International Student Reflections on Issues of Discrimination at U.S. Colleges and Universities: A Participatory Study

Daniel C. Mackeben

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.usfca.edu/theses

Part of the Education Commons
The author of this thesis has agreed to make available
to the University community and the public a copy of this thesis project.

Unauthorized reproduction of any portion of this thesis is prohibited.

The quality of this reproduction is
contingent upon the quality of the original copy submitted.

University of San Francisco
Gleeson Library/Geschke Center
2130 Fulton Street
San Francisco, CA 94117-1080 USA
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT REFLECTIONS ON ISSUES OF Discrimination at U.S. Colleges and Universities: A Participatory Study

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Daniel C. Mackeben
San Francisco, California
April, 1998
This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies represent the work of the candidate alone.

Candidate

Date

Dissertation Committee:

Chairperson

Second Reader

Third Reader

4-7-99

4-7-99

4-14-99
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. THE STUDY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Research Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Do International Students Contribute?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Higher Education Meeting Its &quot;Special Responsibility?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues of Discrimination and International Students</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Rationale</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment Problems and Concerns for International Students</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student Needs and Problems</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Shock</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Shock as a Learning Experience</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors Influencing the Intensity of Culture Shock</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Students and Issues of Discrimination</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influences of Discrimination on International Students</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination Directed at International Students</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Ways: Are International Students Welcome?</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptivity of U.S. Campuses to International Students</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Superior Culture?</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. METHODOLOGY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aims and Principles of Participatory Research</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participatory Research and Its Differences with Traditional Research 46
Participatory Research Approach 48
  Phase I: Organization of the Project and Knowledge of the Working Area 48
  Phase II: Definition of Generating Problematics 49
    Entry into the Community 50
  Phase III: Objectivization and Problemization 51
    Selection of the Research Participants 51
    Profiles of the Research Participants 52
    Questions to Guide the Dialogues 56
  Phase IV: Researching Social Reality and Analyzing Collected Information
    The Dialogue Process 59
  Phase V: Definition of Action Projects 60
  Background of the Researcher 60
  Research Setting 62

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS: THE PRIMARY THEMES
Introduction 64
  Hopes and Challenges of Cross-Cultural Adjustment 65
    Nattie's Story 65
    Tjoman's Story 67
    Osamu's Story 68
    Ko's Story 69
    Nma's Story 71
  Encounters with Discrimination, Prejudice, and Bias 73
    Experiences with Discrimination 73
    Pre-Conceived Notions and Prior Experiences 78
  Factors that Positively Shape International Student Experiences 81
    Influences of Similar Racial or Ethnic Communities 81
    Quality of Interactions with Campus Faculty and Staff 83
    Campus Diversity 84
  Recommendations of the Participants 85
Summary of Primary Themes 88
V. OVERVIEW, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 93

Overview of the Study 93
Conclusions 96
Recommendations for Future Action 99
  Establish Peer Support Groups 100
  Training and Development Workshops 100
  Inclusive, Caring Environment for Gay Sojourners 101
  International Student Recruitment 103

Reflections on the Research Design 103
Recommendations for Future Research 105
Reflections of the Researcher 109

REFERENCES 111

TABLE CHART

Table I International Students: Primary Places and Regions of Origin 4
Table II International Student Enrollment Trends 7
Table III Hypotheses Regarding the Psychological Intensity for Sojourners 29
Table IV International Students at San Francisco State University 63
CHAPTER 1
THE STUDY

Statement of the Research Problem

The December 6, 1996 edition of The Chronicle of Higher Education clarioned that 1996 was a "record-setting" year in the enrollment of international students at U.S. colleges and universities (Desruisseaux, 1996, p. A64). This rise in the international student population, especially the influx of students from non-European regions, has had a profound influence on the "economic, social, cultural, and political aspects" of higher education in the United States (Whetten & Song, 1992, p. 13). Given the numbers, diversity, and contributions of sojourners to its campuses, responding to the needs of international students is one of the "greatest challenges" facing U.S. higher education (Reiff, 1986, p. 1). It is therefore imperative that U.S. colleges and universities strive to create environments that foster the successful achievement of academic and co-curricular goals for international students. This success is far more likely if the international students "enjoy a satisfying contact with the host community [and] if the emotional and social atmosphere is pleasant and the environment congenial" (Helkinhelmo & Shute, 1986, p. 399).

However, despite the record-setting numbers and the apparent need to address international student needs, there is a growing sense that U.S. collegiate environments are actually becoming "less hospitable" to international students (Desruisseaux, 1996, A64). An issue endemic to many U.S. campuses is that international students "may not be viewed by institutions as legitimate students entitled to the same full services and treatment as other students" (Vandrick, Hafernik, & Messerschmitt, 1994, p. 37). Pusch (1979) notes that international students are often thrust onto colleges and universities that place unsuspected challenges to their personal identity. At a time when the nurturing of identity is so critical for the
international students, "they instead find themselves as a minority in the midst of a
dominant culture where there is prejudice, discrimination, and exploitation" (Pusch,
1979, p. 22). A prominent theme in the research on international students is that acts
of discrimination and bias contribute significantly to the cognitive, emotional, and
physical problems often associated with their sojourns to U.S. campuses (Hayes & Lin,
1994; Paige, 1993; Wehrly, 1988; Locke & Velasco, 1987; Helkinhelmo & Shute, 1986;
Pusch, 1981; Vandrick, Hafernik, & Messerschmitt, 1994). Discriminatory acts and
attitudes that U.S. faculty, staff, and students might inflict on "the various international
students that they encounter can serve as powerful barriers to the continued efforts by
international students to attain a quality life experience in the United States" (Hayes &
Lin, 1994, p. 9).

International students and the debilitating influences of discrimination and bias
on "attaining a quality life experience" while studying in the United States is the focal
problem of this study. The inquiries posed in exploring this problem will concentrate
on: (a) the definitions and meaning of discrimination and bias for international
students, especially as it pertains to their experiences in the U.S.; (b) international
student encounters with discrimination and bias during their collegiate education;
(c) the factors within the collegiate environment that contribute to international student
discrimination; and (d) the steps college faculty, staff, and students can take to address
the issues uncovered in the study.
Background of the Study

Human beings have been wandering around the globe and going back home again for millennia . . . [these] intercultural encounters involving people from different backgrounds have historically been too often marked by mutual suspicion or varying degrees of hostility and misunderstanding . . . At least it could be argued that until modern times most people lived in relatively constricted social worlds and could afford the luxury of prejudice and ignorance. Today such complacency in the presence of cultural difference can neither be justified or tolerated (La Brack, 1993, p. 241).

The international student population on United States campuses has soared from approximately 50,000 students in 1960 to over 400,000 students in the mid-1990s (Sidel, 1994, p. 44). The escalating presence of international students has had a dramatic effect on higher education throughout the past three decades, as students representing a diversity of nations and backgrounds have helped turn "colleges and universities into microcosms that currently co-exist on Planet Earth" (Wehrly, 1988, p. 4). Now enrolling over one third of all students who attend college outside of their home countries, the U.S. higher education system has become the leading host country of international students (Open Doors, 1996, p. 6).

The rise in international students from Asia, Africa, and other non-western regions has had an especially distinct influence on U.S. higher education. Gone are the days when one simply assumed that "the typical foreign student is a wealthy European indulging a whim" (Locke and Velasco, 1987, p. 116). The international students of the 1990s bring "much cultural diversity with differing languages, religious orientations, traditions, world views, and cultural constructions of reality" to college campuses (Wehrly, 1988, p. 11). Table I offers perspective on the leading places and regions of origin for international students at US campuses. A review of the data quickly substantiates that, unlike the early part of the twentieth century when the small international student population was comprised mostly of Europeans, the majority of international students now come from non-European regions. In fact, Asian students account for over 50 percent of the international student
population and Latin American, African, and Middle Eastern students are also a notable presence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leading Place of Origin</th>
<th>Region of Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45,276</td>
<td>20,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39,403</td>
<td>261,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36,407</td>
<td>64,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea, Rep. of</td>
<td>Latin America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33,599</td>
<td>47,239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Middle East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33,537</td>
<td>30,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>North America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22,747</td>
<td>23,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Oceania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13,617</td>
<td>4,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>World Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12,935</td>
<td>452,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Source: Open Doors, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,872</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,889</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I
International Students
Primary Places and Regions of Origin

What Do International Students Contribute?

The Institute of International Education reports that, as the numbers of international students have ascended, so have their "contributions to the academic institutions that host them, to the state and local communities in which they live, and to the national economy" (Open Doors, 1996, p. 1). The racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity of international students brings much to enhance both the intellectual and cultural climate on college campuses. According to Tonkin (1988),

We benefit from foreign students as much as they benefit from us. They bring special skills and talents, perhaps unavailable among our own compatriots. They also bring a different perspective, challenging students' perceived truths and settled opinions, showing faculty members new ways of doing things, and raising questions about fundamental assumptions. Sheltered students gain a broader perspective from them, and they learn indirectly that knowledge is indeed international, and that its pursuit is not limited to this country or our way of doing things. (p. 24)

International students and their benefits to both university budgets and the U.S. economy are other contributions of particular note. The National Association of
Foreign Student Advisors estimates that, in the 1994/95 academic year alone, over $7 billion dollars was spent by international students on college tuition, fees and living expenses. The organization also projects that close to 100,000 full and part-time employment opportunities are created as a net result of international student expenditures while in the United States (Open Doors, 1996, p. 2).

The presence of international students may, directly or indirectly, also have a considerable effect on the quality of the United States' political relations with other countries. Gareis (1992) writes that perhaps the "area of intercultural contact with the most impact on the future of international relations is the interaction of foreign and native students on the world's campuses" (p. 2). It is an opinion shared by Locke and Velasco (1987), who assert that "many future leaders of governments, industry, technology, and education are [international students]. It is entirely possible that these individuals' attitudes towards Americans, formed while they are students in the United States, will one day affect foreign relations between the United States and other countries" (p. 116).

Is U.S. Higher Education Meeting Its "Special Responsibility"?

Given the increased presence of international sojourners on U.S. campuses and their numerous economic, intellectual, and (potential) diplomatic contributions, it is imperative that U.S. colleges strive to "bring the needs of these individuals to the forefront of challenges facing college and university administrators" (Wehrly, 1988, p. 4). Locke and Velasco (1987) assert that,

American colleges and universities, then, have a special responsibility to foreign students. Everyone at the university, including the foreign student advisor, advisors in residence halls, counselors, members of the faculty, community volunteers, campus security personnel; and other students, need to have sensitivity, skill, and tact. (p. 116)

In assuming this "special responsibility", faculty, staff, and domestic students alike must strive to positively address the social, cultural, and academic needs of sojourners to U.S. campuses.
Is the U.S. higher education system meeting its "special responsibility"? Have U.S. colleges and universities adequately addressed international student needs? Are collegiate environments truly supportive and welcoming to their international students? Although it cannot be denied that some college and universities do an extraordinary job of addressing international student needs, a number of scholars provide, at best, lukewarm assessments of the overall quality of institutional efforts (Story, 1982; Reiff, 1986; Tonkin, 1988, Wehrly, 1988; Parr, Bradley & Bingi, 1992; Sidel, 1994; Althen, 1995; O'Connell, 1994).

The dramatic increase and diversification of international students throughout the past thirty years has "caught most college and university officials unprepared" (Reiff, 1986, p. 1). Althen (1995) proposes that the U.S. higher education system's attempts to address international student needs are, by and large, "marked by incoherence, inconclusiveness, and a measure of prejudice" (p. 6). Furthermore, the author, based on 25 years of service as an international student advisor, concludes that campus personnel and domestic students view international students "as somehow less human, intelligent, and sensible than people in the United States, less able to solve life's problems, and less emotionally complex" (Althen, 1995, p. 44). The difficulties in responding to the needs of student sojourners and the de-humanizing attitudes of many campus personnel and students are, according to Tonkin (1988), a reflection of U.S. society's struggles with global interdependence and its confusion "about what it is seeking to achieve through its educational system. The result is that, even as [the United States] is becoming more and more engaged at every level with the larger world, its ability to deal with that world is actually declining" (p. 5).

In addition to the criticisms of the afore-mentioned scholars, a marked decrease in the rate of international student growth may point to concerns regarding the attractiveness and value of an education in the United States. The Institute of International Education reported only a 0.6% increase in international student
Table II

International Student Enrollment Trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leading Places of Origin (94/95 Total)</th>
<th>% Change from 93/94</th>
<th>Region of Origin (94/95 Total)</th>
<th>% Change from 93/94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan 45,276</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Africa 20,724</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China 39,403</td>
<td>-11.2</td>
<td>Asia 261,789</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan 36,407</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
<td>Europe 64,811</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea, Rep. of 33,599</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Latin America 47,239</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India 33,537</td>
<td>-3.6</td>
<td>Middle East 30,246</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada 22,747</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>North America 23,394</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia 13,617</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>Oceania 4,327</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong 12,935</td>
<td>-5.9</td>
<td>World Total 452,635</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia 11,872</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand 10,889</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico 9,003</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Open Doors, 1996

enrollment from 1993/94 to 1994/95, "the smallest increase in 10 years and [the continuation of] a five-year trend of slower growth in foreign student enrollments" (Open Hands, 1996, p. 1). Furthermore, seven of the prominent countries of origin for international students either declined or show limited growth in enrollment (see Table II). Richard M. Krasno, president of the Institute of International Education, invokes that these enrollment trends "are quite worrying. If you believe, as I do, that foreign students' coming to the United States is in our national interest, then we have every reason to be concerned" (Desruisseaux, 1996, p. A64). O'Connell (1994) agrees that, unless this downward trend is quickly remedied, it will most assuredly be "bad for business, bad for education, bad for our neighborhoods, bad for the United States, and bad for international amity" (p. 21).

Issues of Discrimination and International Student Experiences

A myriad of both positive and negative factors can influence the quality of an international student's education. Dramatic differences in "climate, food, social values, modes of behavior, and verbal and nonverbal communication" can pose serious
challenges to international students (Dillard & Chisolm, 1983, p. 101). Gaining a clearer understanding of these numerous and complex factors is essential if higher education is to become truly responsive and sensitive to the needs of international students. The stress and insecurity that sojourners experience as they transition into U.S. collegiate environments are especially poignant needs (Althen, 1995; Dillard & Chisolm, 1983; Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Story, 1982; Wehrly, 1988). Wehrly (1988) asserts that traveling to study at a U.S. school tends to be a stressful experience for virtually all student sojourners, and this stress is "ongoing during most of their period of study in the United States" (p. 4).

A number of scholars suggest that discrimination, prejudice, and bias serve as significant sources of stress and difficulty for many international students (Hayes & Lin, 1994; Paige, 1983, 1993; Wohl, 1988; Locke and Velasco, 1987; Sergent, Woods & Sedlacek, 1992). Racism, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination that "members of the host culture might hold for the various international students that they encounter can serve as powerful barriers to continued efforts by international students to attain a quality international experience in the United States" (Hayes and Lin, 1994, p. 9). For example, Althen (1995) cites the "outright hostility" directed at Iranian international students during the taking of American hostages in Tehran as a compelling example of this discrimination. Anti-Chinese sentiments during the late 1980s, based on an increase of Chinese international students at U.S. colleges and universities, profoundly influenced the experiences of the Chinese students (pp. 27-28). Discrimination directed at international students is particularly acute during international events such as the crisis in Iran or, more commonly, when the visiting international students have "led quite separate and very different lives and often have conflicting perspectives and world views" than those of mainstream America (Sidel, 1994, p. 9).
The cross-cultural dynamics experienced by international students as they develop relationships with other students, faculty, and staff can prove to be particularly challenging. Pusch (1981) elaborates that the cultural differences and discrimination encountered by international students, "and the inability to comprehend them, produce a pervasive sense of insecurity" (p. 1). Most international students, especially from non-European regions, are inflicted with a high degree of frustration and anxiety in higher education environments that "seriously undermine any possibility of meaningful adjustment" (Storti, 1990, p. 28). Rather than offer a collegiate environment that nurtures and supports student sojourners, "the actual cultural context on American campuses frequently generates stress, depression, frustration, fear, and pessimism for international students (Hayes & Lin, 1994, p. 7).

Educational researchers have devoted increased scholarly attention to the racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination that are systemic to educational environments (Sidel, 1994; Nieto, 1996; Boyer, 1990; Wilson, 1996). Despite this increased scrutiny, the voices and experiences of students - especially international students - regarding these issues remain unappreciated and unrecognized. Sidel (1994) writes that,

In recent years, we have heard from journalists, political ideologues, elected officials, and college administrators and faculty members about conflict on college campuses, diversity, multiculturalism, political correctness, race relations, and gender issues, but amid the debates and diatribes what have been missing are the voices of the students. (p. 10)

This study is primarily concerned with bringing forth the long "missing" voices of international students as they speak of their sojourns on US college campuses.

**Purpose of the Study**

The central purpose of this study is to explore international student reflections on the discrimination and bias they encounter while studying in the United States. It must be noted that this study does not intend to imply that discrimination and bias from the host culture are the sole factors contributing to international student stress and
other difficulties while studying in the United States. However, the potential influences of discrimination and bias are concerns that definitely merit further exploration, as exposure to "outright prejudice and bigotry can have a debilitating effect on international students" (Paige, 1993, p. 6). Providing international students with an opportunity to dialogue and reflect upon these issues is the critical focus of the research.

Research Questions

Through participatory dialogue with selected international students, the research will strive to shed insight into the following research questions:

How do international students define discrimination and bias, especially as it relates to their own experiences on U.S. campuses?

What are international students' encounters with issues of discrimination and bias while attending US colleges? How have these experiences influenced the quality of their education and sojourn in the United States?

What are the factors within the college and university setting that contribute to discrimination and bias against international students?

What recommendations can be gleaned from this research that will help campus personnel, domestic students, and international students proactively respond to the issues raised in the study?

Theoretical Rationale

... our capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by our interest in one another's presence. Since the vast majority of students learn through conservative, traditional educational practices and concern themselves only with the presence of the professor, any radical pedagogy must insist that everyone's presence is acknowledged. That insistence cannot be simply stated. It has to be demonstrated through pedagogical practices. (hooks, 1994, p. 8).

we [campus personnel] have little to guide us in decision-making, virtually no way to hold on to students who should be getting the best we have to offer, and theories that provide little practical help in administration, leadership, pedagogy, or matching students with institutions. We mostly operate by the seat of our pants. (Tierney, 1991, p. 27)
The theoretical foundation of this study is derived from scholarship in two interconnected areas: the basic constructs of critical pedagogy and theories pertaining to discrimination and the U.S. higher education system. Critical Pedagogy provides the conceptual framework for the focus of this study and the design of the methodology. The focuses on empowerment and critical thinking inherent in Critical Pedagogy are ideally suited to exploring the diversity and reality of international student experiences. Furthermore, Critical Pedagogy advocates a synergistic relationship between participant and researcher; thereby creating a research process that is far more conducive to bringing forth the dynamics of international student life. Participatory Research, a methodology based on Critical Pedagogy, will serve as the means for the study's collection of data.

The dominant paradigm in collegiate student development has long been grounded, both in philosophy and practice, on European American values and priorities. Although the demographic tapestry of collegiate student populations has changed dramatically, the influence of traditional research and practice is still clearly evident "in the ideals that guide our educational processes and in educators' approaches to college students" (Wright, 1987, p. 12). With reference to international students, Story (1982) proposes that the reliance on European American values and cultural assumptions in theory and practice has ill served most sojourners to U.S. campuses (p. 66). It has also become increasingly evident that these ideals must be revised to facilitate a better understanding and appreciation for "the behavior of individual students and groups of students" (Kuh & Andreas, 1991, p. 397).

