

Chapter 10

Implications for Future Research

This chapter mainly addresses the implications for future research. Based on the statement of limitations of this research and earlier interpretations and discussions, future research should address at least the following three issues:

1. Future studies could follow different research designs. For example, it is clear that international students from countries other than China also suffer stress in the United States and future projects should compare and contrast samples of foreign students from different cultures residing in the United States. Studies can research the relationship between the culture and stress and coping behaviors. This could be done at a single university which has a large foreign student population. Further incorporating a variety of international students groups should prove helpful in enhancing the richness of the data.

Schwartz's (1987) study provided a starting point for future research. Schwartz studied the relationship between culture and stress. She compared Chinese international graduate students, Saudi Arabian international graduate students, and American graduate students regarding their perceptions of problems encountered in daily life and their preferred coping strategies. The results of the study showed that individuals from different cultures tend to identify different types of events as stressful and to appraise these events differently. Students also report using different types of coping strategies.

2. A longitudinal or follow-up study should be conducted at a later date, when the interview respondents are more settled. In other words, the research can easily be continued in a number of years and would provide longitudinal accounts which are not available in current literature. After the respondents have put their university days behind them, they may reveal, in greater detail, the stress and anxiety they felt while they were students, how they adapted, how they coped with their stress, and how they lived up to the expectations of their families in China. They might be more candid about their difficulties they faced as students, after they have become permanent residents or United States citizens. The study

can also compare the different stressors they encountered as students, who temporarily reside in America, and as immigrants, who tend to work and live permanently in the United States.

3. Regarding the American dream, stress and coping, job concerns, and other immigration issues, future projects might also conduct a comparison study on different groups such as predeparture students, students who are currently enrolled in American universities, those who have graduated from American universities and have settled in the United States for several years, and those who have finished their degree in the United States and returned home. This comparison study could reveal how students' perceptions change over time and what role foreign study plays in students' future social economic status, which could be upward or downward.