep friendships, the individualism and the self-centeredness. Surika agreed with the first part and added "I think people in the US. accept people from other cultures - more than any other country." However, she qualified that and said, "When it doesn't go down to the personal level they're very accepting." Shoba felt that she understood the customs, but "in terms of participating, I do not feel very comfortable unless I am with friends." She said that sometimes she is stared at. However, "there are places that I am looked on as individual and not as a foreigner." The influence of movies came up yet again with Hendrick saying, "Pretty much I understand. Back home we used to watch American movies, American culture." Hadi understands, but says, "It took me quite a while to get used to this place." Li understood the customs and suggested that it was because he was from a democracy. "So it is almost the same as the US." Mohammed agreed saying, "Everything can be explained. We can understand the behavior, but we many don't agree with it." Maria suggested that she was comfortable with the customs because she was involved with Americans "unlike other internationals." Respect was added to the formula with Kee who said, "I understand I respect peoples' religion, culture, the way they are. I don't have that way of thinking that you have to be exactly like me to be my friend." Finally, Umit said that he understood the customs, adding, "The first thing you consider, I think, is the money. Americans always consider money and benefits of the act."

Some of the respondents felt that they did not understand the customs of the United States. Susanto felt lost with regards to credit hours. "I thought my advisor would

tell me what to take, that we wouldn't have a choice." Apu had problems with the larger social situation. "Like most of the time I try to take a hint, but the subtle clues sometimes I don't get it. People think you know what they want you to do, but you don't. Sometimes it embarrasses me. No matter how hard you try, only the people of the same country can understand them (the subtle clues)." He gave an example of going to his advisor's home and not knowing when to leave. He later discussed the situation and found out the correct way to deal with it. Ravi brought up an important point when he said that he did not understand very much "because I don't have any such exposure from anyone. I know how things move from my point of view because the ISC (international student center) gave us an orientation. But no one has ever done anything from an American point of view - how they are supposed to be done."

Many of the respondents felt that they understood American customs, but still pointed out differences between cultures. Interpersonal relationships were one area where there were definite differences. Jiun said, "I see a lot of people kissing out (in public) but you never see that in my country." She added that "in my country we look into each others eyes when we talk to show respect. Do you do that here?" Zahra talked about dating, and said, "In (my country) there is no concept of dating. It is thought of as real bad. Because most of it is arranged marriages. Sometimes its like somebody asks you to go out and you say 'no' and they think you're snobbish." Pirsada remarked on the family and on friendships. "The concept of family, I still don't understand that. It's very free here, the way the children talk to the parents...The concept of friendship seems to be very different here. What do friends expect from each other?" Aziza felt that people in his

country were more cooperative, even concerning self-achievement. And Gek pointed to the independence of Americans at a young age as the major difference from his country.

Nur Asia and Kee both mentioned the education system as being different from their cultures. For Nur Asia, it was the informal relationships between faculty and students that were difficult to get used to. The grading system was different for Kee. In his country, he said that it is difficult to get a C, unlike in America where the grading is sometimes harder. On a lighter note, Cheng pointed to the way Americans shop as an unexpected difference. "I think most of the Americans when they want to go shopping they buy a lot of things. They want to buy all the groceries at one time."

Fitting In

Respondents were asked whether it was important to them to feel like they belonged at SU and in the United States. The majority of the respondents answered that they did in fact feel that it was important to belong to the host culture. Twenty-four percent of them did not think that it was important and a minority did not even think about it.

For Julio, "that's like the first thing I tried to do - be like Americans. It's easy you know." Surika said, "Yeah. I'm here for 2 years and I don't want to waste 2 years of my life feeling isolated. You have to adapt." Magda agreed saying, "Well, I thought since I'm in America I have to try out what its like to be American." Zafar added, "I certainly want to be accepted, but I have reservations about certain things which I don't want to do. Some things are superficial." Hendrick wanted to belong, but qualified it by saying, "I

accept people if they accept me. But if they don't accept me, then okay, I don't accept them."

Susanto emphasized the importance of belonging for him, saying, "The first time I came here, the first thing I had to do was have a lot of friends here. To feel belong here. To feel welcome here." He then explained some of his motivation behind wanting to belong when he recounted an experience he had with his parents. "When I was in secondary I came to America on tour with my parents. The way the Asian-Americans spoke was so perfect. From that moment on, I knew I wanted to be like them. How I wanted to be like them! That was what motivated me." Business was the motivation for Li. "Let me tell you honestly...If I want to have a happier life, I will stay in U.S....I think I feel I belong here....Because I want to do business, I have to make my customers or my boss feel comfortable about my talking."