Lincoln (1991) implores higher education scholars and practitioners to detach themselves from the dominant paradigm and "look more broadly at the ways of knowing that we have available to us" (Lincoln, 1991, p. 22). Critical Pedagogy is a "way of knowing" that strives to move beyond the confines of the dominant paradigm and establish a pedagogy that, according to Paulo Freire (1970), recognizes "every
human being, no matter how 'ignorant' or submerged in the 'culture of silence' he or she may be, [as] capable of looking critically at the world in a dialogical encounter with others" (p. 14). Tierney (1991) offers a more specific definition of the aims of critical theory,

To begin, critical theorists tie their investigations to a concern for social justice and democracy. Critical theorists work from the assumption that the world is marked by enormous suffering and injustice... the aim of critical theory is to understand the oppressive aspects of society so that those features may be transformed by those who are oppressed... (p. 41)

The theories and research practices of critical pedagogy are based on "qualitative methods and designs that allow those under study the ability to speak about 'their' perceptions and realities." (Tierney, 1991, p. 5). Participatory research, the methodology for this study, is specifically designed to help students develop a "critical perspective about what they hear, read, or see" (Nieto, 1996, p. 320). Ada and Beutel (1993) elaborate that participatory research is concerned with "identifying, naming, and giving voice to knowledge that is not yet codified or legitimated by the dominant society" (p. 12). The constructs of critical pedagogy and participatory research are especially useful in this study's efforts to "acknowledge rather than suppress" the cultural diversity and experiences of today's international students (Nieto, 1996, p. 320). In addition, Critical pedagogy and participatory research offers the research participants with a rare, much needed opportunity to speak of the meaning and influences of discrimination for international students.

An overview of the vast numbers of theories and scholarship pertaining to issues of discrimination in higher education is virtually impossible to provide in this section. However, the works of a number of educational scholars provide the basis for this study's theoretical foundation in exploring issues of discrimination - especially with reference to international students and higher education. Ruth Sidel's acclaimed book Battling Bias: The Struggle for Identity and Community on College Campuses has been of notable influence in the study's formation. Sidel (1994) writes eloquently of
the need for educators to commence intensive dialogues with students regarding the racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression that have become so common on today's college campuses:

... during the late 1980s and early 1990s, bias incidents started to occur with alarming regularity on college campuses. Many observers felt, and still feel, a sense of shock when these incidents occur. Why are they happening? What are the beliefs, the values, the pressures that motivate students who perpetrate racist, sexist, homophobic incidents? What do such incidents tell us about the broader society? What is the impact on the victims? To begin to explore these issues, let us start by listening to some of the students who have themselves experienced bias. (p. 5).

The inquiries posed by Sidel in the above passage lie at the very core of this study's exploration of international students and their encounters with discrimination on U.S. campuses.

Nieto's work *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education* has also profoundly influenced the development of this study. Her provocative examination of the "constant and complex interplay and interactions among personal, social, political, and educational factors in exploring the success or failure of students in schools and the benefits of multicultural education" offers valuable insight into the challenges facing today's educational systems - from elementary schools to colleges and universities. As discussed later in the text, Nieto's (1996) theories regarding "multicultural education in practice" create the foundation for a caring, inclusive response to issues of discrimination and bias, especially as they pertain to international student needs.

**Significance of the Study**

This study is designed to illuminate the voices and experiences of the international student participants and bring forth the students' encounters with discrimination as sojourners in the US higher education system. Perhaps the greatest significance of this study has been attained through the dialogues between researcher
and participants in the Participatory Research methodology. These dialogues served as the key component of a Participatory Research process that pursues "knowledge that is not traditionally part of the already established and published store of knowledge" (Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 12). The opportunity to dialogue and reflect upon their sojourns proved especially significant, for it is through reflection that the participants have been able to "see themselves and their social situations more clearly" (Maguire, 1987, p. 14). Furthermore, by engaging in this research process, the research participants have had an opportunity "to be informed and active participants" in naming and addressing the discrimination and bias so often inherent in international student experiences (Nieto, 1996, p. 319).

It is the author's hope that the new knowledge uncovered in this study will be of particular significance to the campus personnel (international student advisors, housing officials, orientation planners and other student affairs practitioners) that are charged with developing programs and services for international students. More specifically, to help sojourners adjust to U.S. campus life, this study aims to provide information that will help campus personnel identify those cultural elements which will be most difficult for the international student to accept, explore international student responses to these elements, and work with the international students to develop effective strategies for dealing with them (Paige, 1993, p. 5). The failure to closely examine and respond to the discrimination and other factors influencing international student experiences could possibly have far-reaching, "negative consequences for America's future. This may apply to economic, social, cultural, and political aspects" (Whetten & Song, 1992, p. 13).

Undertaking this study has already had great significance for the researcher. Ada and Beutel (1993) write that a researcher's pursuit of a study is based on one's experience with a community and what is urgent to it. [Pursuing the study] may reflect a burning question, or a desire to understand a group of people and to give them the opportunity to discover and share their own voices. (p. 53)
With respect to this study, selection of the topic was based on the researcher's own desire to learn more about the nature of international student experiences. Of particular interest to the researcher has been the following "burning question": what are international students experience with discrimination and how do these experiences influence their education in the United States? The new knowledge and enrichment gained from the dialogues with the research participants has hopefully enabled him to become a more competent and creative advocate for their needs.

**Definition of Terms**

The focus of this section is provide a general understanding of the following terms and concepts that merit further clarification:

- international student
- foreign student
- sojourn
- mainstream American culture
- racism
- xenophobia
- discrimination
- culture
- culture shock
- traditional research
- domestic students
- sojourn

The term **international student** has been selected to identify college or university students studying and living in countries other than that of their citizenship. This study is solely focused on international students studying at U.S. colleges and universities. **Foreign student** is a term that is virtually synononous with international student, and the two terms will be used interchangeably. It is important to note that the researcher's preference is to use international student throughout the text, although foreign student will be utilized when used by quoted authors. This preference for the term international student is because of the sometimes negative, "alien in character" connotations of the term foreign (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 1993, p. 456). International student is also the official descriptor utilized by the faculty and staff at San Francisco State University. As this institution will serve as the source of the study's participants, it is therefore appropriate to identify the participating students as international students.
The term sojourner and sojourn will also be used throughout the study when referring to international students and their journeys to U.S. colleges and universities. Quite simply, sojourn can be defined as "to stay as a temporary resident" (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 1993, p. 1117).

Domestic students is this study's moniker of choice for college students born and raised in the United States. The difficulties and limitations inherent in using any term to describe the immense racial and cultural diversity of college students is duly noted. Mainstream American culture is an equally challenging and nebulous term. However, for the purposes of this study, mainstream American culture refers to the long dominant values and beliefs of the European American middle class (Althen, 1988, p. xiii).

Racism, xenophobia, and discrimination are other complex concepts that can have a multitude of meanings. Interpretations of these concepts can be especially skewed when viewed through the cultural lenses of an international sojourner in the United States. However, for the purposes of this study, racism refers to the biased and negative perceptions that individuals maintain towards members of other racial groups. Racism also denotes the harm done through the policies and practices of institutions such as higher education, health, corporations, and the criminal justice system (Nieto, 1996, p. 36). Behaviors and attitudes directed against individuals simply because of their country or region of origin is called xenophobia, or "the fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign" (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 1993, p. 1369).

Discrimination is a more comprehensive term that relates to "belief systems and behaviors, both personal and institutional, directed against individuals or groups on the basis of gender (sexism), ethnic group (ethnocentrism), social class (classism), language (linguicism), or other perceived differences" (Nieto, 1996, p. 37).
Defining culture - another term with countless meanings - is quite an elusive task, and a host of scholars have attempted to capture its essence (Nieto, 1996; Kohls, 1984; Bullivant, 1993; Gareis, 1992; Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Paige, 1993). Nieto's (1996) concept of culture is perhaps most suitable for the nature of this study. Culture can be understood as the ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created and shared by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class, and/or religion, and how these are transformed by those who share them. (p. 138)

Multiple definitions of culture shock will be presented and analyzed in the Review of the Literature part.

Traditional or conventional research is educational research utilizing theories and methodologies that are "grounded in positivism, the view that recognizes only positive facts and observable, 'objective' phenomena" (Maguire, 1987, p. 9). Ada & Beutel (1993) provide the important addendum that the participants in traditional research "are viewed as passive objects who provide input for the data gathering" (p. 23).
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Gaining a greater appreciation for the complexity of international students' needs and experiences is the central focus of the Review of the Literature. The key areas to be highlighted upon in this review are: (a) adjustment problems and concerns for international students; (b) international student encounters with discrimination and bias; and (c) American ways: are international students welcome?

Adjustment Problems and Concerns for International Students

Being a foreigner is a new and, at least for a time, uncomfortable, even threatening experience. It can produce a persistent sense of insecurity vibrating just below the threshold of consciousness - something like a long-term, low-grade infection, not seriously disruptive but annoyingly debilitating (Kohls, 1964, p. 38).

It is interesting to note that international student sojourns across the world are not necessarily new. In fact, international education has an ancient tradition that spans over two thousand years. An educational institution with a decidedly international flavor was the University of Taxila. During the reign of Emperor Asoka the Great of India (273-232 B.C.), this acclaimed university attracted students from all over Asia Minor. In China, the T'ang Dynasty (620-907) proved to be a great proponent of international education and, upon his death, Alexander the Great bequeathed a kind of Rhodes scholarship to worthy student sojourners (Bochner, 1982, p. 161). Students have been wandering the globe in pursuit of an education throughout the millennia, and their adjustment and adaptation to new cultural and educational environments has long been of interest to educators (La Brack, 1993, p. 241).

Since the end of World War II, higher education institutions in the United States have especially benefited from "huge movement of students across cultural
boundaries" (Bochner, 1982, pp. 161). Accompanying this rise in international students has been a dramatic increase in the scholarly attention devoted to sojourner experiences in United States colleges and universities. This section of the Review of Literature will closely examine some of the critical studies regarding cross-cultural adjustment issues for international students. Specific attention will be devoted towards: international student needs and problems, concepts related to "culture shock", and the factors that can influence the quality of a sojourner's experience in the United States.

**International Student Needs and Problems**

The needs and concerns of international students in the United States have been extensively described and analyzed by a variety of educational researchers (Furnham & Bochner, 1982, 1986; Kohls, 1984; Locke & Velasco, 1987; Althen, 1988, 1995; Paige, 1983, 1995; Herlick, 1993; Pusch, 1979, 1981; Wehrly, 1988; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Dillard & Chisolm, 1983; Leong & Chou, 1996). Much of this scholarship focuses on international students and their "typical adjustments to university life" (Herlick, 1993, p. 1). Attempting to ascertain the specific needs of international students is quite a difficult task, especially when one considers the diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds represented by sojourners from Latin America, Africa, Europe, Asia, and other regions. In general, a myriad of issues and concerns can confront the international student as she/he attempts to adapt to their new scholastic environment.

Althen (1995) emphasizes that most international students are inflicted with a high degree of frustration and anxiety upon entry into higher education environments where "customs, gestures, facial expressions, and words are unfamiliar and at odds with one's own values and experiences" (p. 6). A significant proportion of sojourners encounter daunting challenges in adjusting to life in the United States. These difficulties include, but are not limited to, "English language proficiency, insufficient
financial resources, social integration, problems in daily life tasks, homesickness, and role conflicts (Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992, p. 71). Furnham and Bochner (1982) lend additional insight into some of the concerns facing new international students,

Ordinary everyday situations such as attending parties, making contact with the opposite sex, ordering meals, shopping, even using the bathroom, all activities which hitherto presented no problems, suddenly become major obstacles... (by individuals who) tend to be highly skilled in their own society, and (therefore) find their inadequacy in the new culture particularly frustrating and embarrassing (p. 166)

The stress and insecurity that sojourners experience as they transition into a new educational environment has been a particular focus of past research on international students (Althen, 1983; Dillard & Chisolm, 1983; Furnham & Bochner, 1982, 1986; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Story, 1982; and Wehrly, 1988). Traveling to study at a distant university tends to be a stressful experience for virtually all international students, and this stress has been found to be "ongoing during most of their period of study in the United States" (Wehrly, 1988, p. 4). Social concern and language difficulties have been identified as two of the greatest adjustment issues facing international students (Hayes & Lin, 1994, p. 7). Pusch (1979) elaborates that when the sojourners encounters a new and different culture, they are usually deprived of the supports and identity reinforcements that are available in [their] own group... deprived of many of the guides and cues which orient [them] to social, cultural and linguistic environments and are therefore likely to experience a marked disorientation (p. 23).

Specific sources of stress and difficulty most frequently reported by international students have been summarized by De Verthelyi (1995, p. 389). The author writes that adjustment problems and concerns of international students are focused on:

• Language difficulties
• Financial problems
• Dealing with a new educational system and pressure to succeed
• Changes in social status
- Homesickness
- Adjusting to social customs and norms
- Difficulties in making friends with host nationals
- Racial discrimination

Additional adjustment concerns can include: male/female relationships, immigration difficulties, political conflicts, religious differences, and anxiety about returning home (Leong & Chou, 1996).

Most of these needs and problems are directly related to international students efforts to "adjust to their new culture and to the loss, even if temporarily, of the old" (Hayes & Lin, 1994, p. 8). Furthermore, because of vast cultural differences encountered by most sojourners, the problems experienced are "ongoing during most of their period of study in the United States" (Wehrly, 1988, p. 4). Mallinckrodt and Leong (1992) report that these adjustment problems "may be manifested as social withdrawal, inability to sleep well, sexual problems, sadness and depression, academic problems, loss of self-esteem and loneliness" (p. 71).

This section does not mean to imply that all international students are fraught with problems throughout their sojourn, as many do complete their studies without apparent difficulty, and find their relations with Americans to be enjoyable and enriching (Kohls, 1984). It is also important to point out that the resilience of international students in addressing concerns of cross-cultural adjustment are truly noteworthy. According to Jehly (1988), one must appreciate that

These scholars are a very select group, the cream of the crop. They have been screened with rigorous tests. Many will go home and rise to positions of high leadership in their own countries. The courage to make and implement the decision to leave one's own homeland and to come to study in another country, usually in a foreign language, in itself represents a degree of risk taking . . . Another strength that this group shows is their ability to persevere, sometimes despite what may seem like insurmountable odds. (p. 7)

The perseverance of international students is especially admirable in consideration of the notable challenges to adjusting to life in the United States. As mentioned in this
section, these challenges are primarily related to language difficulties, health concerns, emotional distress, loss of cultural cues, unrealized expectations, and cultural differences (Parr, Bradley, & Bingi, 1992).

**Culture Shock**

A common theme in the literature pertaining to international student needs is the concept of "culture shock". Scholars and practitioners in higher education identify culture shock as one of the principal factors influencing sojourners' experiences while attending US colleges and universities (Kohl, 1984; Leong & Chou, 1996; Befus, 1987; Furnham & Bochner, 1982, 1986; Chiu, 1995; Brislin & Yoshida). Following is a review of the literature related to culture shock and other pertinent cross-cultural adjustment concepts.

The term "culture shock" was introduced into the educational realm after World War II, and was initially used to imply "that entering into a new culture was a potentially disorienting and confusing experience" (Leong & Chou, 1996, p. 212). Throughout the past forty years, recognition of its existence has not only been prominent in education, but has also surfaced in "anthropological, psychological, business, military, and government literature from time to time" (Befus, 1987, pp. 381-382). Although the culture shock phenomenon has received notable attention, its definition and characterization is "not consistent in the literature, and has undergone many changes and revisions" (De Verthelyi, 1995, p. 388). Culture shock (also referred to as cross-cultural adjustment in some educational circles) has been succinctly defined as "that period of transition and adjustment during which a person who has been relocated experiences some degree of anxiety, confusion, and disruption related to living in the new culture" (Befus, 1987, p. 381). However, a comprehensive review of the literature reveals a variety of perspectives regarding the meaning and nature of the term.

In general, culture shock is a concept or theory used by many researchers to describe the adaptive stress experienced by international students as they live in
unfamiliar social and cultural environments (Leong & Chou, 1996; Brislin & Yoshida, 1994; Befus, 1987; Adler, 1987; Kohls, 1984; Althen, 1995; Furnham & Bochner, 1982, 1986; and Pusch, 1979, 1981). A consistent theme within the literature regarding culture shock is that the process appears to be fundamental to the experiences of all sojourners. According to Adler (1987), culture shock is fundamental in "that the individual must somehow confront the social, psychological, and philosophical discrepancies s/he finds in new surroundings as compared with her/his own cultural props, self-image, and understandings" (p. 30).

Sojourner responses to culture shock can vary greatly and, as will be discussed later in this section, are highly dependant on each international student and the nature of their sojourn (Lewis & Jungman, 1986; Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Paige, 1993; Kohls, 1984). The physical, emotional and behavioral reactions to culture shock can range "from excitement and energetic action to withdrawal, depression, physical illness, and hostility. A particular individual might react to culture shock one day and another the next" (Althen, 1988, p. 155). Adverse reactions to culture shock can be especially damaging to intercultural relationships, which could have far-reaching influences on international relations, global trade, and politics (Befus, 1987).

Furnham and Bochner (1986) provide an analysis of the effects of culture shock on sojourners, although their research focuses solely on emotional aspects of the process. Six primary issues of culture shock that are perhaps the most prevalent challenges to the student's emotional health are presented by the authors,

1. **Strain** due to the effort required to make necessary psychological adaptations.
2. A **sense of loss and feelings of deprivation** in regard to friends, status, profession and possessions.
3. Being **rejected** by and/or rejecting members of the new culture.
4. **Confusion** in role, role expectations, values, feelings and self identity.
5. *Surprise, anxiety, even disgust and indignation* after becoming aware of cultural differences.

6. *Feelings of impotence* due to not being able to cope with the new environment (Furnham & Bochner, 1986, p. 48).

Befus (1987) also attempts to classify international student responses to culture shock, although her work is far more specific than Furnham and Bochner's concentration on emotional needs. In a comprehensive examination of treatment needs for sojourners, Befus (1987) proposes that culture shock, and the accompanying stress, is a complex construct involving four distinct levels: intellectual, emotional, behavioral and physiological. These four levels provide the framework for the author's thorough definition of culture shock,

> culture shock is an adjustment reaction syndrome caused by cumulative, multiple, and interactive stress in the intellectual behavioral, emotional, and physiological levels of a person recently relocated to an unfamiliar culture, and is characterized by a variety of symptoms and psychological distress (Befus, 1987, p. 387).

The **intellectual level** of culture shock suggests that the processing of new and often confusing information can be a daunting challenge when entering a new culture. The sheer abundancy of data and cues is often enormously taxing to even the most hardy of international sojourners. The **behavioral level** pertains to the multitude of lifestyle adaptations that force the sojourner to either feel comfortable or disengage in their new environment. The afore-mentioned intellectual and behavioral challenges naturally affect the **emotional level** of the sojourner's culture shock. The confusion and perpetual thinking required on both the intellectual and behavioral level can have severe implications to the sojourner's emotional state. Finally, the stress inherent in adapting to new foods, climates and other relocation needs can contribute greatly to the **physiological level** of culture shock for sojourners (p. 386). In summary, Befus (1987) describes the accumulative stress of culture shock as the synergy of its intellectual, behavioral, emotional and psychological levels.
Culture Shock as a Learning Experience

Rather than looking at culture shock as a mere malady of sojourner adjustment, Adler (1987) suggests one can conceive of culture shock as a "profound learning experience" that has an enormous influence on the degree of self-awareness and personal growth for sojourners (p. 29). Adler's description of the core characteristics of the cross-cultural sojourn that contribute to this learning process are detailed below.

The author proposes that the international student experience:

• Involves change and movement from one cultural frame of reference to another. The individual is presented with changes in the cultural landscape.

• Is unique and assumes unique importance and meaning to the individual. The individual undergoes a highly personal experience of special significance to [her/him]self.

• Becomes provocative. The individual is forced into some form of introspection and self-examination.

• Is extreme in its ups and downs. The individual undergoes various forms of frustration, anxiety, and personal pain.

• Forces personal investigation of relationships. The individual must deal with the relationships and processes (as opposed to only the data and content) inherent in [their] status as an outsider.

• Forces behavioral experimentation. The individual must, of necessity, try out new attitudes and behaviors. This becomes a trial-and-error process until appropriate behavioral responses emerge.

• Presents unlimited opportunity for contrast and comparison. The individual has at [their] disposal an unending source of diversity with which she/he can compare and contrast previous experiences. (Adler, 1987, pp. 30-31)

Kohls (1984) and other scholars concur that experiences with culture shock can allow sojourners to grow in "unique and exciting ways" (p. 21). However, Adler's work is unique in that he specifically details the unique and provocative learning potential of virtually all international student sojourns. Each international student is confronted with new opportunities, challenges, and problems that can promote "new levels of consciousness and understanding" (Adler, 1987, p. 31). Adler's emphasis of the
potential influences of stress on the positive aspects of sojourner learning is a concept largely absent in the literature on culture shock.

Factors Influencing the Intensity of International Student Culture Shock

Because international students vary widely in their ability to adjust to U.S. campus life, individual differences must be examined when attempting to comprehend why some sojourners are more likely to achieve success, or encounter barriers, than others (Hayes & Lin, 1994). Assessing these differences has been a topic in a fairly significant body of research (Locke & Velasco, 1987; Paige, 1993; Bochner, 1982; Althen, 1984; Herlick, 1993; Befus, 1987; Gareis, 1992). Locke and Velasco (1987) assert that the ability of international students to cope with the drastic lifestyle changes inherent in adapting to an "alien" environment depends on the "student's degree of past familiarity with aspects of American culture, the length of the student's stay in the United States; and the number and intensity of differences and similarities between the student's culture and American culture" (p. 116). The type and duration of the sojourn, language fluency, age, sex, degree of identification with mainstream culture, and the amount of previous interactions with Americans have all been cited as factors influencing the quality of international student experiences (Heersche, 1994; Wehrly, 1988; Befus, 1987; Garies, 1992; Chiu, 1995; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Parr, Bradley & Bingi, 1992).

Bochner (1982) attempts to classify the conditions that influence the degree of culture shock and the ease of adjustment for international students. The author indicates that the extent and duration of culture shock is strongly influenced by the following:

**Cultural differences.** The quality, quantity and duration of social difficulty appears to be a function of the differences between the foreigner's culture of origin and the receiving society.

**Individual differences.** Large individual differences exist in the ability of people to cope with new environments. Demographic and personality variables such as age, sex, cognitive ability, socioeconomic class and education may
Sojourn experiences. The quality of learning a new culture is dependent on the experiences a person has in it, especially at the beginning of her/his visit. (p. 171)

Bochner's mention of the significance of cultural differences on sojourner experiences has been noted by a number of researchers (Paige, 1993; De Verthelyi, 1995; Wehrly, 1988; Hendricks & Skinner, 1977; Gareis, 1992). De Verthelyi (1995) comments that differences between the international student's culture and American culture, especially related to cultural diversity perspectives, will have an "important impact" on the nature of sojourner experiences (p. 388). For example, international students from Canada and western Europe - because of their racial and cultural similarities with mainstream White culture in America - are not as influenced by cultural differences as international students from Africa, Asia and other regions (Gareis, 1992). Problems of adjustment seem to occur more frequently for students "whose home cultures are vastly different from United States cultures" (Wehrly, 1988, p. 4).

Paige (1993) closely examines the factors which heighten the psychological intensity for sojourners embarking on particular cultural immersions. The author proposes fifteen hypotheses regarding these factors that have the potential to raise the level of psychological intensity for sojourners. Although Paige's hypotheses are focused solely on psychological intensity, his analysis can be extrapolated to other aspects of the sojourner's adjustment. The hypotheses are outlined in Table III (p. 29 of the text).

Expectations regarding the sojourn can also play an important role in shaping the quality of the international student's experience in the United States. Storti (1990) writes that,

what is especially discouraging for many sojourners is not necessarily the experience itself, but the disappointment that results from the gap between their expectations and actual situations" (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994, p. 39).
The degree of expectation regarding academic success possesses especially significant challenges. To many international students, the academic norms and procedures at US colleges are far different than the classroom experiences in their home countries. Dillard and Chisolm (1983) write that although "most international students have been academically successful in their native lands, many experience new and stressful academic pressures on college campuses in the United States" (p. 102). This pressure can sometimes result in academic "failure" for international students, with individuals performing far below the expectations anticipated for her/himself. The ensuing stress and frustration can have a significant, negative effect during the student's sojourn in the United States. Expectations regarding social situations and relationships with other students have also been cited as source of difficulty for international students (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994; Storti, 1990).

In summary, the extent and duration of an international student's culture shock can be ascribed to differences between the sojourner's culture and the host culture. In addition, individual differences such as the nature of the sojourn, age, sex, previous experiences with the host culture, and language ability can significantly influence the ease of adjustment for international students. Finally, the international students' expectations regarding academic progress, relationships with other students, and other aspects of the sojourn can play a prominent role in the quality of students' experiences.
Hypotheses Regarding the Psychological Intensity for Sojourners

The degree of psychological intensity increases . . .

when there is a great degree of cultural difference between the sojourner's own and the host culture.

the more negatively the sojourner evaluates the cultural differences.

the more ethnocentric the sojourner.

the more ethnocentric behavior the host culture exhibits.

the more racist, sexist, and in other ways prejudiced the host culture.

the less language ability the sojourner possesses.

the more essential language ability is to functioning in the host culture.

the more the sojourner is immersed in the host culture.

when sojourners are culturally isolated from their own culture group.

the less amount of prior, in-depth intercultural experience on behalf of the sojourner.

the more unrealistic the sojourner's expectations of the host culture.

the more physically different the sojourner is from members of the host culture.

the more the sojourner feels invisible to members of the host culture because they do not or cannot accept important aspects of the sojourner's identity.

the more the sojourner feels they are not receiving the respect they deserve or, conversely, the sojourner feels they are receiving undeserved recognition.

the less power and control the sojourner possesses in the intercultural situation. (Paige, 1993, pp. 5-12)
International Students and Issues of Discrimination

At a time when the nurturing of identity is so critical for the international student, they instead find themselves as a minority in the midst of a dominant culture where there is prejudice, discrimination and exploitation (Pusch, 1979, p. 22).

The more racist, sexist, and in other ways prejudiced the host culture, the more psychologically intense the experience will be . . . exposure to outright prejudice and bigotry can have a debilitating effect on sojourners (Paige, 1993, p. 7).

Although it is not a dominant theme in the literature on cross-cultural adjustment, discrimination and its relationship to international students has been explored by several scholars of note (Hayes & Lin, 1994; Althen, 1995; Helkinhelmo & Shute, 1986; Pusch, 1979; Wehrly, 1988; Locke & Velasco, 1987; Paige, 1993; Vandrick, Hafernik, & Messerschmitt, 1994; Sergent, Woods & Sedlacek, 1992). The primary focuses of this section are to highlight the research on international students that: (a) discusses the influences of discrimination on the adjustment concerns of international students; and (b) provides insight into the prejudice and bias directed at specific communities of international students.

Influences of Discrimination on International Students

A number of studies have focused on the role that racism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination plays in shaping international student experiences in the United States (Hayes & Lin, 1994; Pusch, 1979, 1981; Sidel, 1994; Paige, 1983, 1993). Hayes and Lin (1994) write that the prejudices and biases that U.S. faculty, staff, and domestic students "might hold for the various international students that they encounter can serve as powerful barriers to the continued efforts by international students to attain a quality life experience in the United States" (p. 9). Pusch (1981) echoes these concerns about the ongoing discrimination experienced by international students throughout their sojourn. Acts and attitudes of prejudice and bias, along with "the inability to comprehend them, produce a pervasive sense of insecurity" for international students" (p. 1).
Concerns regarding international student discrimination are especially relevant as one considers that incidents of bias against all college students - including sojourners from other countries - have continued to "occur with alarming regularity on college campuses" (Sidel, 1994, p. 5). Issues related to racism, oppression, and discrimination have, as of late, received enormous attention in the literature regarding U.S. higher education (Sigglekow, 1991; Sidel, 1994; Manning, 1992; Kuh & Andreas, 1991; Takaki, 1989; Boyer, 1990; Wilson, 1996; Bowser, Auletta, & Jones, 1993; Tierney, 1991). A consistent theme within this research is that both individual and institutional discrimination directed towards underrepresented students is endemic at colleges and universities nationwide. Tierney (1991) writes that perhaps the "greatest crisis facing the higher education community has been the seeming inability to welcome or educate racial and ethnic minorities" (p. 23). International students, especially those individuals whose racial and cultural heritage differs significantly from the dominant European American culture, are particularly vulnerable to these issues.

The differences between the international student's culture and mainstream American culture directly influences the degree of intensity of the sojourner's encounters with prejudice, bias, and discrimination (Schram & Lauver, 1988; Paige, 1993; Wehrly, 1988; Sidel, 1994; Althen, 1995). Wehrly (1988) writes that debilitating attitudes on behalf of domestic students towards "outsiders" contributes greatly to the "discrimination of isolation" felt by many international students (p. 5). The author elaborates that international students who look and behave differently from the majority are not especially welcome on U.S. campuses. Considering the general hostility and isolation experienced by international students, it is no surprise that they are constantly "facing the stress of interacting with other cultures and many believe that they do not belong to any culture during their sojourn in the United States" (Wehrly, 1988, p. 5). Storti (1990) also comments on the isolation experienced by many international students. The sojourners' encounters with domestic students, all
too frequently marked by stress and uncomfortableness, can "seriously undermine any possibility of meaningful adjustment" (p. 28).

Concerns regarding international student discrimination are not limited solely to their interactions with other students. The cross-cultural dynamics faced by international students as they develop relationships with other faculty and staff can have an enormous influence on the quality of a student's experience. Hayes and Lin (1994) assert that relationships with teachers and administrators on US campuses "frequently generates stress, depression, frustration, fear and pessimism" for international students (p. 7). Althen (1984) describes the lack of trust inherent in the interactions of many international students with college faculty and staff. These difficulties are often grounded in that the students "believe, sometimes rightly so, that they are subject to discriminatory treatment by institutional staff members" (p. 2).

Helkinhelmo and Shute (1986) utilized qualitative methods to assess international student perceptions of their most difficult adjustment problems. Although their research focused on Canadian universities, this study is one of the few in the literature that attempted to measure the influence of racial discrimination on the quality of an international student's experience. It is also exceedingly rare in that the findings present what international students have to say about issues of discrimination. For example, Helkinhelmo and Shute (1986) found that

- Feelings of being discriminated against produce in some students insecurity and a sense of being unwelcome.

- Many Asian and African students seem to believe that racism and discrimination are universal and cannot be escaped anywhere.

- Interaction with White students may suffer because international students may fear being discriminated against.

- Discrimination produces another barrier to satisfying social interactions with the host community. (p. 403).
Despite these findings, it is most interesting to note that the "racial incidents in this study were neither violent nor particularly serious" (Helkinehelmo & Shute, 1986, p. 405). The researchers fail to explain how the students' perceptions of these incidents of racial discrimination were not "particularly serious".

Vandrick, Hafernick and Messerschmitt (1994) note that international students, especially those enrolled in intensive language programs, are "to a degree viewed as outsiders and are therefore marginalized in many ways, both consciously and unconsciously, and obviously and subtly." (p. 38). The authors specifically explored international student access to campus services in a nationwide sampling of colleges and universities. Based upon their findings, Vandrick, Hafernick and Messerschmitt (1994) assert that international students enrolled in intensive English programs are not "viewed by institutions as legitimate students entitled to the same full services and treatments as other students" (p. 37). The informal rationale for this discriminatory treatment is that international students,

often do not speak English well, they are from somewhere else, and they are different. They are often ignored or even resented by native speaking students. They are sometimes accused of holding classes back . . . [and] they are sometimes accused of bringing up the curve unfairly (Vandrick, Hafernik, & Messerschmidt, 1994, p. 48).

The authors conclude their study by stressing that colleges and universities must be "activists against racism and xenophobia" and take proactive, responsive steps to "reduce prejudice against international students" (Vandrick, Hafernik, & Messerschmitt, 1994, p. 50).

**Discrimination Directed at International Student Communities**

Althen (1995) provides a rare historical overview of discrimination directed at international students studying in the United States. Perhaps the most vivid example of this discrimination is the intense prejudice and bias directed at Iranian international students in the 1970s and in the early part of the 1980s. Althen (1995) writes that an influx of Iranian international students in the mid-1970s was "not especially popular in
many campuses or in many communities. They were seen as aggressive, hypocritically obsequious, and untrustworthy (Althen, 1995, p. 26). When the Khomeni regime then took over in Iran, these feeling "evoked strong anti-Iranian sentiment" and Iranian international students were faced with brutal "public hostility". As the revolution progressed in Iran, some Iranian international students participated in political demonstrations, further evoking the ire of numerous Americans. The students also encountered a U.S. government that was "generally not sympathetic" to their concerns about going back to a home country that might not be receptive to their return. U.S. government attempts to cut off all money transfers from Iran to the United States and the Immigration and Naturalization Service's interviewing of all Iranian international students also proved to be daunting challenges (Althen, 1995, p. 27).

The anti-Iranian sentiments so vivid during the "Iranian crisis" are reflective of the perpetual stereotyping and prejudice directed at international students of Arab descent. In their assessment of domestic students' attitudes towards Arabs (those who speak Arabic and are born and raised in the Arab culture), Sergent, Woods and Sedlacek (1992) write that Arabian international students are "suffering considerable prejudice and stereotyping" on U.S. college campuses (p. 123). "Barbaric and cruel," "treacherous and cunning", and "warlike and bloodthirsty" were found to be common perceptions of Arabs held by domestic college students. Furthermore, the authors found that events during the Persian Gulf War only served to intensify feelings and actions of discrimination against international students of Arab descent (Sergent, Woods, & Sedlacek, 1992, p. 124).

According to Althen (1995), the sharp rise in the mid-1980s enrollment of students from China is another major episode of intense prejudice against a community of international sojourners (p. 28). Differences in communication styles and behavior patterns caused Chinese international students to be viewed, in many quarters, "as nuisances, as devious and self-promoting" (Althen, 1995, p. 29). Even
some international student advisors were "galled" by the behavior of the Chinese students, especially when advising the students on their complex immigration status. These prejudices became even more pronounced after the Tiananmen Square incident caused many justifiably anxious Chinese students to become "remarkably persistent" in resolving their needs and concerns (Althen, 1995, p. 28).

Several other studies have touched on the influences of prejudice, bias, and discrimination related to international student communities (Hayes & Lin, 1994; Adelegan & Parks, 1985; Wehrly, 1988). However, although discrimination is mentioned in some studies, the body of literature on international students remains sorely lacking in substantive research on the nature and influences of discrimination for specific groups of international students.
American Ways

Given the increased numbers, enhanced diversity, and many contributions of international students on U.S. campuses, faculty, staff, and students alike have a "special responsibility" to foster an environment that nurtures and supports the needs of student sojourners (Reiff, 1986, p. 1). The ideal campus climate should offer ample institutional support and a "fertile ground" for the growth and development of international students. However, the efforts to provide nurturing environments for international students has fallen far "short of this ideal, pursuing a residue of complaints and discontents on many sojourners" (Gareis, 1992, p. 101). These issues are in many ways reflective of higher education's level of interest - or disinterest - in all things outside of mainstream American culture.

Bowser, Auletta, and Jones (1993) propose that the interests of higher education should ideally be directed towards "the pursuit of knowledge and the improvement of the larger society across all ethnic and historic identities" (p. 82). However, although most campuses claim this "noble goal", the traditional exclusion of non-mainstream students has assured that the needs and experiences of international students are of "peripheral importance" to higher education institutions (Bowser, Auletta, & Jones, 1993, p. 82). Higher education's struggles in acknowledging and responding to the needs of international students has received considerable attention in the literature. A consistent theme within these studies is that the environments on U.S. campuses are generally neither sensitive nor responsive to the needs, ambitions, and difficulties of international students. (Story, 1982; Reiff, 1986; Tonkin, 1988, Wehrly, 1988; Parr, Bradley & Bingi, 1992; Sidel, 1994; Althen, 1988, 1995; O'Connell, 1994). This section of the literature review will seek to more closely examine the receptivity of U.S. campuses to international students, as well as explore the social dynamics in the United States that might influence the experiences of sojourners to its colleges and universities.
Receptivity of U.S. Campuses to International Students

A host of scholars have voiced concerns about the hostile views and the exclusionary treatment of international students by campus faculty, staff, and domestic students (Althen, 1988, 1995; O'Connell, 1994; Vandrick, Hafernik, & Messerschmitt, 1994; and Hendricks & Skinner, 1977, Schram & Lauver, 1988). In an examination of the social relationships of international students, Hendricks and Skinner (1977) found that campus personnel and domestic students view international students as markedly different, "a 'they' and not a 'we'". (p. 124). More specifically, Althen (1995) proposes that the "they" versus "we" viewpoints are based on feelings that sojourners are "somehow less human, intelligent, and sensible than people in the United States, less able to solve life's problems, and less emotionally complex" (p. 44). Simply because they are "foreign", sojourners to U.S. campuses may not be perceived as "legitimate students entitled to the same full services and treatment as other students" (Vandrick, Hafernik, & Messerschmitt, 1994, p. 37).

In a comprehensive overview of the role of international student services on college campuses, Althen (1995) decries the general treatment of international students. The author writes that institutional efforts to address international student needs are plagued "by incoherence, inconclusiveness, and a measure of prejudice" (p. 6). Drawing on twenty-five years of international student advising experience, Althen (1995) also asserts that the mistreatment of international students is prevalent "among institutional colleagues, within the student body, and in our communities" (p. 44).

Vandrick, Hafernik, and Messerschmitt (1994) examined the status and recognition of international students as a component of a study on the treatment of English as a Second Language faculty and students. Their work reinforces Althen's (1988, 1995) and other scholars' contentions (Wehrly, 1988; Schram & Lauver, 1988)
that international students receive questionable treatment by U.S. faculty, staff, and other students,

- do international students have the same priority for housing in the dormitories,
- do they receive as much help at the bursar's office or health clinic if they have problems, and do domestic students accept them as peers? Anecdotal information suggests that international students are not completely accepted on campuses. (p. 49)

Hendricks and Skinner (1977) write that this paucity of recognition has much to do with unrealistic expectations of international students on behalf of campus personnel and other students. International students are often "expected to understand things to the same degree U.S. students do, are expected to participate adequately in all things that American students do, and are granted little recognition for their difficulties" (Hendricks & Skinner, 1977, p. 125).

Althen (1988, 1995) details specific examples of the lack of acceptance and mistreatment of international students. The tendency for campus offices to "keep foreign students standing in line or subject them to complex, unexplained procedures that would never be inflicted on domestic students" is an all too common malady at U.S. colleges and universities (Althen, 1995, p. 44). International student advisors, the campus staff most responsible for working with international students, are not immune to these concerns. Althen (1995) elaborates that "the subtle feeling that foreigners are inferior persists even among foreign student advisors . . . if you don't believe it, ask some foreign students" (p. 44).

Student affairs officers play an especially important role in addressing the needs of international students on college campuses. Staff in housing, admissions, advising, financial aid, and other student affairs provide critical programs and services that either directly, or indirectly, influence the sojourner's adjustment to campus life. Although the student affairs field has emphasized the importance of international education, Story (1982) professes that the student development theories that guide the field still "do not address a major issue, are the values inherent in a development
philosophy of college students an students antithetical to the values" of international students? (Story, 1982, p. 66). In her comprehensive analysis of the relationship between student affairs and international student outreach, Story (1982) concludes that "the values and beliefs of American culture are pervasive in theories of college student development" (p. 67). To ensure that international students are welcome on U.S. campuses, and that their needs are truly being addressed, the author implores student affairs practitioners to more closely examine "the impact of the theories on the foreign students with whom they work" (Story, 1982, p. 69).