Adaptability was apparent in Kee. "It is important for me to fit in. Very important. So I do my best. I switch when I go back to (my country). I switch when I go to US. I want to be happy wherever I am." Anonymity was a plus for Ifan who wanted to fit in "because everybody likes America" and "nobody cares what you are doing here."

Another person wanted to fit in and did not have any problems. However, his life revolved around the university where he had not encountered any difficult situations. Zahra was more active in the community and pointed out that "if I wouldn't do that (fit in) I'd just be sitting in a corner feeling sorry for myself and I'd be miserable all the time." She alluded to the benefits of trying to belong when she said, "You learn a lot when you interact with different people. So it's a good way to learn about other cultures. And learn

how to deal with other people." Another benefit, offered by Abdul, is that by getting involved in your department, you can get the most out of your time here. "I don't want to miss any opportunity here. I know I am only going to be here a limited time."

The reasons that fitting in was not important varied. For one girl, it was because her parents did not want her to become too American. For two other students, fitting in would be nice, if it happened, but it was not important. Cheng answered firmly in the negative and said, "No. Because I think this US. is not suitable for me to stay for a long period of time. After I finish, maybe I will go back." Homesickness definitely played a part in his response. Perhaps the most insightful response came from Umit, who said, "To be a part of the country you have to be involved with Americans. Sometimes I miss jokes, slang. I don't think it's possible. I don't know why. I have some American friends, but we do rare things together."

Experiences: Good and Bad, Easy and Difficult

The experiences of the students varied considerably. One respondent was taken to the hospital when he was sick. At another point, the same individual was walking on the sidewalk when a car with 2 women and one man yelled at him. "I talked back to them asking them what they wanted and they drove off. I don't consider that as big issue. I think they would have done that to anyone. But it irritated me. ...I did things like that when I was younger. Back at home I would have (been) happy because, hey, two girls are chasing me." One was invited to a family's home for Thanksgiving. "That was really good. I met 100% American family and I stayed there for 5 days. It was great." Another spoke of her host family and said, "I've been with them at Christmas, Thanksgiving,

Easter. It's been very nice." This same individual mentioned a frustrating experience trying to get orange juice at McDonald's. When she finally got the cashier to understand, she was told that they only serve orange juice at breakfast. Hendrick recounted an experience that occurred at the end of an interview he had done for a class. "After the interview I gave her a leather bracelet from (my country) and she said thank you very much and wanted to give me a hug. I was so surprised. ...girls (from my country) wouldn't do that. It was only a leather bracelet." Another student had positive experiences both in the classroom and at work. She was given a nickname at work because her real name was difficult to pronounce. "I guess I was the youngest so it was kind of a close experience. It was my first time working with Americans."

Some students recounted negative experiences that they had had. Four, in fact, reported experiences with communication problems. One student was buying a textbook and when the cashier tried to make conversation, he could not understand her. "She repeated it three times and couldn't understand her. I finally told her 'I am only trying to buy this book, don't say anything else.'" Another student told of a friend's experience with immigration. When he was asked if he had anything else besides clothes and books, he said 'snacks', but the immigration officer thought he said 'snakes.' Anna felt silly when she could not understand the girls at the first hall meeting that she attended in the residence hall.

A few students reported that they had asked Americans for help and the Americans had just walked away. Another student told of a situation where she had left a copy machine to get something and had come back to find someone had taken her place.

"I went back to the machine and that guy thought I had just come to the machine and he said a bad world. That's okay it was a misunderstanding." In a similar vein of understanding is the story of Susanto. "Before I came I heard about the gun problem, but I never had a picture about how bad it was...but one time this black guy had a hand gun...and he asked me if I had money...at the time I really didn't have much money, so I told them I only had 2 or 3 dollars and I needed it to buy drinks and snacks. And they didn't believe me so I let them check and I wasn't really scared, but I was kind of 'is this really happening?' Anyway, they just took 2 dollars and left me a dollar for drinks...It happened all the time at home, but they didn't use guns." He did not appear to be upset by the experience and attributed it to the fact that he had been robbed at knife point several times at home.

In addition to being asked about their experiences, the students were also asked to talk about things that they found difficult or easy about living in the United States. With regards to the problems, responses ranged from communication to food to making friends to blaming any problems on themselves. Simple things ranged from the ease of accessing services, people, and technology to meeting people to the education.