The viewpoints and attitudes of domestic students towards international students has been identified as a particularly acute concern for international students (Gareis, 1992; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Hendricks & Skinner, 1977; Wehrly, 1988; Hayes & Lin, 1994). Mallinckrodt and Leong (1992) surveyed international students on the degree of social support received from domestic students, and found that "the relationships of most Americans with international students rarely go beyond the most superficial contacts, and many international students soon give up hope of establishing deep cross-cultural friendships (p. 71). Domestic students' poor attitudes towards international students were also noted by Hendricks and Skinner (1977). The authors proposed that most domestic students view international students "as interesting, curious, insular, distant, quiet, abrasive, and so forth". (Hendricks & Skinner, 1977, p. 124). In the reverse, from an international student's perspective, domestic students "often appear ethnocentric, generally ignorant of other cultures, and disinterested in overcoming their lack of awareness" (Gareis, 1992, p. 103).

Althen (1988) also points to numerous, troubling concerns regarding domestic students' attitudes toward international students. At the foundation of these attitudes is that domestic students often condescend to international students and, in general treat "them a bit (or very much like) children who have limited experience and perhaps limited intelligence" (Althen. 1998, p. xviii). These negative perceptions are, in many
respects, the source of domestic students' general unwillingness to "make themselves available nor make an effort great enough to create a bridge for international friendship" (Hayes & Lin, 1994, p. 12).

**A Superior Culture?**

What we are witnessing today in our everyday life is not an eagerness on the part of neighbors and strangers to develop a world perspective but a return to narrow nationalism, isolationism, and xenophobia. (hooks, 1994, p. 28).

What serves as the primary source for the mistreatment of international students and their perceived "inferiority? Undoubtedly, a myriad of institutional and individual factors contribute to the perceptions and treatment of international students on U.S. campuses. However, Althen (1988) does propose that a significant source of the prejudice and bias directed at international students can be traced to "Americans generally [believing] that 'heirs is a superior country, probably the 'greatest' country in the world . . . if Americans consider their country to be superior, then it cannot be surprising that they often consider other countries to be inferior" (p. xvi). The belief that the negative attitudes towards international students are reflective of mainstream American culture's inhospitable views towards all things "foreign" or "different" is a thesis shared by a number of scholars (Tonkin, 1988; Wehrly, 1988; Althen, 1988, 1995; Story, 1982; Locke & Velasco, 1987; O'Connell, 1994; Schram & Lauver, 1988; Kohls, 1984; Gareis, 1992). Tonkin (1988) asserts that - despite dramatic increases in global trade, education, and communication - as the United States has become more and more engaged with the world, "its ability to deal with that world is actually declining" (p. 5). This inability to keep up with the world's thriving internationalism is, according to O'Connell (1994), a direct by-product of a U.S. population that is "insular, ignorant of world geography, untrained in foreign languages, and insensitive to cultural differences" (p. 21).

Pertaining to higher education, the isolationist views of mainstream U.S. culture can have a direct influence on the quality and nature of international student
experiences. For example, Tonkin (1988) writes that most international students interact with mainstream domestic students that have been taught "little about political geography - a subject barely taught anymore - and less about physical geography. They know relatively little about the global environment or about current affairs. Their knowledge of foreign languages is deplorable" (p. 5). This lack of knowledge of people and issues beyond United States borders has led many domestic students to become even more ethnocentric, a trend that has become "one of the most powerful of all obstacles" for international students to overcome on their U.S. sojourns (Locke & Velasco, 1987, p. 117).

Summary

The Review of Literature concentrates on three areas that lend insight into the experiences of international students during their sojourns in the United States. The central themes of each of these research areas are outlined below.

A) Adjustment Problems and Concerns for International Students

International students often experience a vast array of problems associated with their adjustment and adaptation to studying and living in the United States. This section strived to identify the host of studies that have examined international student needs and experiences on U.S. campuses. Concepts of "culture shock" and relevant cross-cultural adjustment concepts received particular attention. The factors influencing the intensity of an international students' experience proved to be another important component of this section. In summary, the research presented in this section helps one gain a greater appreciation for the totality of a sojourner's experience in the United States - a key first step in this study's exploration of discrimination issues for international students.

B) International Student Encounters with Discrimination and Bias

Although not a dominant theme in the research related to international students, this section of the Review of Literature examined discrimination and its pertinence to
international students' experiences in the United States. In summary, several scholars of note assert that, for many international students, issues of discrimination and bias can have a debilitating influence on the quality of their sojourn in the United States. An overview of the discrimination concerns most prevalent for some international students was offered, as well as an introduction to the critical issues that contribute to international student discrimination on college campuses. Presenting historical perspectives on international student discrimination in the United States was an additional focus of the section. The information provided highlights the need to bring forth the voices of international students regarding their encounters with prejudice, bias, and discrimination while on U.S. campuses.

C. American Ways: Are International Students Welcome?

A theme explored by many international student scholars is that collegiate environments are not totally receptive to international student sojourners. Given the increased numbers and the vast contributions of international students, one might hope that U.S. campuses would prove "receptive and favorable toward [international students] and offer plenty of institutional support, providing a fertile ground for intercultural interaction and friendship formation" (Gareis, 1992, p. 101). However, this section of the Review of Literature presented research indicating that U.S. colleges and universities are far less welcoming to international students. According to several scholars of note, the perception held by many U.S. students, faculty, and staff that the United States possesses a "superior culture" to those of international students plays a central role in shaping these inhospitable environments. The lukewarm receptivity of many U.S. students and faculty to international students was another important theme presented in this section.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

A review of the general principles and practices of Participatory Research will be provided in this section, as well as an overview of the feminist approach to the methodology that is the foundation of the study. In addition, a description of the primary differences between Participatory Research and the more traditional, quantitative methods long relied upon in higher education will be analyzed. This section will also detail the following components of the methodology: the Participatory Research dialogue process; the primary research questions and questions to guide the dialogue; the researcher's entry into the international student community; a profile of the researcher; and profiles of the study's participants.

The Research Design

In recent years, we have heard from journalists, political ideologues, elected officials, and college administrators and faculty members about conflict on college campuses, diversity, multiculturalism, political correctness, race relations, and gender issues, but amid the debates and diatribes what have been missing are the voices of the students. (Sidel, 1994, p. 10).

The traditional social science theories and quantitative methodologies that have long provided the foundation for higher education research have come under scrutiny by a growing number of educational researchers. Of particular concern has been the absence of student viewpoints and experiences in the research efforts related to college student needs and development. (Kuh & Andreas, 1991; Sidel, 1994; Manning, 1992; Tierney, 1991; Nieto, 1996). To address this concern, Tierney (1991) implores educational researchers to re-examine their virtual obsession with quantitative studies and adopt qualitative methodologies that encourage college students "to speak about 'their' perceptions and realities" (p. 5). Kuh and Andreas (1991) concur that initiating more qualitative studies could offer "penetrating insights in the complexities and subtleties of college and university life that are intuitively
Participatory Research, a qualitative methodology based on the principles of Critical Pedagogy, is a design that strives to honor and validate students' backgrounds, languages, and cultures as the basis for their education (Nieto, 1996, p. 322). This qualitative method is highly appropriate for research regarding the "missing voices" of international students and it served as the means for the study's data collection.

**Aims and Principles of Participatory Research**

To transform the world. To amplify the voices of those who are rendered voiceless by the dominant society. To inscribe with them their words and wisdom, creating written histories, and then to read the world with one another. To provide the stage where women and men, children, the elderly, and the disenfranchised minorities and communities become the protagonists in their own life stories. These are the intentions of Participatory Research (Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 7).

The writings of Kieffer (1981), Maguire (1987), Park (1989), Pitot (1996), and Ada and Beutel (1993) have offered valuable insight into the general aims and principles of Participatory Research. A central theme in this scholarship is the assertion that Participatory Research is not a methodology solely focused on the transmission of knowledge from the researcher to the study participants. Ada and Beutel (1993) assert that Participatory Research allows both the researcher and the study's participants to jointly "create a living document and historical text of their work together. At its best, this research is an inviting and open narrative of {a} community's history, struggle, values, wisdom, and action" (p. 9). The aims of Participatory Research can perhaps best be described as: "to develop critical consciousness, to improve the lives of those involved in the research process, and to transform fundamental social structures and relationships" (Maguire, 1987, p. 3).

Pitot (1996) describes Participatory Research as employing "the tools of dialogue, reaction, reflection, and action in an ongoing process of learning. In this way both the individual undertaking the research and those participants included in the study learn new information about themselves and their world" (p. 58). The dialogue
process inherent in Participatory Research plays, according to Park (1989), an especially vital function in Participatory Research,

To dialogue means to talk as equal partners in an exchange of not only information but also of sentiment and values. Dialogue is a means of discovering the sharedness of a problem, the connectedness of the lives, and the common ground for action. (p. 12)

Park (1989) also asserts that dialogue provides the foundation for the participant's involvement in the research process, as "it is not just so they can reveal private facts that are hidden from others but really so they may know themselves better as individuals and a community (p. 12).

An essential component of the Participatory Research process is the relationship between the researcher and her/his participants. In Participatory Research, this interactive relationship involves,

Researchers and participants com[ing] together in a mutual and rigorous exploration of their lives, deeply respecting each other's ability to truly know and believing that through the act of knowing we can transform our reality (Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 7).

As discussed later in this section, this close relationship is noticeably different from the "a-personal and a-temporal" researcher/subject relationships in conventional research (Kieffer, 1981, p. 8). Manning (1992) encourages higher education scholars to employ methodologies, like Participatory Research, that ensure both the researcher and those participating in the study "are ardently engaged in teaching and learning from one another" (p. 198). Participatory Research advocates just such an interactive relationship between the researcher and participants, and is ideally suited for an exploration of international student needs and experiences.

The empowerment of the study's participants remains a key, desired outcome of the Participatory Research process. Park (1989) writes that Participatory Research is ultimately concerned with "empowering people so that they can take effective action towards betterment of their life conditions" (p. 1). Put simply, Participatory Research empowers the research participants to "use the understanding gained from reflection
to make changes" (Nieto, 1996, p. 320). Kieffer (1981) writes that the empowerment of research participants is focused on the following dimensions:

1. development of a more positive sense of self,
2. construction of a more critical comprehension of the web of social and political relations which comprise one's experienced environment, and
3. cultivation of resources and strategies, or functional competence, for efficacious attainment of personal and collective socio-political goals (p. 7).

In this research study, the researcher engaged international students in a dialogue about their experiences, needs, and concerns. A particular focus of these dialogues was to empower the participants to reflect upon and address issues of discrimination for international students - both at the individual and community level.

**Participatory Research And Its Differences with Traditional Research**

The principal distinction between Participatory Research and traditional academic research is the commitment of the researcher to meet her participants in unconditional love as their co-facilitator, co-educator, co-organizer, and catalyst...engaging her community in a continual cycle and rhythm of research, education, action, reflection - research (Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 29).

A number of scholars have described the sharp differences between Participatory Research and the traditional academic methods that have long dominated higher education research (Nieto, 1996; Kuh & Andreas, 1991; Tierney, 1991; Park, 1989; Ada & Beutel, 1993; and Maguire, 1987). Park (1989) writes that Participatory Research differs markedly from quantitative methodologies in "the specificity of social change objectives it pursues, the utilization and modification of the research methods, the kind of knowledge it produces, and the way it relates knowledge to social action" (p. 1). Maguire (1987) asserts that the central focus of Participatory Research, especially when contrasted with quantitative methodologies, is "not merely to describe or uncover interpretations of social dynamics, but to do something about social contradictions and inequities" (p. 16). This focus differs markedly from the aims and outcomes of traditional research which, according to Kuh...
and Andreas (1991), have yielded little to researchers beyond the simple purposes of their study (p. 406).

Participatory Research also differs from traditional forms of inquiry in that its primary intention is to "go after knowledge that is not traditionally part of the already established and published store of knowledge" (Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 12). Rather than expand the knowledge base regarding higher education's increasingly diverse student population, previous research efforts have instead sought to develop a theoretical base that promotes a single, true reality for all college students. This emphasis on the universality, not individuality, of student needs and development has created significant gaps in the knowledge bases regarding college students (Tierney, 1991, p. 21). Therefore, Tierney (1991) proposes that "when the inquiry model we are using fails to respond to a different array of questions, then we need to shift models. We can look more broadly at the ways of knowing that we have available to us" (Tierney, 1991, p. 22). Critical Pedagogy and Participatory Research offer an alternative "way of knowing" that is grounded in "listening to students [so] we can learn how they experience school, how social and educational structures affect their learning, and what we can do to provide high-quality education for all students" (Nieto, 1996, p. 4).

The stark differences in the relationship between the researcher and the research participants is another noticeable contrast between Participatory Research and traditional academic studies. Ada and Beutel (1993) write that traditional research methods are "not designed for the 'subjects' to be able to learn from the experience. While the researcher may learn about the 'subjects', she does not learn with them" (p. 26). Participatory Research departs from these conventional studies "by virtue of its inclusion of its subjects as active partners throughout the research process. They are involved in preliminary research design, in interactive generation of data, and in
dialogic interpretation of the data as it is generated" (p. 3). Park (1989) provides further commentary on the critical role of the afore-mentioned "dialogic interpretation".

If there is any one methodological feature that distinguishes participatory research from other social research, it is dialogue, because it is through dialogue that people come together and participate in all crucial aspects of investigation and collective action. (p. 12)

The dialogues inherent in Participatory Research nurture a transformative process in which all involved "learn new information about themselves and their world" (Pitot, 1996, p. 60).

**Participatory Research Approach**

Maguire (1937) outlines a Participatory Research process that encompasses three primary activities: "investigation, education, and action" (p. 29). These three activities are carried out in the five stage research process detailed below, and this approach served as the framework for the study's methodology.

**Phase I:** Organization of the Project and Knowledge of the Working Area
- Review of the Literature
- Preliminary Discussions with Community Members
- Involvement in Community Activities

**Phase II:** Definition of Generating Problematics
- Description of the Entry into the Community

**Phase III:** Objectivization and Problemization
- Selection of Research Participants
- Profile of the Research Participants
- Research Questions
- Questions to Guide the Dialogues

**Phase IV:** Researching Social Reality and Analyzing Collected Information
- The Dialogue Process

**Phase V:** Definition of Action Projects

Obtaining the background information critical to the study's development is the central objective of the initial phase of Participatory Research. To develop and enhance the researcher's appreciation for the study's community, information from
both quantitative and qualitative studies should be accumulated and analyzed. Maguire (1987) writes that incorporating the quantitative studies can yield "socio-economic, demographic, geographical, and political" information that places the population "within a regional and national perspective" (p. 113). The qualitative research efforts offer the researcher with analyses on "discovers the world as it is described by the quantitative data [and also on] discovering the range of ways various segments of the population experience that world" (Maguire, 1987, pp. 113-114).

To obtain the necessary background information, the researcher's efforts focused on: (a) conducting a comprehensive review of the literature regarding international students needs and experiences; (b) developing contacts with faculty, staff, and students that can provide resources and information related to international students in higher education; and (c) becoming more actively involved in educational and cultural programs that shed greater insight into the international student community.

Phase II: Definition of Generating Problematics

The researcher's efforts to develop an intimate connection with the needs, concerns, and experiences of the community with which she/he will be working is at the core of this phase (Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 63). Maguire (1987) asserts that it is essential that the researcher obtain a "deeper and more critical understanding of reality as perceived and experienced by both participants and the researcher" (Maguire, 1987, p. 41). The researcher must utilize a diversity of strategies to learn more about the "reality" for the community and its individual members. Ada and Beutel (1993) describe these strategies as the inner and outer preparations that facilitate the researcher's entry into the community.

There are many ways of inner preparation. Through reading about the community, you can understand and identify who the leaders and activists are and then go about meeting them. Listening to the community's music, reading its literature, and appreciating the art of the community are important things that you can do to prepare... You being to immerse yourself into that community
through listening to its voices, walking the steps of the people, feeling its rhythms and strengths (Ada and Beutel, 1993, p. 63).

The outer preparations are centered on collecting and analyzing the external sources of information that are essential to better understand the community. The "people, leaders, and activists within whom you can begin your dialogue" are the primary resources for these outer preparations (Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 65).

**Entry Into the Community**

The researcher's entry into the international student community at San Francisco State University proved to be a challenging endeavor. The great diversity of needs, experiences, and backgrounds of the University's international students made developing a "solid connection" with the community particularly challenging. In addition, the fact that the researcher has never been an international student (especially one studying in the United States!) made it difficult to fully relate and appreciate the students' experiences.

However, there are two primary steps that the researcher took to address some of the afore-mentioned challenges and facilitate a careful, sensitive entry into the international student community. For one, the researcher utilized the many resources available at the San Francisco State campus to become better acquainted with the educational, cultural, and social reality for many of the school's international students. Perhaps the most important resource was the Office of International Programs (OIP), a department charged with addressing the adjustment concerns of international students as they enter the University. Issues related to housing, finances, and cross-cultural communication are just a few of the needs addressed through OIP services. The researcher has worked extensively with the OIP staff over the past few years, and have found them to be an excellent source of information and advice. A similar relationship has developed with the staff at the University's American Language Institute (ALI), and the researcher also consulted with this department's staff. Contacts with programs like
ALI and OIP at other universities (Stanford, the University of California-Berkeley, and the University of San Francisco) also assisted in the acquisition of additional background information.

The researcher also relied on interactions with international students living in the college residential program at San Francisco State to facilitate his entry into the community. In fact, the international students living (or formerly residing) in residential housing served as the primary source for research participants. Among the researcher's current responsibilities in working with international students are: planning orientation programs that introduce international students to campus living; facilitating educational workshops on international student concerns (i.e., roommate relationships and cross-cultural communication); and providing counseling and referral services to individual international students. These responsibilities have provided direct insight into the complex and often challenging transitional needs of international sojourners, and served as a catalyst for the researcher's entry into the community.

Phase III: Objectivization and Problemization

Identifying and selecting the participants in the research process is the primary focuses of the objectivization and problemization phase. Another important component of this phase is that the researcher will work with the participants to formulate "the questions and themes which will be investigated" (Maguire, 1987, p. 41). Following is an overview of the process for identifying and inviting the study's research participants. The study's research questions are also identified. Finally, the questions to guide the dialogues that will explore answers to these research inquiries are included in this section.

Selection of the Research Participants
Five international students accept invitations to participate in the research process. The selection of the participants was based on their current enrollment at San Francisco State University, or enrollment at the University within the past two years. Both graduate and undergraduate students were considered as research participants. It must be emphasized that the focus of the study is on sojourners to the U.S. higher education system. Therefore, only international students that are currently studying in the U.S. and are in the country on temporary immigration visas were considered for the study.

International students whose racial and cultural background differs markedly from mainstream U.S. culture were selected as research participants. To gain a diversity of perspectives on international student experiences, students from Asia and Africa were invited to partake in the process. A concerted effort was made to involve students from Latin American and the Middle East in the research but the small enrollment of students from each of these regions made it difficult to recruit participants. Two students from the Middle East were invited but decided not to partake in the research process. Canadian, European and Australian international students were not be selected as research participants, as the cultural similarities between these regions and mainstream European American culture in the United States may not be conducive to the exploration of racial discrimination and other forms of prejudice and bias.

Profiles of the Research Participants

This section outlines basic information regarding each of the five research participants: their nationality, family background, academic interests, and status as a student at San Francisco State University. More detailed information regarding the students' collegiate experiences - as shared in the participant dialogues - will be presented in Chapter IV.
Koichito or "Ko"

Ko came to the United States in the fall semester of 1996, enrolling in the speech communication department at San Francisco State University. His specific academic interests at the University have centered on inter-cultural communication. The researcher became acquainted with Ko through Ko's work as a member of the Office of International Programs staff - employment he obtained soon after his arrival in the United States.

Ko was born and raised in a small city outside of Tokyo. His family consists of his parents, both teachers in the Japanese public school system, and one sister - a Japanese literature student at a university near Ko's home. Ko's interest in inter-cultural communication was generated through his own collegiate experiences in Japan. He majored in international studies, with a special emphasis on American studies. More specifically, Ko's academic pursuits have focused on American politics and diplomacy and this interest is the primary reason he came to the United States to study.