About one third of the students mentioned problems with some aspect of communication. Magda mentioned having problems for the first month. Maria agreed, but extended her time to the first semester she was here. " I didn't understand the common conversation." Gek talked about the difficulties shopping and understanding what things are. Cheng mentioned the differences between British and American slang.

Several students mentioned the problems they had making friends with Americans. Jiun said that making real friends was a problem. "Because like if you are not in the same culture, they have their own lifestyle. I have a lot of friends, but they aren't the type I have in (my country). Not the type you can really talk to." Hendrick agreed and added that making friends with the opposite sex is hard, too. Another student offered this explanation for the difficulties international students have finding friends. "Probably a lot of people are busy so they don't have a lot of time to hang with the friends. And also probably because the goals in here are self-achievement so everybody is focused on themselves and what they need."

Students also had problems with the food. Shoba reported problems with the diet because she was used to eating grains and vegetables, not meat. Another student complained about the lack of spices in the food. "I hate to cook, but if I want to eat I have to cook." Mohammed perhaps summed it up best when he said, "The food. Sometimes your stomach has to be really tough to eat in the cafeteria. Sometimes your only dream is about your mother's food."

Other problems that were mentioned included shopping, which Tomas solved by not buying anything that he did not know. Surprisingly, homesickness was reported by two respondents. Getting used to driving on the right side of the road was listed as a problem by one student. Related to driving are the problems with transportation experience by two other students. Finally, one student said, "I think the problem is myself. Depends on what I want to learn or not."

Respondents did not talk only about problems, in fact two students said that they did not have any problems. The topic that kept surfacing was the ease with which a person can get information and services and connect with people in order to get things done. According to one student, "Everything can just call. Enroll, order things. In my place, phone is not that common." Another student added, "Like if you need something, you just go to the office and you get it." Ravi mentioned the cash transactions, getting things installed and repaired.

Apu summed up the sentiments of many of the students when he said, "I don't think the country's a boundary, maybe the culture to some extent. It basically depends on the personality of the individual. Do not stereotype or make sweeping generalizations about people from other countries."

Results of the Reliability Check using American Students

The reliability check was performed to determine if the survey could be counted on to yield the same results over successive testings. It was accomplished using two general education classes. Seventy-seven students, as discussed above, were administered the first two pages of the survey on two separate occasions, two weeks apart. A Pearson product-moment correlation was then done on the individual items in the original alienation scale and on the revised eight-item alienation scale. Additionally, the overall alienation scores for each were correlated.

First, all of the items on the original alienation scale, with the exception of questions 2, 11, and 13, were significantly correlated. In each case, the correlation coefficients were above 0.35. The alienation scores for the first and second test on the

original alienation scale correlated at 0.66 ($\alpha = 0.001$). This, too, was found to be significant.

Second, all of the items on the revised alienation scale were significantly correlated. Again, the correlation coefficients were above 0.35. The alienation scores for the revised scale were significantly correlated at an alpha of 0.001 with a correlation coefficient of 0.63. This suggests that both scales yield similar answers over time.

Looking at the raw data shows that the differences in the scores for each time period range from 0.006 to 0.22. This suggests a marked similarity in the answers between the two testing times. These results suggest that the scale being used is acceptably reliable in the answers that it generates.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a discussion of the results of this study. The first section provides a summary of the results, discussing their theoretical implications. Additionally, the findings of the in-depth interviews are examined to further shed light upon alienation. The second section provides recommendations for further research.

Summary and Analysis of the Statistical Data

Country of Origin

The first hypothesis suggests that those individuals from cultures similar to the United States, roughly defined as Western countries, would feel less alienation than those from Eastern countries. An analysis of variance was run on the two variables, but did not generate an F value that suggested significant differences in the mean scores of alienation with regards to country of origin. Thus, the statistical data does not offer support for the first hypothesis. The in-depth interviews offer a possible explanation for this occurrence.

The in-depth interviews highlight the importance of recognizing that the sample is made up of individuals. For some respondents, their personality appeared to overshadow the affect of their native culture. Based on research by Parr, Bradley, and Bingi (1992), it was expected that Asians would be more alienated than non-Asians, but several of the Asians that participated in the in-depth interviews described themselves as people persons who felt very comfortable around others. For two of the respondents,

homesickness was more important than their country of origin. They were unhappy at State University., but said that it was because they missed their parents and/or husband. Granted, there were definite differences pointed out by the respondents, many of whom had difficulty getting used to those differences. However, the weight of the evidence suggests that the affect of country of origin is subsumed under a myriad of other factors within each individual, including but not limited to; personality, personal decision, open-mindedness, and life experience.

Membership in Organizations

Hypothesis 2 suggests that students who have ties to organizations will feel less alienation than those with few social connections. On the survey, students were asked to list the organizations they were a member of. The number of organizations listed became the basis for the statistical tests. A Pearson product-moment correlation was run to determine the strength of the relationship between number of organizations a student is a member of and alienation. The intent was to determine if alienation increased or decreased as the number of organizations that a student was a member of increased. The correlation coefficient shows no significant relationship between membership in organizations and alienation at the 0.05 alpha level. An OLS regression was then run to examine the possibility of a predictive relationship between the two variables. However, the standard scores showed no significant predictive ability. Again, the statistical data failed to offer support for a hypothesis. However, the qualitative data sheds interesting light on why this might have occurred.

The in-depth interviews show varied involvement in organizations. Nearly every respondent was a member of their area club and many were involved in the umbrella organization, the International Student Club. There was also some membership in professional organizations, though this occurred primarily with graduate students, and the amount of involvement in these organizations differed. What emerged in the course of the interviews was the significance, not of the organization, but of the strength of the student's personal ties. Though the focus of the question was on the organization and the benefits of membership, several students mentioned that they would still have the connection (at least with the area club) even if they were not members. The benefits of the various clubs ranged from socialization to home food to academic enrichment. While the importance of these benefits cannot be denied, it became clear over the course of the interviews that the social connections that these organizations offered were more important than the organizations themselves. However, it should be noted that, for some respondents, the organization itself offered a sense of identity. Thus, the organization, and the social network inherent in it, *are* significant to alienation. The literature offers conflicting suggestions at this point. Schram and Lauver (1988) suggest that the more contact with host nationals, the less alienated an individual is likely to be. Pruitt (1978) proposed that contact with people from their home country would actually hinder their adjustment. However, Church (1982) suggested that contact with individuals from their native country would provide support throughout the adjustment process. This last appears to be the case for the respondents in this study. Perhaps no statistical significance appeared because the study was not measuring the strength of the personal ties that the

individuals had to their organizations. Rather the survey asked the respondents to list the organizations that they were a member of. One way of measuring the closeness of students' ties to organizations would be to ask them to rank the importance of those organizations in their lives.

English Ability, Acceptance, and Time

Hypothesis 3 holds that those individuals who are fluent in English, have resided in the United States for a long time (at least 1 year) and are tolerant of the values of host culture will feel less alienated than those who are closer to the language and values of their native country. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed for each of the three independent variables. Of the three, only acceptance of American values had a correlation coefficient which was significant at the 0.001 level. The sign of the coefficient is positive which suggests that as acceptance of American values decreases, alienation increases. This agrees with what was expected. As individuals begin to accept the values of the host country, they begin to feel less alienated. Mendoza and Martinez (1981) suggest that as international students become more accepting of the host country's values, they incorporate them into their lives and begin to see themselves as part of the host country. Unfortunately, this can lead to conflict between the host values and the individuals' native values. This study supports the initial ideas of Mendoza and Martinez and Kagan and Cohen (1990) by suggesting that increasing acceptance of host values leads to decreases in alienation.

Self-reported English ability and length of time in the United States were not significantly correlated with alienation. The direction of the weak correlation for English

ability suggests that as perception of one's English ability increases, alienation also increases. This could be due again to the ambiguous situations international students find themselves in where they feel that their English is better, more acceptable, but the Americans around them do not seem to be increasingly accepting of them. However, because the relationship is so weak, this is merely a suggestion. One-way AOVs were run on each of the independent variables to determine if there were any significant differences in their mean alienation scores. Only acceptance of American values showed a significant relationship at the 0.05 alpha level. Acceptance of American values ranged from very accepting to accepting to not accepting to not at all. Self-reported English ability offered the choices of very well, well, fairly, not very well, and poorly. Length of time in the United States was an open-ended question that asked the respondent for the number of months and years that they had been in the United States. A multiple analysis of variance was run on acceptance of American values, English ability, and time in the United States, but no significant difference in the means on alienation was found. Although the statistical tests did not reveal the expected results, the in-depth interviews shed light on the reasons for this.