Natividad or "Nattie"

Nattie was born and raised in the Philippines. The product of a "mostly middle class upbringing", her father works in an electrical power company and her mother is, according to Nattie, an "entrepreneur" (Natividad, 1998, p. 1). Nattie grew up in the central region of the Philippines, two hours from the capital of Manila, and attended a nearby university - majoring in counseling.

Nattie entered San Francisco State University in the fall semester of 1997. She is currently a resident of the University's new International Community, and the researcher became acquainted with Nattie through his work with this residential community. Nattie will only be in the United States for one year, as she is on a scholarship provided by a Rotary Club in her home country. She received the scholarship in support of her strong interest in
working with deaf students in elementary schools. Nattie is specifically in the United States to learn American Sign Language (ASL) and examine the varied support services offered to deaf students at San Francisco State University. She will leave San Francisco State in May of 1998 and return to the Philippines to complete her education.

Osamu

Osamu first entered the United States in an intensive English language program in Olympia, Washington. After several months at the school, he moved south to enroll in San Francisco State University and live on-campus in the residence halls - the impetus for his relationship with the research. Osamu's initial academic interests were in physical education and kinesiology - based on his previous "professional high school" experience in Japan. However, upon arriving in San Francisco, he quickly developed an affinity for hotel and restaurant management and enrolled in SFSU's Hospitality Management program. Osamu is in his third years at the University, and will graduate in December of 1998 with his bachelor's degree.

A native of Kobe, Osamu's family still lives in this northern Japanese city. His father owns a small construction business and his mother is a housewife. He has one sister - ten years younger - that is currently studying in high school.

Nma

Nma, a native of Nigeria, entered San Francisco State University in the fall semester of 1994. She lived in the University's residence halls, and became acquainted with the researcher through her participation in the school's Black Residents Association. Nma also worked closely with the researcher as a member of SFSU's Residential Life staff. After attending the University for three years, her academic interests changed and Nma transferred to the University of California at Davis (please note that the sole focus of the dialogues with Nma
pertained to her experiences at San Francisco State). She expects to graduate from the University of California - Davis with a bachelor's degree in May, 1998, and now aspires to stay in the United States once her education is complete. Nma is currently considering job possibilities with a number of financial service companies. Applying to graduate school to obtain a Master's degree is another option that Nma is weighing.

Regarding her family background, Nma has three sisters and she is the youngest child in the family. All of Nma's sisters now live in the United States - the close proximity of these family members have served as a great source of support for Nma during her sojourn in the United States. Nma's parent still live in Nigeria, and her father is a university professor and her mother a housewife.

Tjoman

Tjoman came to the United States in February of 1996 as a student in San Francisco State University's American Language Institute (A.L.I.) program. He lived in the residence halls his first semester at the school and then moved to an off-campus apartment. As with most of the participants, his status as a resident student is the source of his relationship with the researcher.

After approximately three months in A.L.I.'s intensive English language program, he applied - and was admitted to - the Master's in Business Administration program at the University. A former soap opera television actor in Indonesia, Tjoman also has a deep interest in movie and theatre production, and initially considered enrolling in the school's Cinema department. Concerns about career opportunities in cinema caused him to re-consider and pursue his education in areas of business and marketing.

Tjoman was born and raised in central Java. His three brothers and two sisters still live in Java, along with his parents, the owners of a retail business
store. Tjoman is also a practicing Buddhist and his sexual identity is gay - two important traits that will be explored later in the text.

Questions to Guide the Dialogues

The research questions and questions to guide the dialogues that are detailed below were developed by the researcher prior to initiating the dialogue process with the participants. Ada and Beutel (1993) emphasize that these inquiries "should be formulated with the community and participants, assuring that the research is controlled by those who are co-researching their reality [with the researcher]" (p. 70). The questions to guide the dialogues are based upon, and designed to explore, the research questions. It is important to note that, although the central themes of the dialogue questions were explored with each participant, all of the inquiries were not posed to each participant. The researcher did work closely with the participants to identify additional questions that might lead to a more fruitful and comprehensive dialogue regarding their issues and concerns.

1. What are international students' encounters with issues of discrimination and bias while attending US colleges? How have these experiences influenced the quality of their education and sojourn in the United States?
   a. Please describe your life prior to coming to the United States?
      1. Where are you from?
      2. Please describe your family life.
      3. What are some of your personal and academic interests?
      4. Describe your educational experiences in your home country.
   b. What values and beliefs are important to you?
   c. Describe some of the similarities and differences between your culture and "American" culture. How are the educational systems similar or different?
   d. What did you hope to accomplish by coming to live and study in the United States?
   e. What have been some of the high points of your experience in the United States?
   f. What were some of the primary issues and problems that you experienced
as an international student? What issues or problems did you find particularly troubling?

g. Are you satisfied with your experience in the United States (academic progress, relationships with U.S. students, etc.)?

h. Have you experienced any forms of discrimination or prejudice while in the United States? If so, please describe the experience(s). How did it make you feel? How did you respond to it? What do you think caused the incident(s)?

i. What were your impressions of the United States before you arrived here? How did you develop these impressions, what were your sources of information?

j. Do you think that discrimination is an issue facing international students? Why or why not?

2. How do international students define discrimination and bias, especially as it relates to their own experiences on U.S. campuses?

   a. What do you think is the definition of discrimination in the United States?

   b. As it pertains to your culture and language, how is discrimination defined?

   c. Do you think that discrimination is an issue in your home country? Why, or why not?

   d. Many people in the United States view discrimination as a major issue. What are your feelings?

3. What are the factors within the college and university setting that contribute to discrimination and bias against international students?

   a. How would you describe, in general, the campus' views towards international students?

   b. Do you feel that international students are always treated fairly by faculty, staff and other students? If not, please give some examples.

   c. What do you believe are American students' views of international students?

   d. What do you believe are the sources of some Americans' prejudices about international students?

   e. What have been your experiences with life outside of the college environment? How have your experiences been similar, or dissimilar to your life on campus?

   f. What do you believe are U.S. society's feelings about "foreigners"?

   g. How would you describe U.S. society to someone from your home country?
h. What are some of your impressions of intercultural relations in the United States?

4. What recommendations can be gleaned from this research that will help campus personnel, domestic students, and international students proactively respond to the issues raised in the study?
   a. How have faculty, staff, and other students supported you during your stay in the United States?
   b. What do you believe are the primary needs of international students?
   c. What information about your personal experiences would you like to share with others?
   d. On an individual level, what action would you like to see taken to address the needs and concerns of international students?
   e. Would you tell a student interested in studying in the United States that it's a "good" place to live and study? Why or why not?
   f. If you were asked to give advice to an international student from your own country that was preparing to go to the United States, what would you say?
   g. What kinds of campus programs or groups have you found particularly helpful as an international student?
   h. What types of programs or activities would have helped make your adjustment to campus life easier?
   i. What individuals (other students, faculty, staff) were influential in your experience?

Phase IV:
Researching Social Reality and Analyzing Collected Information

Designing the dialogue process is the central focus of the fourth phase of Participatory Research. Park (1989) comments that this dialogue process serves as "an essential reason for people's participation in research. It is not just so they can reveal private facts that are hidden from others but really so they may know themselves better as individuals and as a community" (p. 12). Of primary importance in this phase is designing a dialogue process that will facilitate open and interactive
communication between the researcher and the study's participant. Following is a review of the dialogue process proposed for this study.

The Dialogue Process

The researcher engaged in two dialogues with each participant. Steps were taken by the researcher to ensure that each dialogue was conducted with the utmost respect and sensitivity towards the individual needs of the international student participants. For example, decisions ranging from the appropriate questions for each dialogue to the selection of a fitting dialogue location were made in close conjunction with the research participants. Of special concern throughout the dialogue process was to maintain the appropriate level of confidentiality regarding the students' participation and to foster a sense of trust and cooperation between researcher and participant.

In the initial dialogues, emphasis was placed on exploring the individual backgrounds and experiences of each student. In addition, since the researcher was not closely acquainted with the participants, the general tone of the dialogue were on fostering an appropriate level of trust. Initial discussion of the afore-mentioned research questions also took place. The researcher audio taped and transcribed each dialogue. The research participants then, prior to their second dialogue, had an opportunity to read, review and edit a transcription of the first. Generative themes emerging from the dialogue were identified by both the researcher and participants, and these themes were more closely examined in the second stage of the process.

In addition to a closer examination of the first dialogue's themes, the second dialogue sought to address the questions that were not covered initially. The second dialogue also provided the research participants with an opportunity to reflect upon their involvement in the dialogue process. As with the initial dialogue, the second was audio recorded, transcribed, and shared with the participant for reviewing and editing. Researcher and participant once again met to discuss the themes raised in the second
dialogue and to consider recommendations for additional follow-up (see Phase V: Definition of Action Projects). After completion of the dialogue process, each participant will be provided with a copy of the transcriptions from both dialogues, along with a summary of the research's primary themes. A copy of the completed dissertation will also be forwarded to each of the research participants.

Phase V: Definition of Action Projects

Formulating the "actions to take to address the problems that they have collectively defined and investigated" is the primary charge for both the researcher and the participants in this final phase of Participatory Research (Maguire, 1987, p. 42). These actions "may take place on the part of the individual, their family or friends, individual educators in their lives, or at the larger level of the school as a whole" (Pitot, 1996, p. 73). Working in close collaboration, the researcher and participants collectively reflected upon, analyzed, and recommended "action projects" that address the needs and issues brought forth in the study.

Background of the Researcher

Born and raised in rural Illinois, the researcher is a European American male whose ascendants immigrated from Wales, Germany and England during the mid to late nineteenth century. An "international perspective" was hard to come by in the researcher's hometown of 1,500 people, nestled far in the northwest corner of Illinois. The town was (and remains) racially and culturally homogenous, and interactions with anyone not white or American were virtually non-existent. However, an interest and curiosity in global travel and history was instilled by his parents and schoolteachers throughout his childhood. At the age of eighteen, an eye-opening journey cross the Atlantic to Poland was the researcher's first international experience. Discussions with Polish youth about life in then communist Poland proved to be quite enlightening. In addition, a
visit to the Auschwitz concentration camp provided the researcher with his first, significant lesson in the horrors of oppression. This initial global journey helped ignite the researcher's desire to learn more about life outside of the confines of rural Illinois.

The researcher's first intensive contacts with international students came during his undergraduate experience at Illinois State University. Attending the University in the midst of the taking of U.S. hostages in Iran, the researcher observed first hand the overt discrimination and bias directed at international students of Middle Eastern descent. One discriminatory act was particularly horrific - an Iranian international student in the researcher's residence hall was bound, gagged and taken "hostage" by American students - in retaliation for the crisis in Tehran. As a peer counselor in the community, the researcher worked with other staff and students to develop appropriate responses to the incident. One year later, the researcher was hired to work, again in peer counseling, for the International House at Illinois State. The researcher's responsibilities allowed him to be actively involved in developing programs and services that addressed international student needs. In his many conversations with international students from Africa, Iran, and other regions, the researcher found that prejudice and bias from American faculty, staff, and students had a particularly debilitating effect on the quality of the students' education.

The researcher continued on to receive his Masters Degree in Education at Colorado State University, and in 1984 commenced his professional career in student services at the University of Puget Sound. Three years later, the researcher moved to San Francisco State University and assumed the position of Coordinator of Student Development. The researcher's experiences at San Francisco State have offered a unique opportunity to become better acquainted with the needs and concerns of international students as they adjust to studying in the United States. Although he does not serve as a director advisor to international students, the researcher is still
actively involved in designing orientation programs and other services to address their adjustment needs. It should be noted that much of this work is focused on quality of life issues in campus housing - issues that can be particularly difficult and stressful for international students. Active involvement in the development of an International House - a living and learning center for both international students and U.S. students - is a central focus of the researcher's current work at San Francisco State. The researcher's interactions with international students have had a profound influence on the author, and have helped plant the foundation for further research regarding their experiences.

Global travel has also kindled the researcher's interest in this study and provided the researcher with insight into the cross-cultural adjustment problems encountered by sojourners to distant lands. Although the researcher has not ventured overseas for a formal education, journeys through the Indian sub-continent, Indonesia, Peru, Ecuador, and Guatemala have broadened the researcher's appreciation for the challenges of the sojourner's "culture shock". In his work at San Francisco State University, the researcher has also found that these travels serve as a source of conversation and connection with international students.

Research Setting

San Francisco State University, setting for this participatory research project, boasts an enrollment of over 26,000 students. The majority of San Francisco State students are from the San Francisco Bay Area. However, every state in the United States is represented in the increasingly ethnically diverse student population, with almost 60 percent of the undergraduate population representing racial and ethnic minority groups. According to the 1997/98 edition of the San Francisco State University Bulletin, key to the University's identity is to "help people of exceptionally diverse backgrounds come into their own". San Francisco State's mission statement
specifically states that the University strives to "provide broadly accessible higher education for residents of the region and state, as well as the nation and world" (p. 15).

Helping to obtain a "broadly accessible" education for the relatively large number of international students on campus is a key component of the University's mission. Regarding the international student presence on campus, sojourners from over 90 countries attend the University. Although figures from all countries were not available to the researcher, the primary countries of origin for international students are detailed in Table IV.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of International Programs at San Francisco State University
CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH FINDINGS: THE PRIMARY THEMES

Introduction

The Review of Literature provides a general overview of the diverse needs and varied experiences of international students at U.S. colleges and universities. More specifically, the previous chapter explores the cross-cultural adjustment issues facing international students, the receptivity of collegiate environments to the many sojourners on U.S. campuses, and the potential influences of discrimination and bias in shaping international student experiences. In analyzing the dialogues conducted between the researcher and the study's participants, a host of points surfaced that support the generative themes discussed in the Review of Literature. In addition, the dialogues provided information that, in some respects, appeared to run contrary to several of the more prominent focuses of the research. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the primary themes and core findings of the study revealed through the Participatory Research methodology. The description of these themes will prominently feature the voices and experiences of the study's international student participants.

In general, the primary themes and significant findings to be discussed in this chapter are classified as follows: (a) the hopes and challenges of cross-cultural adjustment for international sojourners to U.S. campuses; (b) the varied encounters of international students with incidents of discrimination, bias and prejudice from the host culture; (c) the factors that positively shape the experiences of international students at San Francisco State University; and (d) the international students' recommendations to address some of the needs and concerns brought forth in the dialogues with the researcher. The core themes uncovered in the research design
and presented in this chapter also provide greater insight into responses to the study's research questions (please refer to p. 10 of the study).

Hopes and Challenges of Cross-Cultural Adjustment

A prevalent theme in the research related to international students is that sojourners often face a myriad of challenges and difficulties during their sojourn in the United States (Althen, 1995; Herlick, 1993; Kohls, 1984; Paige, 1983, 1995; Hayes & Lin, 1994). "English language proficiency, insufficient financial resources, social integration, problems in daily life tasks, homesickness, and role conflicts" are just a few of the general areas of concern for most international students (Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992, p. 71). As discussed earlier in the study, gaining an appreciation of the totality of an international student's experiences in the United States is an integral first step in this study's exploration of discrimination issues. Following is a review of the central needs and concerns in adjusting to campus life at San Francisco State University - as told through the stories of each international student participant. In addition, the rationale - or "hopes" - for each students' sojourn to the United States is provided in this section. Please note that additional information regarding the background of each participant is provided in the "Profile of the Research Participants" section of the study's Research Design (see Chapter II).

Nattie's Story

Nattie's primary hope in coming to the United States was to "try to learn some things to help the disabled in our country" and, on a secondary level, partake in academic and co-curricular experiences that helped enhance her understanding of U.S. society. Her lack of interest in obtaining a bachelor's degree and focus on learning about deaf services in the United States is markedly different than the specific academic pursuits of the other international student participants. Nattie asserts that "I'm the type of person that likes cultures, like languages" and her enrollment in
classes such as the "City of San Francisco" and the "History of California" reflect the
true essence of her sojourn to the United States.

Nattie's adjustment to life on a U.S. campus has been both difficult and
rewarding. A previous, six month journey helped prepare her for many of the
transitional needs initially encountered in her venture across the Pacific. Her intensive
studies of the English language throughout her schooling were, in some respects, of
great benefit. However, as with most international students, insecurities regarding
speaking the language still surfaced as immediate sources of stress. She describes
her initial struggles with English as a multitude of "what ifs",

What if they don't understand my English, what if I don't say it right, what if I say
it out of context...there's a lot of what ifs! We learned a lot of America through
movies and television. I know that Americans are open about sex and
relationships...I know English...I know this and that...but it's a lot different
than experiencing it! My [American] friends have a lot of plans, and I don't know
what they're talking about. They will sometimes have conversations and I don't
know what they're talking about. I'm completely lost in the conversation.

Struggles with the "what ifs" of conversing in English were among the most
difficult issues of adjustment for Nattie. Another area of adjustment that proved
particularly challenging pertained to gender roles and relationships on campus.
Nattie stresses that her relatively conservative upbringing in her home country did not
prepare her for some of the attitudes in the United States,

In the Philippines I was brought up very conservative. My elementary and high
school were private Catholic schools - they're not very open about
relationships, it's a private thing. You don't talk about it with your friends, if you
talk about it you make fun of it...but here [there's no] reservations about talking
about it. I kinda like it, but sometimes it bugs the hell out of me. It's a culture
thing and I wasn't exposed to that kind of stuff and when you get here it's like
"oh my god...I can't take this!

Nattie is quick to assert that she now views the differences in gender relationships as
"just natural, normal, you have to deal with it". However, she is concerned about the
difficulties she will most assuredly encounter when her new perspectives on sexuality
collide with the values of her family and culture in the Philippines.
Living as one of the first members of the International Community on San Francisco State's campus (a living and learning center that houses one international student and one student from the U.S. in each room) posed some additional adjustment issues. For example, Nattie is deeply interested in becoming involved in student leadership at the University. However, her first attempts to become involved in planning activities with the International Community's student government proved quite frustrating. She describes her first meeting with some of the group's U.S. membership,

They had this constitution and they argued about it, these three Americans. They were arguing about having a two-thirds majority, or something like that, and I'm like "what the hell are you talking about?"

The American students "really speak their mind", a trait that she often finds troubling. Nattie also perceives that many international students in the International Community, including herself, encounter serious difficulties in their relationships with American students. Roommate issues and other conflicts frequently arise in the community, and have contributed significantly to Nattie's stress in coming to the United States.

Tjoman's Story

Tjoman's rationale for coming to San Francisco State University rests more in his need to affirm and support himself as a gay man than in the pursuit of an academic degree. He stresses that his core reason for coming to the University is to leave the discrimination he has long faced in his home country,

[I came here] because I knew San Francisco is a "gay city". To be honest, I came here because San Francisco is the best place for me to live because I'm gay and it's more acceptable than my country. It's the reason that I just want to run away from my country because it's not acceptable to be gay in Indonesia.

In exploring the cross-cultural adjustment issues facing Tjoman, concerns related to sexual identity are central to his experience and will be discussed more thoroughly in the following section of this chapter.
Finances have proven to be a critical concern for Tjoman. He does not receive any form of financial support from the University or his family, and must continuously work to raise the necessary funds to remain in the United States. In addition to being a full-time student, Tjoman currently works over 12 hours per day, six days a week, at a variety of local jobs. The demands of this schedule place enormous physical and emotional challenges on Tjoman - challenges he has so far met with incredible resiliency.

Another cross-cultural adjustment issue facing Tjoman actually pertains to his potential return to Indonesia. He is deeply committed to remaining in the United States after completion of his degree, and abhors the thought of returning to a country where his homosexuality would have to once again be strictly hidden and suppressed. Fears regarding his possible return are embodied in the following passage,

It's really difficult and very stressful. You can get a working permit, but it is very difficult. . . . I'm so scared, I don't want to go back there, I don't want to ruin my life.

Key to Tjoman's current adjustment process is identifying ways that he can acquire the necessary work permits or obtain the U.S. citizenship necessary to live in the United States. A few days prior to our dialogue, the stress related to this quest was greatly relieved as a woman from the United States agreed to an "arranged" marriage so he could become a U.S. citizen. Although the details of the agreement are still to be worked out, it is readily apparent that the new development has done much to alleviate Tjoman's difficulties as a sojourner.

Osamu's Story

Osamu first came to the United States at the behest of his father, who implored him to obtain an academic degree at a U.S. university - an accomplishment viewed quite positively in Japan. It was an idea that Osamu was not at all resistant to and, after a short stay at an intensive English program in Olympia, Washington, he enrolled at San Francisco State University. Osamu's rationale for coming to the United States
is ultimately reflective of his desire to experience the world - and understand American movies!

[I wanted] to learn more about the world and also be able to speak English . . . I wanted to understand the American movie. What are those subtitles, what are they talking about? I wanted to understand that!

Osamu’s initial adjustment to the University proved exceedingly difficult and his struggles with English language fluency, negative perspectives regarding the attentiveness of people in the United States, and difficulties with academics were at the fore-front of his concerns. Once Osamu arrived at San Francisco State, he quickly ascertained that most Americans are inattentive and not willing to “take time to listen if you don’t speak [English] clearly”. Osamu’s perceptions of Americans contrasted sharply with his pre-conceived notions, "I thought the U.S.A. was so friendly and nice, a warm country. But once I came to the city, people were not as warm”. The perceived inattentiveness of Americans and his struggles with the language had, according to Osamu, an overwhelming effect on his personality,

It was hard for me when I first came here. I was so closed, I didn't want to talk a lot. I wasn't ever that kind of person [in Japan]. My personality just changed, became dark, closed . . . I could really feel the pressure.

Academics also served as a source of stress for Osamu, an issue again compounded by his worries about language. He explains that, “classes were hard because the teachers used language in such a difficult way . . . but I felt that if I ask any questions, the classes will never go on because I have so many questions”. As discussed later in the study, Osamu’s struggles in cross-cultural adjustment are eased greatly by attentive faculty members and the support of other students at the University.

Ko’s Story

As mentioned earlier in the text, Ko's deep interest in inter-cultural communication served as his primary reason for coming to study in the United States. Ko chose the multicultural environment of San Francisco State University because,
"It's the perfect place to study inter-cultural communication. Because being here and living here is part of my study". Ko's fondness for the institution's diversity is reflected in the following passage, as he revels in the irony of a U.S. visitor to the campus asking him, an international student from Japan, directions to a location on campus,

The first day I got here in San Francisco, a person came up to me and asked "Do you know where the humanities building is?" She didn't even think I was an international student here! It [San Francisco State] is so diverse!

Ko is very interested in parlaying his academic work in inter-cultural communication - along with his staff position at SFSU's Office of International Programs - into a position as an international student advisor at a Japanese university.

The primary adjustment issues facing Ko have centered on language difficulties and in developing authentic relationships with non-Asian American U.S. students. With reference to the latter issue, Ko is especially concerned about the approach of U.S. students to academic matters, finding it far less collegial than his previous experiences.

Here, it's so much more :individualistic. People are so scared. One thing that made me so mad is that I couldn't borrow [class]notes from somebody. That makes me so mad, they got so scared that I'm going to take away their grade. It's so selfish. I now understand about America, you have to be on your own ... Ko's interactions with U.S. students, in both academic and co-curricular arenas, have led him to conclude that many U.S. students are, in his opinion, "immature". This perceived immaturity has been a source of acute difficulty for Ko as he has adjusted to life at San Francisco State's campus and attempted to meet one of his goals of learning the English language.

Sometimes I talk with American students that haven't spoken with international students ... and [sometimes] they can be very rude ... once that happened I was even more scared to speak.

Ko goes on to share that, with experience, he now is beginning to tolerate the students' impatience, but the perceived rudeness is behavior that he still finds difficult to accept.
Nma's Story

Nma selected San Francisco State University as her place of study virtually by default. She experienced immeasurable difficulties in obtaining a visa to study in the United States, and chose San Francisco State simply because it "was the first place to give me a VISA". According to Nma, she had two primary reasons for pursuing an education in the United States. For one, she shares that,

I wanted to come and get a degree from higher education here, because I figured a degree from this country is well respected pretty much anywhere you go. That is what I was hoping. I figured if I could get a degree from here, I could go anywhere with that. Possibly get a bachelor's, go to graduate school, maybe get a job here and get some experience.

Nma's other reason for coming to study in the United States can be discovered in her need to escape the tense political environments on campuses in Nigeria. In the dialogue with the researcher, she described at length the issues of violence plaguing many of Nigerian colleges - abhorrent difficulties that necessitated her move to another educational environment.

Nma speaks of her struggles in cross-cultural adjustment to San Francisco State with great specificity. She came to the U.S. as a teenager, fresh from an all women's boarding school in Nigeria. One of her first challenges is to adapt to the "new freedom" and responsibilities of a college student in the United States, especially when contrasted with the far more restrictive environment at her Nigerian school. Although English fluency was not at all a concern for Nma, issues regarding the language still arose -

I had to learn, not so much a new language, but it seemed like a new language, because with the language comes the culture. Everything seemed very new and, even though I could speak English, it still didn't seem like it was enough - because it's more than just speaking English in this country.
Nma also lived in the residence halls at San Francisco State, a living environment that presented its own set of challenges. She describes some of her difficulties in the passage below.

The surroundings [the dormitories] were a little different than I expected! I expected something a little more grand! The general living experience - the noise, and having to deal with people were real issues. I grew up in a country where smoking, pretty much anything is forbidden, unheard of. It was such a big transition to come here and see people my own age smoking like they were drinking tea or something. That was hard for me to adjust too. I was very young and impressionable. Eighteen years old!

Relationships with students from the United States proved to be both a source of stress and support for Nma. When contrasted with the other research participants, Nma speaks in the greatest detail regarding her encounters with discrimination and bias and the influences that these incidents have had on the quality of her education. Please note these issues will be discussed with more detail in the following section of the chapter. However, one relationship issue that does bear mentioning in this section pertains to Nma's initial interactions with members of the University's African American community. Nma describes the surprising difficulties she first experienced,

It was hard when I came to SFSU... On a more detailed level, I would say that the African Americans I didn't actually fit in with... because of the way I acted, the way I spoke, and just my whole persona was not something they really identified with. The only thing we had in common was the way we looked on the outside, but everything else was totally different. And that kind of saddened me, because I walk down the street, see someone that looks like me, could pass for a sister, and I motion to say "hi", because as we begin to dialogue you could sense that she's thinking "oh, she's not from the 'hood"... she doesn't understand... doesn't know what I've been through. Or she's just here to take what we've worked for our whole lives, and that's a kind of feeling I got for a little while. It's more like some of them felt Africans are just here to take from them what they have worked for their whole lives and we think that we're better than they [African Americans] are.

Although her difficulties with other African American students were at first challenging for Nma, her relationships with many of the students has changed markedly over the years. She now attributes much of her success at the University to the continuous support and guidance she has received from African American students at the school.
It is important to emphasize that Nma's relationships with African American students differ significantly from her interactions with other students from the United States. Once again, this topic will be pursued more thoroughly later in the text.

**Encounters with Discrimination, Bias, and Prejudice**

The central purpose of this section is to explore the influences of discrimination, bias, and prejudice on the quality of the participants' sojourn in the United States. The students' descriptions of their experiences with discrimination will be presented in the first part of the section. The second part is designed to bring forth the participants' pre-conceived notions regarding life in the United States and encounters with discrimination in their home countries. In the dialogues with the participants, these past experiences with discrimination (if any) and pre-conceived notions of U.S. society played a notable influence in their student life experiences.

**Experiences with Discrimination**

Nma and Tjoman provide perhaps the most specific, thorough accounts of perceived discrimination at San Francisco State University. Nma strongly feels that discrimination and acts of bigotry have made her sojourn on campus exceedingly difficult. Nma's first recollection of the effects of the prejudices of others can be observed in that the manner she "spoke English was clearly different than the average person". She goes on to comment that,

> I had people make fun of me because the English I spoke was "too proper". Plus there was also that stereotype that, you look at me, and when you hear me speak, you see a different person than what you were expecting and what you're hearing - the voice doesn't fit the face.

Nma finds it interesting that, "the whole outcome would change" once mainstream, white students from the U.S. heard her voice. Somehow, these students would suddenly warm up to Nma - a "change of heart" that Nma soon realized was due to the White students' mis-trust of African Americans. She also describes the students' views towards her as moving from hostile to accepting when her performance in the
classroom contrasted with their biases towards the perceived "work ethics" of African Americans:

When they see me again they begin to see a difference, like their whole attitude changes then most of the times they are not as hostile as they were initially, especially like in my classes where they except, okay, anyone that's going to get the lowest in the class is the one black girl in the class. When I'm there every blessed class, putting in as much effort as everyone else, it kinda helped change their views.

However, the "change of views" that Nma describes proved exceedingly difficult to attain . . . if achieve at all. She shares an incident in a chemistry class that is perhaps more reflective of her treatment.

But the other times were really hard . . . in my Chem 111 lab, I was the only black person and I remember the first day, we were all supposed to pair up in twos - you needed to have a lab partner to work together. I remember everybody was asked by the teacher to turn to the left or right and pair up with someone, or to pair up with your friends. And everybody around me turned to someone else, and the one girl that was left I turned to and said, "will you be my partner?" and she's like "ahhhh . . . Jennifer!" Or whoever she was calling to and ran across the room. That was the beginning of my frustration . . .

Nma feels strongly that the students' unwillingness to pair up with her is reflective of "the stereotype that a lot of people have of black people in this country is that they are not hard-working and that most of the bottom 10% [of scores] in class will be African American". Nma also invokes that incidents such as the afore-mentioned "happened time and time again" while at San Francisco State.

It is also important to note that, in helping to address situations similar to the chemistry class, faculty members proved to be of little support or assistance to Nma. In her dialogue, Nma shared a specific case where she perceived that a faculty member was intentionally, and aggressively, attempting to "weed her out" of an important, required math class. The only possible rationale that Nma can identify for the teacher's actions, especially since she was achieving fairly well in the class, was that the instructor grew weary of being asked questions by an inquisitive, African international student.
Tjoman's most difficult encounters with discrimination came during his first months at the University, and were primarily related to his sexual identity. He was very surprised about the extent of students' discomfort with his being gay, especially in the his on-campus residence.

I lived in the dorm, and most people there are conservative, I can tell. Because some of them are not from San Francisco, they're young, immature. It really freaked me out! I thought this [San Francisco] is the "gay city", it is [supposed] to be more acceptable here. But when I came here, it's not acceptable to be gay in the dorms... I mean, is this San Francisco?

Students' dis-comfort with Tjoman's sexuality was quite confusing to him, and he was especially troubled by his roommate's reaction and diligent attempts to "convert" him to a different religion and heterosexuality.

The above-mentioned response of Tjoman's roommate merits specific mention. Tjoman indicates that, once his roommate learned of Tjoman's sexual identity, he immediately contacted his family. Over the phone, Tjoman could hear the roommate tell his family, "oh, by the way, my roommate is gay. You have to talk with him. He needs help. He's lost". Shortly thereafter, his roommate's family paid a visit to the San Francisco State campus and attempted to convert Tjoman from Buddhism to Christianity. Once that conversion took place, according to Tjoman, his roommate and family assured him that he would swiftly be able to "convert back to heterosexuality". Although Tjoman deflected this incident with relative ease, it still shook his faith in what he had hoped would be a far more welcoming environment.

Another issue identified as a significant concern in Tjoman's dialogue was his treatment by many Whites within San Francisco's gay community. Tjoman explains that,

In the gay community, they don't like the Asian people. They mostly just think that I'm from Hong Kong, China. Most of the [gay community] seems to have an attitude problem. They treat me differently, not nice, you can feel it. Many gays don't like me just because I'm Asian.
The prejudice and bigotry that Tjoman has encountered from other gay men has altered his view of San Francisco as, according to his pre-conceived notions, the "gay city". He now finds it difficult to affirm that San Francisco is a safe and comfortable place to live.

Ko identified campus faculty as possessing biases towards international students. Based on his personal experiences, he finds that many faculty treat him with a degree of impertinence. Ko perceives that faculty members consistently reflect the following attitude towards international students:

They're like "Just say what you want to say, and be clear . . . I don't have time for you". I've gotten that from faculty . . . I'm like "who do you think you are?", you're not supposed to talk to anyone like that.

Ko has also encountered difficulties in interacting with some campus staff members, particularly in the "snuffing out" of his application to graduate school. He feels that his inquiries regarding a special admission process were dismissed by the campus staff solely because of his difficulties with English language fluency.

Nattie feels strongly that San Francisco State students' openness to "different races and ethnicities" has not made her feel discriminated against on campus. However, she does feel frequently stereotyped as an international student, and easily grows frustrated at students' lack of awareness of the Philippines or global issues. She offers the following example regarding her interactions with students from the U.S.,

I mean, if they don't know anything about the Philippines, they ask questions like, "why is your English so good?" and I have to tell them the history of the Philippines and how American colonized us for 50 years.

The conflicts that often arise between international students and students from the United States, primarily in the University's International Community, is a pressing concern for Nattie. She attributes many of the conflicts to American students' mistreatment and impatience with their international student colleagues.

Discrimination based on religion did not come up as a major concern of any of the international student participants, although Tjoman's encounter with
conservative Christian roommate regarding his sexual identity including placing pressure on Tjoman to convert from Buddhism to Christianity. For Tjoman, his religion is at the very core of his identity,

My religion taught me that about life, what is important being in this life. I just believe in god and I think god knows what I want and has really encouraged me.

His roommates (and his roommate's family's) efforts to convert him were quite unsuccessful. Nevertheless, Tjoman shares his frustration with his roommate - whom he had so far trusted and respected - pressuring him to abandon beliefs that he finds so important. In addition, his roommates assertions about the "superiority of Christianity" and the inferiority of Buddhism are were troubling for Tjoman.

In responding to specific questions regarding issues of discrimination and bias, Osamu was one of several participants that cited negative interactions with individuals outside of the San Francisco State campus. For example, Osamu shares his frustrations with the treatment he receives when interacting with local business people,

One thing I hate about Americans is they know I am Japanese and they don't treat me the same as Americans. Maybe it's because of my language [fluency in English], but they speak slowly, asking questions again and again . . . it's always like "What do you want?"

Obtaining off-campus housing is another area identified as a source of discrimination and prejudice for international students. Nma shares the story of an international student friend, also from Africa, that recently applied to live in an on-campus apartment. The student's relatively light skin complexion caused the apartment manager - who at first thought she was a white European and then learned of her African heritage - to express surprise at her lack of "cannibalistic features". Not surprisingly, Nma's friend never secured the apartment.

Ko shares that many international students, particularly in the housing-strapped city of San Francisco, encounter mis-treatment by local landlords. Although these incidents have not directly effected Ko, he has heard countless stories of the
discriminatory practices of local landlords from other sojourners. More specifically, Ko shares that since many international students are unaware of landlord tenant laws in the United States, a host of landlords are quick to charge exorbitant down payments on rental property and are reluctant to return the funds once the student leaves the country. He goes to provide a recent example of two international students from Malaysia that finally secured an apartment only after the landlord negotiated a $10,000 payment as a deposit - a balloon payment that violates San Francisco tenant laws. Desperate to keep the apartment and anxious about taking any recourse against the landlord, the international students have been forced to continue living in the apartment, while their much-needed funds are being "held hostage". Ko asserts that situations like the afore-mentioned come to the Office of International Programs Office far too frequently.

Pre-Conceived Notions and Prior Experiences Regarding Discrimination

In the dialogues with the researcher, the participants shared some of their prior experiences with issues of discrimination in their home countries, as well as their pre-conceived notions regarding related issues in the United States. Of all of the participants, Tjoman was the only one who identified discrimination as a significant issue in his home country. His experiences have provided him with additional insight into both the institutional and individual dimensions of discrimination. These issues have directly impacted Tjoman in Indonesia, and have remained a source of stress and difficulty for him throughout his sojourn at San Francisco State. He shares that in Indonesia,

You can lose your job [if people find out you are gay]. Get beat up. Discriminate against you. The government is against gay people . . . I don't have any place to go back to [in Indonesia] because I'm gay.

Tjoman also confides that his family does not know he is gay, and he has no intention of telling them. In fact, if he is granted citizenship, he seriously doubts that he will ever see his family again.
For virtually all of the other research participants, racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination were generally unknown entities prior to their arrival in the United States. Although Nma acknowledges that issues of oppression are prevalent in her home country of Nigeria, racial conflict and discrimination are concepts that she never encountered growing up. She explains that,

In Nigeria - for the first 18 years of my life - I was never really defined by my race. If anything, I was defined by my tribe. It as not a race issue. But it was more about what tribe are you from. Language is only the main difference.

Nma also shares that, like many Nigerians, she had a surface understanding of racism in the United States, but never truly "understood to what level it exits". Only by coming to the United States and both observing and experiencing racism that she was able to come to a clearer understanding of issues of oppression and discrimination.

It is interesting to note that, in many respects, Nma has mixed feelings about the new knowledge she has gained,

Now that I've lived [in the United States] for so long I kind of understand more, and now I ask myself whether that's good, or whether that's bad. Because I think it's better when I just didn't know - I just didn't let it get to me. You know how when children are young and impressionable? They don't let things get to them. That's how it was. Because I was young I just said, "oh well, whatever". But now, it's like every little thing I'm ready to file a lawsuit, make noise and fight... Seems like every black person in this country's constantly fighting for one thing or another.

Nma explains her need to "make noise and fight" is fueled by having the "veil of innocence" - or her lack of knowledge about racism and discrimination - removed so dramatically upon her arrival in the United States.

Pre-conceived notions regarding U.S. society have played a notable role in shaping the experiences of most of the participants. As mentioned earlier in the text, Tjoman's inflated expectations of San Francisco as the "gay city" have, in many respects, curbed his enthusiasm for both San Francisco State and the surrounding Bay Area. He in no way expected the discrimination he would encounter, especially from members of San Francisco's gay community.
Nattie shared her surprise at "the regional issues, rural vs. urban clashes, and racial difficulties" in the United States. These discoveries proved to be a real "eye-opener" for her. Nattie also continues to have many pre-conceptions regarding the rest of the United States - she has yet to travel outside of the Bay Area during her sojourn. Some of her perceptions have been inspired by the anti-American feelings currently prevalent in the Philippines. She explains that,

In the Philippines, Americans are really, really criticized because of the bases [American military presence] They also have given us McDonalds' - given us pop culture, they've destroyed our culture - all the bad sides of America are in the Philippines.

Nattie's visit to the United States has led her to conclude that "America is not all that bad" and she now doesn't have any "grudges of Americans". She still bears some apprehension, wondering, "if I were in Iowa, would I think differently? My friends always tell me, remember, San Francisco is not America!"

When questioned regarding his experiences with discrimination, Ko confessed to a total lack of knowledge regarding the concept - especially in terms of race relations in the United States. However, on closer introspection, he does share a story that betrays a far deeper understanding of the role that perception and mis-information can play in the prejudices that one might hold for others. He goes on to disclose that,

I thought I didn't have a prejudice or stereotype but, in fact, when I went to the store I was scared just because there were some African Americans around. They didn't do anything . . . I was just scared.

Ko feels that the source of his fear and apprehension came through the biased media reports he would often read in Japan about African Americans and violent crimes. In the dialogue, Ko expressed surprised at the intensity of his fear - even though he had rarely even seen people of African descent prior to his arrival in the U.S.

The mis-information that Osamu received while in Japan also played a significant influence in his experience in the United States. Osamu expresses a great deal of frustration at the way "Japanese people stereotype people in America". The
messages that he received prior to coming to the U.S. emphasized that, "all Black people are bad and violent". A host of other stereotypes and negative comments were also shared with him regarding Mexican Americans and other people of color in the United States. Osamu admits that his pre-conceived notions regarding African Americans and Mexican Americans made him "fear" people from both races. His positive interactions with an African American roommate helped to counteract many of the prejudices and stereotypes that had been fed to Osamu.