With regards to English ability, the in-depth interview respondents were in the 7-9 range on the English scale. As discussed earlier, the respondents' scores were determined by the researcher and could range from 1 - 10. Some of them were graduate students and were articulate and thoughtful as they answered the questions. There were many comments about difficulties that the respondents faced communicating with Americans. They had trouble with the slang, the accents, informal conversation, and information

access. While the amount of difficulty with English varied from student to student, it was clear that the ability to communicate effectively and freely was important to many of the students. Although it did not appear statistically significant, the in-depth interviews leave little doubt that it is an important factor in alienation. Inability to communicate causes the student to withdraw from contact with Americans. This in turn, leads to higher alienation. This agrees with research by Church (1982) and Kagan and Cohen (1990) that points to English fluency as being key in the adjustment of international students, and thus relatedly, their alienation.

It should be pointed out that some of the students reported that they had no problems with English. This was attributed to attending an international school, meeting the business clients of a parent, speaking English in the home country, and working with Americans at home. For these individuals, this variable was not something that would have affected their level of alienation at all. Additionally, the average self-reported English score was 3.16 which suggests that perhaps survey respondents chose the socially desirable answer, not wanting to appear boastful.

While acceptance of American values was never directly addressed in the in-depth interviews, the student's comfort level with the customs of the country were. Overall, the majority of the respondents reported that they understood the customs of the United States. Many of them said that they were comfortable with the way things were done here, although several of them did not agree with everything. This was not unexpected. It would be ethnocentric to demand that everyone that comes to a country accept and believe in the values of that country. What is interesting is that many of those

who did not understand American customs were not adamantly opposed to them. Rather, they admitted to being confused about the customs, but accepting of the differences between Americans and themselves. This last especially relates to acceptance of values. The more that individuals accept the differences between cultures, perhaps the less alienated they are likely to be. However, when they begin to internalize the values of the host country, there is likely to be conflict between their native values and those they have adopted²³.

Length of time in the United States was not discussed in the in-depth interviews, previous visits to the United States did arise. Those students who reported that they had been to this country before appeared to be the ones with the most realistic outlook. They did not expect tremendous things, they understood the US. to some extent, and they felt more comfortable here. Thus, previous visits to the United States emerged as an important factor for some individuals in this study.

Expectations

Hypothesis 4 states that when expectations are met, alienation will be lower. Expectations were either met or not. A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed for this variable and did not show a statistically significant relationship between alienation and whether international students' expectations are met. An analysis of variance was run on the two variables to determine whether the means of alienation were significantly different for those students whose expectations were met, but the F value was not significant at the 0.05 level. When controlling for age, classification, gender, marital

²³ See Melford Spiro's 1955 work and Brein and David in Austin T. Church's 1982 work for further discussion of the affect of value internalization.

status, and major, a statistically insignificant F value was again generated. Thus, we see no significant statistical support for the proposed relationship between the alienation and whether expectations were met or not.

The in-depth interviews offer insight into the lack of a relationship. First, the hypothesis did not take into consideration whether the original expectations were negative or positive. It became glaringly apparent during the course of the interviews that when negative expectations were met, the effect was only slightly less negative. When positive expectations were met, the resulting opinions were positive, but it was the positive, unexpected phenomena that had the most positive impact. Unless the student had been to the United States before, the expectations were based on hearsay, books, and movies. This meant that the movies that are exported abroad are a major source of American stereotypes. Side comments from some of the respondents indicated that they did not take their initial expectations seriously. They seemed to feel that they were based on inadequate information. Added to that is the fact that other respondents did not have any expectations about the United States, or their expectations were that they would get different opportunities. Thus, it appears that, while expectations are important initially, they lose their importance over time. The students in this sample appeared to realize the fallacies behind their expectations. This hypothesis originally arose both from Seeman's variants and the pilot project. Inherent in Seeman's six variants are the expectations individuals have that their actions will engender a response. Additionally, some respondents in the pilot project complained about the disappointment they felt upon

coming to the United States. The findings suggest that expectations may play a part in alienation, but they are not always integral to the concept.

Fitting In

The final hypothesis suggests that those individuals who do not care about 'fitting in' will not be as alienated as those who feel it is important. This question arose from the pilot project. Several of the respondents indicated that they were not concerned about adapting to American culture. Most of these respondents spoke excellent English and understood the United States, yet their lack of interest in adapting overshadowed the positive affects of the other factors. It was thought that the same might hold true for alienation. If an individual was not interested in 'fitting in,' they would not be as concerned about their English, their relationships with Americans, or their involvement in organizations. The measurement of this variable was solely through the in-depth interviews.