Factors That Positively Shape International Student Experiences

A review of the positive factors that have influenced the quality of the international students' experiences will prove to be of great help in this study's attempts to address some of the key issues - especially with reference to discrimination and bias - that have been voiced by the participants. In analysis of the participant reflections, the following factors have had a particularly positive influence on sojourners to San Francisco State's campus: (1) the empowering influence of students or community members from similar racial or ethnic backgrounds; (2) the quality of international student interactions with campus faculty and staff; and (3) the diverse population and commitment to multicultural education at the University.

Influences of Similar Racial or Ethnic Communities

Except for Tjoman, each of the research participants spoke highly of the empowering influence of similar racial or ethnic communities to their own - either at the University or in the San Francisco Bay Area. For example, Nattie was "stunned" by the strong Filipino American population in the San Francisco Bay Area, and has found the community to be a continuous source of support - often in unexpected ways. For one, Nattie was pleased to learn that a strong deaf-support network for Filipino Americans exists in Vallejo, California, and this network has provided her with excellent resources and information related to her scholarship project. Second, Nattie
describes the much-needed assistance provided by a Philipino American staff member during her first day on campus,

  When I first came here, I didn't know where the cashier's office was, how to get my check, how to do touch-tone registration. But then I went to the cashier's office, and there was a Philipino woman there, and she told me "okay, first you're going to do this, then you'll do this . . . ". Then I went to the Health Center to get my insurance thing and a Philipino woman helped me . . .

Nattie emphasizes that the strong Philipino American presence, both on campus in the surrounding area, have "helped me to not feel scared anymore" while on her sojourn.

  As a Japanese international student, Ko speaks warmly of the "comfortable" feelings he gains from the large number of Asian international students, especially from Japan. His ease of cross-cultural adjustment has also been augmented by the University's high population of Asian American students. Ko clarifies that,

  One thing I really like about SFSU is that I feel comfortable. One of the biggest reasons is that I see a lot of Asians, and I don't see a lot of students saying we are "foreigners". In Japan, when you see foreign people you are just staring at them. I got here, and when I'm with Asian students, I somehow feel comfortable. With Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, I feel somehow comfortable.

Osamu shares Ko's beliefs about the feelings of support and empowerment gained from the large number of Asian American students at San Francisco State. He especially benefited from the guidance of his first roommate on campus - a Japanese American student - who helped provid Osamu with an immediate sense of connection with the University.

  Although at first she experienced some difficulties, Nma now speaks glowingly of the positive influences of African American students on her sojourn in the United States. Her participation in the University's Black Residents Association proved to be a learning experience of particular benefit to Nma. Among the many benefits of her involvement, Nma shares that the organization helped her to cope with the many struggles she encountered being Black and living in the United States - struggles that she was not the least bit prepared to address. Nma's colleagues in the Black
Residents Association both listened with care to her concerns, and helped empower her to address the discrimination and bias she experienced during her stay at San Francisco State.

**Quality of International Student Interactions with Campus Faculty and Staff**

Most of the study's participants have found campus faculty and staff to be sensitive to the individualized needs of international students and, somewhat surprisingly, patient and flexible with the difficulties sojourners experiences with English language fluency. The students' assertions tend to differ with one of the more prominent themes inherent in the Review of Literature - that international student interactions with campus faculty and staff "frequently generates stress, depression, frustration, fear and pessimism" (Hayes & Lin, 1994, p. 7). It is critical to point out that both Ko's and Nma's negative encounters with some faculty - as discussed in the prior sections on discrimination - have created the type of stress and frustration emphasized by Hayes and Lin (1994).

The participants who spoke most strongly about the positive role of faculty and staff were Nattie, Tjoman, Ko (only with reference to staff), and Osamu. Osamu offers a strong recommendation for the faculty in his Hospitality Management department. He especially appreciates the noticeable presence of Asian American faculty on campus.

Our department has a lot of Asians and there is one faculty member that speaks Japanese and he is very nice. I'm very comfortable being at this University. First, for Asian people like me, it's easy to talk with Asian faculty. I can talk with Chinese American faculty, because we have a shared [interest]. The Asian faculty make me feel a part of the class. Just talking about Japan makes me feel good.

Ko's experience as a member of the Office of International Programs staff proven to be a highlight of his sojourn in the United States. Ko is quick to point out that the professional staff members in the Office have "helped me a lot . . . Big time". He comments that the patience, listening skills, and willingness to help that is consistently demonstrated by the staff has contributed immeasurably to the quality of his education.
On his positive interactions with campus faculty, Tjoman comments that "teachers [at San Francisco State] are absolutely fine. They give me different ways [to learn]. Not really easier, but different. They help me a lot. They love to help you, make a program for you".

Although Nma encountered numerous difficulties in her relations with some faculty and staff, she speaks eloquently of the positive influences of several University personnel. For example, she cites the guidance and trust she received from her coffeehouse supervisor,

The way he gave me the responsibility to take care of the Coffeehouse. It instilled in me a lot of responsibility. It meant a lot to me that he put the Coffeehouse in my hands and put me in charge of everything. It helped lay a foundation for being able to handle all this responsibility and at the same time, still do well. It meant a lot to me, for him to say "this is now yours" . . . it wasn't just a bunch of orders.

Nma's supervisor was one of a number of campus student affairs staff that "took me under their wing, realizing this was just a child and she could easily get lost. They helped me pull through".

Campus Diversity

Each of the research participants found the racial and cultural diversity of San Francisco State's faculty, staff, and student population to be a powerful, positive influence in shaping their education. An aspect of cross-cultural adjustment that offered a surprising, yet empowering, challenge for Nattie was the thriving multiculturalism of San Francisco State and in the city of San Francisco. The multitude of students from various racial and ethnic backgrounds shook Nattie's long-held view of the "everyday" American. She asserts that, "when I came here . . . I found out that there's a lot of diversity, and I said 'this is America?' It's so different than what I thought". Nattie has found that the University's diversity has been exceedingly helpful in her efforts to "learn more about cultures and language" while on her sojourn.
Nma speaks warmly of the "ethnic learning experience" she has obtained as an international student at San Francisco State. She clarifies that,

I met so many people from different backgrounds, different stories, different family histories. They didn't just have the family history, they shared it, and that's one thing that I like about this school. I learned so much about people, and this is a very good place to start, because for someone who's trying to learn about new cultures and new countries.

Nma is also touched by the willingness by many members of the San Francisco State community to "learn about me as a person, as a Nigerian". It is clear from the words of Nma - and in analyzing the comments of the other participants - that San Francisco State "is a very good place" to both support and facilitate the learning that is integral to international student sojourns in the United States.

Recommendations of the Participants

A central purpose of the dialogues with the research participants was to glean information that will assist international students, students from the United States, campus faculty and staff, and other members of the University community to address the issues brought in the research. Although recommendations regarding specific programs and services were not a central focus of the students' perspectives, their thoughts and opinions are still of great value - especially the advice provided to future international sojourners to San Francisco State's campus.

A prominent theme within the suggested recommendations pertained to developing peer support groups for international students. Both Tjoman and Nattie placed particular emphasis on developing mechanisms for sojourners to share their concerns, frustrations, and ideas in a safe, confidential environment. Nattie's vision of the purposes of the support groups is evident in the following passage,

International students "need to hang out and talk things over . . . how are you? what frustrates you? what makes you happy?" [International students] need peer support and I think it would help to make a lot of issues come out . . . just set aside one day of the week or month to talk. Especially for international students, it's so hard for them.
She is especially supportive of developing a discussion group for international students living in San Francisco State's new International Community. It's a project she has long "been dreaming about", as she feels there is a critical need to empower the sojourners to have more control over the quality of their lives on campus.

In establishing the support groups, Tjoman emphasizes that forming groups to address the needs and concerns of specific communities of international students would be the most helpful. For example, he strongly suggests that the University develop "some kind of organization, like a volunteer organization, that helps gay international students". Although he sees some benefit in support groups to discuss the general needs of sojourners, he asserts that the specific issues related to gay international students will undoubtedly "get lost" in a support group with a less concentrated focus.

Tjoman also recommends that campus staff at San Francisco State University be more proactive in responding to the needs of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual students. He asserts that most of the sexuality education facilitated for international students, especially during orientation week, is focused solely on heterosexuality. According to Tjoman, any discussion regarding homosexuality is considered "taboo". Tjoman strongly recommends that programs and services be designed that create a more inclusive, caring environment for gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual students on campus.

Perhaps the most prominent recommendation to emerge in the dialogue with Nma pertained to the lack of representation of international students from Africa at San Francisco State. Based on the following passage from her dialogue, it is readily apparent that the lack of diversity among international students has influenced her sojourn deeply,

It was hard when I came. I thought it was a privilege, first of all, but then when I looked at the statistics. I think only four or five of us came straight from Africa, that year . . . of the thousand-something international students on campus. I mean, it's not like we don't have the people that can excel in Africa. There are
many people I know in Nigeria that would excel far beyond people's expectations in this country, but they just don't have the means to do so.

Nma is deeply committed "to work hard, represent, and try to increase the number of people that come here" from not only her native Nigeria, but other African nations as well. She also implores the University officials responsible for admissions and recruitment to share this commitment, and dramatically increase the relatively low enrollment of African international students on campus.

Several of the participants offered recommendations to future sojourners to San Francisco State's campus. Tjoman suggests that international students come to the United States with the willingness to take a close look at both U.S. society and their own background. He states that international students should, "open their eyes widely. They have to think it [being in the United States], they have to feel it, and feel it through their own culture".

Nattie encourages sojourners to, prior to coming to the United States, learn to appreciate that "cultures and values will be different". She also stresses that international students must strive to,

    Just be yourself. Keep your base culture and language and feel strong about it, and be open to adjustment. Don't feel that you should not accept changes or should not deal with new things . . . don't just feel safe with the cultures around you, but be open to other peoples values and cultures.

The acquisition of these attitudes towards herself and others has had a profound effect on Nattie's sojourn at San Francisco State. Her openness to acquire new knowledge has significantly altered her perceptions of people in the United States and, in general, those from different races and backgrounds then her own. For example, Nattie states that,

If I was to judge Americans by what I was taught was good and bad, then I would think that Americans are bad, according to these standards. But when I would be open about it and ask why are they doing this . . . I have completely changed my attitudes towards people that are different, especially towards my relationships with the opposite sex. In the Philippines, my god, the only men I could even talk with were in the seminary or were priests . . . I was a "do-
gooder". And I came here and many people smoke or drank and at first it really bothered me, but now [my perceptions change] because of this, because of that. Nattie hopes that, by being open and honest with oneself, other international students can strive to "better understand what [one's] strengths are, and what [one's] weaknesses are".

Osamu is especially concerned that international students, primarily from Asian countries, seek out students from races and backgrounds different than their own. For example, he has observed that many of his international student colleagues from Japan appear to gravitate towards one another. This is a natural, convenient bonding that Osamu recommends Japanese students not become too reliant upon. He shares that,

I know a lot of Japanese people here - and they never really get out in America. They never learn English or culture because they just stay with other Japanese. Osamu recommends that other international students adopt make a concerted effort to closely interact with students from a diversity of backgrounds. As he points out, "it's why I've believed I learned so much about other races" while at San Francisco State.

Summary of Primary Themes

Following is a general overview of the principal themes and findings brought forth in the researcher's dialogues with the international student participants. The core themes and findings of the research serve as the foundation for the recommendations for further action described in the following chapter.

Hopes and Challenges of Cross-Cultural Adjustment

The participants' sharing of their hopes and rationale for coming to study in the United States supplies an important context for the analysis of their experiences. The sojourners reasons for venturing to the United States varied from Tjoman's need to "escape" the suppressive environment for gay men in Indonesia to Osamu's desire to obtain a bachelor's degree and better understand English films. English language
acquisition, escaping politically volatile environments, and learning about U.S. culture were other reasons of import mentioned by the participants.

The international students' reflections regarding the challenges of cross-cultural adjustment echo many of the central themes presented in the Review of Literature. In accordance with Hayes and Lin (1994), the participants invoked that language difficulties and social adaptation concerns were perhaps the most daunting issues faced by the students. Each of the participants described both the positive and debilitating influences of their relationships with students from the United States. Issues related to sexuality and academic success concerns were specific adjustment issues mentioned by the participants. In general, the international students' sojourn at San Francisco State mirrors the intellectual, behavioral, emotional, and physiological levels of culture shock proposed by Befus (1987, p. 386).

**Encounters with Discrimination**

There were notable differences in the international students' descriptions of their encounters with discrimination, prejudice, and bias. In addition, issues of discrimination had varied influences over the quality of each sojourner's experience. Although the two participants from Japan expressed some frustration at their treatment at the University, both students ultimately did not feel that discrimination issues have played a significant, negative role in their experiences on-campus. Nattie of the Philippines does express some general bafflement at her relations with students from the United States but, once again, does not directly identify discrimination as an issue of particular concern for international students.

The stories of Nma of Nigeria and Tjoman of Indonesia differ markedly from the experiences of Osamu, Ko, or Nattie. Nma was perhaps the most forthright and detailed in her accounts of the many difficult incidents of discrimination and bias that have profoundly influenced her education at San Francisco State. She directly attributes this treatment to the fact that she is both an international student and that her
race is Black. As a gay man, Tjoman eloquently describes the pervasive prejudice and bias he has experienced at the University and in the surrounding San Francisco Bay Area. The frustration at the perceived prejudice directed at him by other members of San Francisco's gay community proves particularly troubling to Tjoman.

The cases of Nma and Tjoman lend authenticity to a central theme of the research - that the differences between the international student's culture and mainstream American culture directly influences the degree of intensity of the sojourner's encounters with discrimination and bias (Schram & Lauver, 1988; Paige, 1993; Wehrly, 1988; Sidel, 1994; Althen, 1995). It cannot be denied that - in general - the Asian cultures of Nattie, Osamu, and Ko differ markedly from mainstream U.S. culture. However, as described by these three participants, both the large Asian American population and the high number of international students from Asia at the University helped create a strong sense of inclusion and support. On the opposite end of the scale, Nma's status as an international student from Africa - one of only a handful at the University - greatly accentuated her feelings of exclusion and of difference. Tjoman's isolation as a gay international student undoubtedly contributed to the intensity of the perceived discrimination and bias he encountered. Even though there are a large number of international students from Indonesia at the University, Tjoman's sexual identity has virtually negated this community as a source of support. As discussed earlier, his sharp differences with the gay community in the Bay Area also contributed to the intensity of the perceived discrimination he encountered as a student sojourner. Wehrly's (1988) assertion that international students who look and behave differently from the majority are not especially welcome on U.S. campuses - in this case San Francisco State University - is highly reflective of the experiences of both Nma and Tjoman.

A final theme present in this section was that the participants' ability to comprehend and define discrimination was partially influenced by their pre-conceived
notions regarding U.S. society and the students' reflections on discrimination in their home countries.

Positive influences

The students offered their reflections on a number of positive factors that have shaped their experiences at San Francisco State University. Although the challenges of cross-cultural adjustment at the University proved to be difficult, all of the international student participants spoke highly of the University's commitment to create a caring environment that, in many respects, facilitated their ease of cross-cultural adjustment. Although a fair share of criticism was still put forth, each international student commented favorably on the diverse faculty, staff, and student population at San Francisco State. As proposed by Nattie, this diversity has helped to instill a sense of support and inclusion that might not be present for international students studying at less multicultural campuses in the United States.

Save for Nma's and Ko's difficult encounters with campus faculty, the majority of participants offered glowing feedback regarding the quality of interactions with their instructors. Osamu, Nattie, and Tjoman referred to the willingness of faculty members to teach classes in a manner that met their specific learning needs - with a particular emphasis on addressing language fluency concerns. Although Nattie and Ko shared positive feedback regarding the support of campus staff members, the rest of the participants shared surprisingly little feedback about the effectiveness of programs and services provided by student affairs staff on campus.

The empowering influence of students or community members from similar ethnic or racial backgrounds as the participants was another positive factor of note. Osamu and Ko both drew a great sense of comfort from the large Asian American presence on San Francisco State, while Nattie was surprised, yet pleased, with the guidance and support she has received from Filipino American staff members and the local Filipino American community in neighboring Daly City. Nma's initial
interactions with members of the University's African American community were often tense, but she soon developed a close bond with many of the students and now considers the mentoring and support from the African American community to be key to her success at the University.

Recommendations

Perhaps the most prominent theme present in the students' recommendations pertained to the establishment of peer support groups for international students at San Francisco State. Tjoman and Nattie placed particular emphasis on the development of these groups, whose core purposes would be to offer international students an opportunity to share their frustrations and difficulties. Nma offered a compelling recommendation that San Francisco State University actively seek to increase the African international student population - an endeavor she is very interested in participating in. Finally, several of the research participants offered valuable messages of empowerment to future sojourners to San Francisco State's campus.
CHAPTER V
OVERVIEW, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of the Study

The primary focus of this study was to explore the influences of discrimination, prejudice, and bias on the quality of international student experiences in the United States. More specifically, through intensive dialogues with the study's five research participants, the study sought to: (a) examine the definitions and meaning of discrimination and bias for international students; (b) shed light on the international student participants' encounters with discrimination and bias during their collegiate education; (c) bring forth some of the factors within the campus climate that contribute to incidents of discrimination; and (d) identify programs and services that faculty, staff, and students can initiate to address the issues uncovered in this Participatory Research study.

In Chapter I, the researcher strived to provide the background information necessary for an enhanced understanding of the influences of discrimination and bias on international student experiences in the United States. The chapter commenced by emphasizing that the dramatic rise in international student enrollment, especially students from Asia, Africa, and other non western regions, has offered both expansive contributions and notable challenges to college campuses throughout the United States. However, serious questions have arisen regarding the ability of collegiate environments to adequately address the needs and concerns of student sojourners. The discrimination, bias, and prejudice that many international students encounter while in the United States has been identified as an area of particularly acute concern.

Chapter II's Review of Literature offered the reader an enhanced understanding of international students' needs and experiences while living in the United States. The first section of the chapter provided an overview of the vast array of problems and
concerns often associated with international student sojourns. Research related to cross-cultural adjustment and "culture shock" were topics of specific focus in this section. Financial concerns, language difficulties, and social relationships were just a few of the multitude of issues identified as sojourner needs. In addition, both the positive and negative factors that can contribute to the physical and emotional intensity of a sojourner's experience in the United States were reviewed.

The second primary section of Chapter II provided an overview of research pertaining to international students and their encounters with discrimination and bias. More specifically, research exploring the influences of discrimination and bias on sojourner experiences was presented, as well as information related to the prejudice and bias directed at specific communities of international students. Included in this section was a brief historical review of international student discrimination in the United States. The anti-Iranian sentiments in the United States during the late 1970s and rise in Chinese student enrollment during the 1980s were topics of particular focus in this historical review.

The final section of the Review of Literature summarized the receptivity of U.S. campuses to international student sojourners. Higher education's struggles in acknowledging and responding to international student needs received particular scrutiny. In addition, the section sought to explore the societal dynamics in the United States that might influence the experiences of sojourners to college campuses. The general treatment of international students by campus faculty, staff, and U.S. students - often perceived as quite negative - was a central theme of this research.

Chapter III provided the framework for the research design employed in the study. Participatory Research was the methodology selected to best bring forth the international students' reflections on their sojourn in the United States. The chapter provided background information pertaining to the foundations of Participatory Research, as well as commentary on its differences with more traditional modes of
inquiry. A discussion of the rationale for utilizing the methodology was another important component of this chapter.

The five step, feminist approach that served as the framework for the methodology was also detailed in this chapter. A thorough description of the intensive dialogue process between the research and participants was provided in describing this approach. General, demographical information regarding each of the study's five research participants was also included in this section, as well as background information on the researcher and San Francisco State University (the focus school for the study).