The majority of the respondents felt that 'fitting in' was important. For some, it would have been a waste of time not to. For others, the idea was more that they were in the culture and getting involved was one way to learn about it. Other students felt that it was a matter of course that they would try to fit in because of their personalities. They were sociable individuals who fully expected to remain so in the United States. Still other students did not think about 'fitting in' one way or the other. For them, it was not even a consideration. For the students who did not feel that 'fitting in' was important, the reasons ranged from wanting to remain as they were to not wanting to offend parents to not feeling that the United States was the country for them. In this last case, not caring about

'fitting in' would not have the expected affect on alienation because the individual was unhappy in the United States. For this sample, it appeared that it was those individuals who considered it natural to want to fit in and who had positive attitudes about their experiences that would experience the least alienation. However, because there was no way to test this statistically, this suggestion is based on the overall impressions of the researcher from the study.

Conclusion

The relationships between marital status, class, gender, age, and alienation were not found to be significant as previous research would lead us to expect (Kagan & Cohen, 1990; Schram & Lauver, 1988; Barber, Altbach & Myers, 1984). However, this does not mean that they are unimportant variables. Rather, for this sample, they were not significantly related to alienation. For this study, individual personality and personal attitude are the two factors that stand out most clearly from the in-depth interviews. The lack of statistical support for the hypotheses led to close examination of the qualitative aspects of the study in the hopes of finding an explanation. From the beginning of the interview process, respondents began commenting about their personalities and how similar their actions at home were to their actions in the United States. In light of the reformulation of the instrument, these comments are significant. Alienation, for the respondents in this study, was not experienced in the expected ways. Rather, those who did feel alienated did so because of the ambiguity and isolation of their personal situations. The expressions of gladness and disappointment in the interviews highlights the importance of looking at the individual situations.

The implications of this research for counselors of international students lie in the emphasis on the importance of an individualized approach to counseling. Drawing on the experiences of the respondents it could be suggested that making international students aware of both the difficulties involved in making friends and of the types of people they are likely to meet could lessen the sense of isolation that many seem to experience. Additionally, counselors could encourage international students to be tolerant of the customs and values of the host society and treat their time in the country as a learning experience.

By encouraging tolerance and stressing the educational value of their experiences, counselors free the international student to become actively involved in the host country without, it is hoped, taking any of the results (positive or negative) personally. Finally, it should be stressed that they will meet many different kinds of people and so should not feel that any one group represents the entire population. The simplicity of this advice stems both from personal experience and the research. It is not being suggested that international students would not be able to figure these things out for themselves. Rather, it is being suggested that these somewhat obvious considerations be voiced and reiterated. The culture shock and confusion that international students may experience means that many obvious adjustment techniques may not be thought of by the student until after they are needed.

Referring back to the theoretical chain discussed earlier, it can be seen that much of what Smelser (1962) and Scott (1975) suggested holds for these respondents. The normlessness/ambiguity factor relates both to anomie and organizational roles in the

model (Figure 1). Students are faced with uncertainty about the roles that they are expected to play in the new society. For some, this causes problems while for others it does not. The powerless isolation factor refers to the separation from values in the model. Again, it is their unfamiliarity with the values that causes problems for some students. Interestingly, many of the interview respondents did not have trouble with their control of situational facilities. In fact, that was one aspect that was frequently described as easy to do. This stands contrary to what Scott expected, but emphasizes again the individuality of alienation.

What has surfaced between the interviews and the surveys is the idea that, at least for these respondents, their personality and the way they view their experiences here have more to do with their alienation than any of the expected factors. This points again to the necessity of viewing alienation in both macro and micro contexts. This study emphasizes the importance of treating alienation as something that is an individual experience. However, no insights into the concept would have been gained had it not also been treated as a structural phenomenon.

Another facet of alienation is the way it is measured. The scale used in this study was based on Dean's (1961) Alienation Scale. Dodder (1969) used factor analysis to determine if Dean's scale was measuring one general dimension or if there was sufficient evidence to suggest that the subscales are independent variables. Twelve of the items that loaded most highly on the first unrotated factor of Dodder's factor analysis were chosen for the scale in this study. As discussed in Chapter 4, the items were reworded in an attempt to simplify the English and make them more understandable to a wide range of

international students. In addition, eight of the items were repeated, once referring to the US. and once to S.U.