Chapter IV provided a comprehensive overview of the core themes and findings brought forth through the Participatory Research methodology. In analysis of the thoughts and perspectives of each of the international student participants, several prominent themes surfaced in the dialogues between the researcher and participants. For one, the participants' accounts of their experiences in the United States affirm many of the issues of cross-cultural adjustment and "culture shock" described in the Review of Literature. Second, although there were notable differences in the students' descriptions of their experiences, issues of discrimination, prejudice, and bias did have a profound influence on the quality of several students' education. The intensity of a student's encounters with discrimination appears to be directly influenced by the differences between the student's culture and that of the host campus and U.S. society. Pre-conceived notions that the students had regarding U.S. society and the students' past experiences with issues of discrimination also were found to have helped shape the quality of their sojourn in the United States. These pre-conceived notions and past encounters with discrimination also helped to form the participants' comprehension of discrimination related issues - both in the United States and in their home countries.
Chapter IV also detailed the participants' reflections on the positive factors that have assisted in their transition to San Francisco State University. The diverse population at San Francisco State's campus, as well as the University's commitment to create an inclusive, caring environment was one factor that had a substantive impact on each of the students' sojourns. The high quality of treatment (save for a few exceptions of note) by campus faculty and staff was another area found to be well received by the participants. In addition, the empowering influence of U.S. students or Bay Area community members from similar racial or ethnic backgrounds as the international student participants was another positive factor discussed in this chapter. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the prevalent themes inherent in the international students' recommendations to address the issues raised in the study. The establishment of support groups for sojourners, expanded recruitment efforts to enhance international student diversity on campus, initiating efforts to address the needs of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual students, and general advice to other sojourners were recommendations put forth by the research participants.

Conclusions

Based on the dialogues with the study's international student participants and an analysis of the generative themes and key findings that emerged through the research, several prominent conclusions have been identified by the researcher. It is important to emphasize that the diversity of international student experiences and cultural backgrounds represented in the study make it difficult to offer any sweeping conclusions that encompass the perspectives of all five research participants. However, the inter-connectedness of several of the participants' experiences, as well as the powerful assertions of solitary voices such as Nma or Tjoman, create the foundation for a number of the study's conclusions.

Perhaps the most obvious conclusion gained from the dialogues and reflected in the review of literature is that the transition to campus life at San Francisco State
University proved to be an exceedingly difficult one for each participant. A wide variety of issues were shared by the students, with social relationships, financial concerns, and language difficulties being most prominently mentioned. Therefore, the researcher concludes that, like virtually every other campus in the United States, international students encounter numerous difficulties in adjusting to academic and co-curricular life at the University.

Conclusions regarding the role that discrimination and bias plays in shaping international student experiences are less clear. Several of the participants did not identify discriminatory or prejudicial behavior as being either influential or present in their education at San Francisco State University. In addition, concepts of discrimination and bias appeared to be difficult for some of the participants to either identify or define. These difficulties were especially apparent with the two participants from Japan and the one student from the Philippines. However, the stories shared by both Nma and Tjoman do lead the researcher to conclude that, for some international students, discrimination, prejudice, and bias can have a considerable influence on the quality of a students' sojourn. Based on the backgrounds of Nma and Tjoman, the author also concludes that the intensity of an international student's experiences is directly influenced by the differences between the sojourner's background and mainstream American culture. For example, Nma's status as one of only a few international students from Africa at San Francisco State accentuated her feelings of exclusion while at the University. In addition, the racism and sexism she has encountered as a Black woman in U.S. society lends further authenticity to this conclusion.

Although Tjoman was the only participant to discuss issues related to sexual identity, the power of his skeptical voice leads the researcher to conclude that U.S. campuses are sorely lacking in addressing the needs of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students. It is especially interesting to note that, in a city and University
widely known for its openness to diverse sexual identities and orientations, Tjoman feels an acute sense of frustration and has encountered numerous acts of discrimination and bias. One can only wonder at the difficulties Tjoman might experience in a region with a less welcoming reputation. The paucity of research on sexual identity and international students also leads the author to conclude that this is an area in grave need of attention by student affairs scholars and practitioners. Recommendations for future action in this area are detailed later in the text.

Several conclusions can be garnered from the students' reflections on the positive factors influencing the quality of their sojourn. For one, each participants' strong endorsement of the campus climate at San Francisco State University indicates that the University is, in many respects, attaining its mission to help "people of exceptionally diverse backgrounds come into their own" (SFSU Bulletin, 1997/98, p. 15). One can readily conclude that the diverse population at San Francisco State University has positively influenced the development of each of the international student participants. In addition, the impact of U.S. students or Bay Area community members from similar ethnic or racial backgrounds as the participants was found to have a powerful influence on the experiences of each sojourner. For example, the high number of Asian American students and international students from Asian countries has helped to create, as mentioned by research participant Ko, a "comfortable" environment for the four students from this global region. Nma's recommendation that the University more actively recruit international students from Africa and other regions could expand this feeling of "comfortableness" to international students from non-Asian backgrounds.

Another conclusion that can be derived regarding the role of the University is that, unlike many schools in the United States, the faculty and staff at San Francisco State University are striving to meet the "special responsibility" to address the needs of international students on campus. The favorable comments that
faculty received regarding teaching styles and that staff received regarding programs and services provide the foundation for this conclusion. Once again, it must be emphasized that two of the participants - Nma and Ko - did share strong criticisms of their treatment by faculty. Therefore, despite the generally positive feedback to faculty and staff, another conclusion that can be derived from this study is that the treatment of international students by University personnel merits closer scrutiny.

Finally, the students' perspectives on how collegiate environments can best address the needs of international students leads to the conclusion that support/discussion groups can be of critical import to international student success. The establishment of groups of this nature was heavily emphasized by two of the participants, and one can conclude that having the opportunity to share frustrations and exchange ideas with other international students can have a highly positive effect on sojourners' experiences. As emphasized by both Tjoman and Nattie, it is critical that these support groups be formed with a great deal of care and fore-thought, as many international students might be unfamiliar with the concept of a support group and/or reluctant to share their problems with others.

Recommendations for Future Action

The comments of the study's international student participants serve as the foundation for the following recommendations for future action. Although this study focused solely on students from San Francisco State University, the recommendations detailed below are designed to be applicable to any university or college in the United States that attempts to serve international student needs. The specific recommendations are classified as follows: (a) establish peer support groups for international students; (b) implement training and development workshops for faculty and staff members working with international students; (c) strive to create an inclusive, caring campus community for gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students; and
(d) seek to actively recruit a true representation of global diversity within the international student population on campus.

Establish Peer Support Groups

Developing and facilitating on-going peer support groups was identified as a key, critical service for international students. Both Tjoman and Nattie vocalized that establishment of the groups could provide international students with an opportunity to share information, discuss common concerns, and offer guidance and support to one another. Additional goals for support groups of this nature are also articulated by Althen (1995). He states that international student support groups can:

- allow foreign students to see themselves as an identity group; with enough common characteristics and interests to promote sharing;
- help newly arrived students get settled and oriented;
- provide for members' social needs;
- organize cultural programs from which Americans will learn something about the countries the students represent;
- represent the foreign students, or segments of them, to the institution's administration. (p. 185)

It is also strongly recommended that support groups be developed that meet the needs of specific communities of international students. Sojourner communities that are a notable minority on campus - for example gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students or sojourners from Africa - might especially benefit from the establishment of groups specifically tailored to their needs.

Conduct Training and Development Workshops for Faculty and Staff

Although several participants commented favorably on their interactions with faculty and staff at San Francisco State University, the difficulties described by two of the participants merits further scrutiny of the training faculty and staff members receive related to their interactions with international students. The themes present in the
study's Review of Literature also suggest that U.S. higher education in general might be well be served by adopting faculty and staff development initiatives that explore the needs of international students and identify strategies for best meeting sojourner needs (Aithen, 1995; Reiff, 1986; Desruisseaux, 1996).

More specifically, the researcher recommends the following focuses for faculty development:

- general education in cross-cultural adjustment issues and other aspects of "culture shock" for sojourners;
- orientation to some of the common challenges international students encounter in adapting to the academic environment in the United States; and
- strategies for addressing language difficulties and differences in learning styles for international students.

With reference to staff training and development, initiatives should not only be directed towards international student advisors, but also the student affairs staff that work both directly and in-directly with international students. The often complex issues that pertain to international students and their on-campus living experiences merits particular attention - an area that Nattie of the Philippines identified as a critical need.

In addition to the training focuses on cross-cultural adjustment, goals of staff training for international students can include, but are not limited to: program and activity planning, cross-cultural communication, conflict mediation, and peer support group mediation (Reiff, 1986, p. 4).

**Strive to Create an Inclusive, Caring Community for Gay, Lesbian, and Bi-Sexual International Students**

Tjoman's experience at San Francisco State University is, one can easily project, not unlike the sojourns of many gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual students on college campuses throughout the United States. According to Tjoman, discussion of the sexual identity issues related to international students is a "taboo" subject that is sorely in need of attention and care by university personnel.
To better address the needs of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students, it is strongly recommended that campus faculty and staff take a more proactive, educational approach in meeting the students' needs. More specific programmatic recommendations for institutional action are outlined below.

- Incorporate specific training and development requirements for international student advisors, residential life staff and other appropriate staff members. The focus of the training should concentrate on both understanding and addressing the needs and concerns of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual student sojourners. Issues related to homophobia, theories related to the "coming out" process, and campus resource/support information should receive particular attention.

- Develop educational programs during international student orientation events that provide information and resources pertaining to gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual student needs. Providing these programs shortly after a student's arrival on campus may prove quite helpful in their adjustment to life in the United States.

- In the implementation of international living and learning centers on collegiate campuses, ensure that on-going education and resources are provided to all students regarding sexual identity needs and issues.

- Maintain a close working relationship with student organizations designed to meet the needs of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual students on campus. These organizations can not only provide valuable resources, but also serve as a potential source of peer support.

- As mentioned earlier, campus staff should actively encourage the establishment of support/discussion groups for gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international student groups. As with any campus support group, ensuring the confidentiality for member participation is especially critical in forming a group of this nature.

In addition to the recommendations offered above, it is strongly recommended that international student advisors, residential life staff, and other appropriate staff members strive to engage in dialogue with gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students. The needs and concerns of the students have long remained an unmentionable subject within international communities on collegiate campuses, and it is strongly recommended that faculty and staff alike actively engage students in addressing the concerns raised in this study.
Recruit an International Student Population Representative of Global Diversity

As only one of a handful of African students at San Francisco State University, Nma encountered numerous difficulties throughout her sojourn. Her story offered a compelling account of not only the discrimination and bias she experienced, but also of her inability to seek support from students with similar ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. To help address these concerns, Nma strongly recommended that the University work diligently to recruit students from Africa and other under-represented world regions. It is an intensive effort that will not only yield great benefits for students like Nma, but have many positive outcomes for the institution. Recruiting a more diverse international student population can help influse the environment with special skills and talents, new methods of teaching and learning, and "broader perspective" about global issues (Tonkin, 1988, p. 24). Although it is beyond the expertise of the researcher to offer recommendations to the university personnel responsible for such endeavors, one specific suggestion might be to utilize the skills and knowledge of students such as Nma. Perhaps employing the students as university "ambassadors" to their home country could be an effective first step in outreach to under-represented populations.

Reflections on the Research Design

In retrospect, several prominent reflections surfaced in conducting the study. These general reflections are classified as: (a) challenges regarding the selection of participants; (b) the nature of the researcher's personal experiences in working with international students; and (c) the reluctance of some communities of international students to participate in the study.
Challenges Regarding the Selection of Participants

The researcher initially aspired to obtain a broad sampling of international students of color at San Francisco State University. However, the surprising lack of racial diversity in San Francisco State's international student population placed some limitations on the ability to incorporate students of color from various regions of the world. The vast majority of international students at San Francisco State originate from countries in Asia, with Japan, Korea, and Thailand serving as the primary countries of origin (see Table IV). As one can discern through analysis of the population data, San Francisco State has less than two dozen students from each of three prominent world regions: Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. The low numbers of students from these regions made it exceedingly difficult to ensure their inclusion in the study. For example, in San Francisco State's residence hall community (the primary source of the participant pool), there are no international students from Africa or Latin America, and a small representation of students from the Middle East and Indian sub-continent. Despite the researcher's efforts to invite students from a diversity of regions to participate in the study, four of the five participants were still from Asian countries. As detailed in the Recommendations for Future Research, it is strongly suggested that additional research be directed towards international students of color from non-Asian regions - especially at San Francisco State University.

Experiences of the Researcher

Although the researcher does have some substantial professional experiences in working with international students, the challenges inherent in facilitating intensive dialogues with the participants proved to, at times, be quite daunting. The diverse cultural backgrounds, English language fluency levels, and prior interactions with the researcher at times surfaced as issues in the dialogue process. With additional training and experience in cross-cultural counseling, especially with reference to
international students, the researcher might have been better suited to address some of these issues as they manifested themselves in the research process. With further education in cross-cultural counseling and practice in Participatory Research techniques, the researcher will strive to address some of the limitations that surfaced as he partakes in future research endeavors.

**Reluctance of Potential Participants**

Related to the afore-mentioned challenges with participant selection, it is interesting to note the reluctance of several international students invited to participate in the research process. In the efforts to recruit two students from Middle Eastern countries, the researcher encountered deep mistrust of the ultimate intention of the study. Despite assurances of the confidentiality of the dialogues, both students were concerned that the information might somehow "get back to them" and they would therefore find it exceedingly difficult to be forthright and honest in the dialogue process. The small number of Middle Eastern students at San Francisco State and the study's sole focus on the University as the source of participants were of particular concern to the students. Eventually, both individuals declined the invitation to participate and the important voices of students from this region of the world were not included in the study.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

The participant dialogues in this study unveiled several prominent areas recommended for future research regarding international student experiences. The recommendations for future studies are as follows: (a) conduct research that explores issues pertaining to international students and sexual identity; (b) initiate studies that provide a more thorough examination of international students and their on-campus, residential experiences; (c) concentrate Participatory Research studies on specific communities of interest among international student populations; and (d) conduct
research related to international students and issues of discrimination at campuses with a majority white population.

**Exploration of Sexual Identity Issues**

The numerous challenges and difficulties encountered by Tjoman as a gay international student make it readily apparent that additional research is desperately needed regarding gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students. The absolute paucity of research in this area is, in the opinion of the researcher, a critical need for student affairs and international student scholars to address in future scholarship.

Inquiries to pursue in this research can include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. What are the specific adjustment needs of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students during their sojourns in the United States?

2. What role does discrimination and bias from the host culture play in shaping the experiences of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students?

3. In what respects do the experiences of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students differ from those of heterosexual international students?

4. What are some of the particular challenges or difficulties encountered by gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students as they prepare to return to their home countries (with a particular focus on countries or societies that have little tolerance for homosexuality or bi-sexuality)?

5. What types of programs and services can colleges and universities adopt to adequately address the needs of gay, lesbian and bi-sexual international students?

It is the researcher’s recommendation that a healthy balance of quantitative methods and Participatory Research be employed to shed insight into the experiences of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students. As discussed in the methodology section of this report, Participatory Research has the vast potential to create "an inviting and open narrative of [a] community’s story, struggles, values, wisdom, and action" (Ada & Beutel, 1993, p. 9). With reference to international students and sexual identity, bringing forth the long-silenced voices of the students can be a key first step in
the efforts to address the needs and concerns of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students.

It is also important to point out that, for some international students, Participatory Research might prove to be a challenging mode in the efforts to bring forth their experiences. The reluctance to verbally share experiences - especially without a clear vision of the consequences of doing so - may serve as a daunting barrier to the participation of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual students. One must only consider the drastic, often violent, consequences of "coming out" in many societies (including the United States) to gain an appreciation for an international student's reluctance to be forthright about their sexual identity. Therefore, as with any Participatory Research study, it must be emphasized that the dialogue process be approached with great sensitivity and care, with the utmost respect of the participant's need for confidentiality. In addition, adopting appropriate quantitative methodologies and other qualitative designs is strongly recommended. Some international students might be more comfortable simply completing a survey or other research instrument that strives to bring forth their needs and concerns.

More Thorough Exploration of Residential Housing Issues

The participants in this study shared stories of the many benefits - and challenges - inherent in their residential, on-campus living experiences. Reiff (1986) asserts that international students living in on-campus housing can be of great benefit to both U.S. students and international sojourners alike,

Residence hall living may well provide the best milieu for both American and foreign students to develop as world citizens . . . residence halls provide an ideal environment for sharing ideas and feelings, clarifying values, and enhancing human relations through contact with people of varying backgrounds. Living and learning with foreign students can aid mastery of the developmental tasks necessary for maximum growth. (p. 1).

However, Reiff (1986) also invokes that, because most efforts to address international student needs originate from international student offices, residential housing staff
members are often ill-prepared to meet the unique needs of international students living in on-campus housing (p.2). Additional research regarding international student transitional needs is critical if the residential housing profession is going to do an adequate job meeting student sojourner needs. Special emphasis of this research can include: identifying the key transitional needs of international students as they live and learn in residential housing, exploring the dynamics and challenges inherent in international student relations with students from the United States, and identifying programmatic initiatives that are truly responsive to international student needs. Ultimately, this research should assist residential housing professionals in obtaining the "information, knowledge, and skills to meet the challenges of providing a living/learning environment in which all students can become global citizens" (Reiff, 1986, p. 2).

**Participatory Research and Communities of Interest**

This study's discussion of the limitations of the research design suggests that a more specific, concentrated participatory study may offer greater insight into specific communities of interest within the international student population. Bowser, Auletta and Jones (1993) implore higher education scholars to "recognize that the college, the classroom, and the student union are living spaces of various communities of interest". The authors stress that by conducting research that offers insight into the needs of various communities of interest on college campuses, our comprehension of the diversity issues on college campuses increases exponentially (p. 84). For example, early in this section, a strong recommendation was made to facilitate research that brings forth the needs of a particular community of interest: gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual international students. Although, in some respects, international students can be termed a "community of interest", it is readily apparent that the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of international students merits closer scrutiny of the experiences of specific communities of sojourners. Based on the experiences of one participant in
this study - Nma - it is readily apparent that the nature of her sojourn - especially pertaining to encounters with discrimination - differs markedly than the experiences of sojourners from other lands. Conducting participatory studies that specifically explore the experiences of international students based on their racial or ethnic background is a recommendation for future research that can perhaps lend more substantive insight into the experiences of different communities of international students.

**International Students at Campuses with a Majority White Population**

As discussed more expansively in the research limitations section of the study, the diverse population at San Francisco State University and the institution's commitment to multicultural education have, in many respects, helped to create an inclusive, caring environment for many international students. According to several studies, this campus climate contrasts markedly with the challenges and difficulties encountered by many sojourners in the United States (Gareis, 1992; Story, 1982; Althen, 1988, 1995; Wehly, 1988). Therefore, an exploration of issues of discrimination and their influences on international students at other universities, specifically with majority white student populations, is strongly recommended. Bringing forth the voices and experiences of international students of color at campuses that might not have San Francisco State's diverse population or philosophy of multiculturalism could shed additional, critical information on bias, discrimination, and prejudice and their pertinence to international student experiences.

**Reflections of the Researcher**

In Chapter I, the researcher commented that this study may prove to be significant in a number of ways. Uncovering new knowledge for student affairs practitioners and offering recommendations for novel programs to meet the needs of international students were perhaps two of the more "lofty", but not yet realized aspirations described by the researcher. If the perspectives shared by the participants can contribute to the body of scholarship regarding international students and also
influence, in some way, the development of an initiative to address even one of the issues uncovered in the dialogues . . . then this study would prove to have enormous significance. Given the study's focus at San Francisco State University and the researcher's work at the institution, there is little doubt that the voices of the students will soon be represented in some type of service or program at the University.

It is also readily apparent that perhaps the greatest significance of this process has been the lessons learned by the researcher from the student participants. Engaging in dialogues with the students has proven to be both personally and professionally rewarding in a multitude of ways. The study has already offered the researcher with a far greater appreciation for the experiences of international students, as well as some of the steps the researcher can take to be a more active advocate for their needs.

Finally, upon further reflection, it is the researcher's ultimate hope is that the international student participants will one day be as empowered and enriched by the project as the researcher. Being involved in a research process which provides students with the opportunity to "be informed and active participants" in naming and addressing issues within their own education is undoubtedly the greatest significance of this endeavor.
References