What arose during the course of the study was that the questions were not getting the expected responses. Many who agreed that people were naturally friendly and helpful also agreed with the statement that they sometimes felt all alone in the world. Logically speaking, both could be true, but the coding of the survey causes them to cancel each other out. This points to the major criticism of Dean's scale for this study. It does not seem to speak to the experiences of international students. Their experiences in the United States may suggest that people are friendly, but they may still have difficulty making friends. Or, they may find Americans to be unhelpful and cold, but have many friends from their home country. In this latter case, the student may in fact be alienated from US. society, but not appear to be, based on his or her score on the scale. The alienation might exist, but the questions were not designed for the special circumstances of international students.

In order to measure the alienation of international students from American society, more specific less abstract statements should be used.²⁴ For example:

1. It is difficult to make friends here (in the host country).
2. People here do not discriminate against international students.
3. My department does not seem to listen to what I say.
4. I feel very comfortable living here.

The items used in an alienation scale designed for international students should be concrete because abstract concepts can be difficult to grasp in a second language. The survey must not be difficult to understand or students will be discouraged from

²⁴ This advice should be followed primarily when the survey is to be written in the language of the host country.

completing it. The items should also be related to the students experiences. In this way, the researcher can be more certain of measuring the actual level of alienation.

The next question that can be asked is, Is it important that we measure alienation in international students? Is alienation the appropriate concept for evaluating the experiences of international students? As discussed in Chapter 3, the concept of alienation came into public awareness with the work of Marx and Hegel. As a result of industrialization, individuals became separated, or alienated, from the products of their labor. As the concept developed, the feelings that arose from being alienated began to be seen as part of the concept (powerlessness, meaninglessness, etc.) Seeman (1959) took alienation out of its structural foundation and gave it a social-psychological emphasis. Seeman's attempt to make alienation measurable is still used today. Powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement have been used, or at least considered, in research from Dean (1961) to Scott (1975) to Moon (1989). One problem alienation faces with regards to international students, is that the items used to measure it do not account for the two or more cultural frames of reference that they bring to their present situations. The problems that can be involved in acculturation can influence the way that international students feel about their host country. For example, questions like:

"I worry about the future facing today's children."

"The world in which we live is basically a friendly place."

"The future looks very dismal."

"People's ideas change so much that I wonder if we'll ever have anything to depend on."

may engender responses that are colored by recent experiences, positive or negative, of the students. Thus, it is important to either clarify the questions to reflect the students'

experiences in the host country, or change concepts. Alienation *is* a problem faced by international students, however, it may be less important than simply trying to understand the processes of acculturation and adjustment. Students from different cultures will experience different kinds of problems, and different students from the same culture will experience the host country differently. Perhaps it is more important to understand that alienation exists and then move beyond the concept to a greater understanding of the individuality of the acculturation process. Alienation is an important concept, but the diversity that exists within its bounds does not necessarily lend itself to understanding international students and trying to assist them. However, further research would definitely not be amiss.

Recommendations for Further Study

Future research on alienation should take personality and attitudes into consideration. This was not expected when the study was begun and, therefore, only emerged in the analysis. However, it would benefit international student counselors if a study were conducted that gave them material to use when helping students adjust to a new culture. In addition, a greater emphasis on the role that organizations play in international students' lives would enhance our understanding of the kinds of interactions that facilitate adjustment.

Another avenue for future research would be to take the structural conditions of alienation advocated by the Marxists and combine them with the social psychological variants espoused by Seeman and Scott. The latter research would go a long way toward reconciling the two branches of alienation research.

The factor analysis presented in Chapter 5 highlighted the weakness of the alienation scale. Future research would need to devise a stronger alienation scale that was designed specifically for international students. A new scale would need to take into consideration the unique situation of internationals and focus more on the ambiguous situations that they find themselves in. It would also need to be worded more clearly and simply, using concrete examples rather than abstract ideas for the concepts like normlessness.

Finally, this research relied on a convenience sample of international students. Any future research in this vein should use a representative random sample selection. Further clarification of the variables, especially expectations and membership in organizations, would generate greater detail with regards to these factors.

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APPENDIX

Dear Student:

Please take a few minutes of your time to answer the questions in this questionnaire. It is part of a larger study looking at the opinions of international students. I am conducting this study as part of the requirements for a Masters Degree at State University's Department of Sociology.

Please understand that the information you give me is **confidential**. Your name will not be on the questionnaire and will not be associated with it in any way.

After answering the questions, please return the questionnaire to an officer of your organization. My name and phone number are at the bottom of this page if you would like to know more about the project.

Thank you for participating in this study.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Howard

Elizabeth Howard
Department of Sociology

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is being used for a graduate research project. Your participation is voluntary and your responses are confidential. Thank you for your participation.

1. Date of birth _____.
month / day / year

2. Sex
- 1. Male
 - 2. Female

3. City and Country of Origin _____.

4. Department of your Major _____.

5. Classification
- 1. Freshman
 - 2. Sophomore
 - 3. Junior
 - 4. Senior
 - 5. Masters student
 - 6. Ph.D student

6. Are you married?
- 1. Yes
 - 2. No (if no, skip to question 8)

7. Is your wife or husband living in Stillwater with you?
- 1. Yes
 - 2. No

8. How long have you lived in the United States? _____
years / months

9. Please, list all of the organizations/clubs/groups that you are a member of or are involved in.

For the following statements, please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with them, at the present time. There are no right answers, just your opinion. Circle the number that best describes your feelings.

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1. Real friends are as easy as ever to find in the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
2. People are just naturally friendly and helpful at SU.	1	2	3	4	5
3. With so much information available, a person cannot know what to believe in.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am overwhelmed by the number of decisions there are to make at SU.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Sometimes I feel all alone in the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Life in the U.S. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Most people in the U.S. rarely feel lonely.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My future at SU looks hopeless.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I feel like a piece of machinery in the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
10. There is nothing people can depend on at SU.	1	2	3	4	5
11. What you get in life is more important than how you get it.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The only thing that one can be sure of in the U.S. is that one can be sure of nothing.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Most people at SU. rarely feel lonely.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Real friends are as easy as ever to find at SU.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I am overwhelmed by the number of decisions there are to make in the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Sometimes I feel all alone at SU.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I feel like a piece of machinery at SU.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Life at Su. does not seem to leave much room for personal choice.	1	2	3	4	5
19. There is nothing people can depend on in the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
20. My future in the U.S. looks hopeless.	1	2	3	4	5
21. People at SU. are just naturally friendly and helpful.	1	2	3	4	5

22. In your opinion, what are some of the main values of Americans? Please list some.

23. How accepting are you of the values you listed?

1. Very much
2. Accepting
3. Not accepting
4. Not at all

24. Please list some of the expectations that you had about the United States and this University before coming here.

25. Overall, do you feel that these expectations have been met?

1. Yes
 2. No
- Please explain...

26. Please honestly rate your English skills... Would you say you speak English

- A. very well.
- B. well.
- C. fairly.
- D. not very well.
- E. poorly.

Thank you very much for completing this!!

Interview Questions

1. What is your major?
2. What is your classification/status?
3. How were you able to come to the U.S.? (who sponsored you?)
4. What organizations/clubs do you belong to?
5. What has membership in these clubs done for you? What does it mean in your life?
Has it helped you in any way?
6. What were some expectations you had about the U.S. before you arrived? about the University?
7. Do you feel that these expectations were met? Explain.
8. Do you feel that you understand the customs (the way things are done) in the U.S.?
9. Are there things you have had problems with? or found especially easy?
10. Would you be willing to share some of your experiences dealing with other people here at SU?
11. Do you concerned about "fitting in" or are you even interested in "fitting in"?
12. Interviewer assessment of respondent's English skills

Poor										Very Good
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Request for In-depth Interview

For the rest of my thesis, I need to interview international students in person. The interview would be done at your convenience and would last 30-45 minutes. If you are willing to be contacted for an interview, please write your name and phone number so that I may get in touch with you.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Best time to call you: _____

VITA

Elizabeth A. Howard

Candidate for Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: ALIENATION AMONG INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Major Field: Sociology

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on June 25, 1969, the daughter of James P. Howard and Anne D. Malone.

Education: Graduated from Northeast High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in May 1987; received Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri in May 1991. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major in Sociology at Oklahoma State University in December 1994.

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INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

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Principal Investigator(s): Dr. Robert L. Maril,
Elizabeth A. Howard

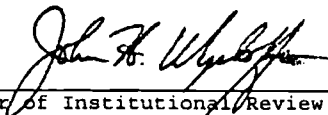
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Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature:



Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: February 4, 1994