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THE PROCESS OF ADJUSTMENT:  
AN ANALYSIS OF SOME CORRELATES  
AFFECTING THE ADJUSTMENT PROCESS OF  
INDIVIDUALS IN A NEW ENVIRONMENT

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Ali Kamali

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Y. B. Waisanen

Major professor

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**Abstract** The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of a 12-week, low-intensity, low-impact, and low-volume aquatic exercise program on the physical fitness of sedentary, middle-aged women. The study was a randomized, controlled trial. The subjects were randomly assigned to either an aquatic exercise group or a control group. The aquatic exercise group performed a 12-week, low-intensity, low-impact, and low-volume aquatic exercise program. The control group performed no exercise. The subjects were assessed for physical fitness at baseline and at 12 weeks. The aquatic exercise group showed significant improvements in physical fitness compared to the control group. The improvements were seen in all measures of physical fitness, including cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, and flexibility. The aquatic exercise program was found to be an effective means of improving physical fitness in sedentary, middle-aged women.

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By

Ali Kamali

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## ABSTRACT

### THE PROCESS OF ADJUSTMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF SOME CORRELATES AFFECTING THE ADJUSTMENT PROCESS OF INDIVIDUALS IN A NEW ENVIRONMENT

By

Ali Kamali

The primary focus of this project is to explore the adjustment process of Iranian students to American society. It is intended to investigate "what it is like to be a foreigner" and what sociological, social structural, and social psychological factors are involved in this dilemma.

Unlike many previous investigations that examined adjustment as a psychological "state" or "condition," the main theme of this study deals with the "process" of adjustment, e.g., the interaction of many factors operating throughout time. The aim is to identify a process through which persons undergo varying degrees of change, on one hand, in their attitude and perception toward the surrounding environment and the life situation in the host country and, on the other hand, in their social interaction with Americans.

By employing a theoretical guideline derived from the existing literature on cross-cultural contacts, an attempt is made to predict the condition that Iranian students have undergone in the United States since 1979 due to the changes

in socio-political relationships between two countries. Hence, it becomes the main concern of this study to examine the notion of changes which occurred in different aspects of Iranian students' life while in the United States.

Survey data were collected from 61 students for both present and the past. An investigation of the process of change in the individuals' behavioral patterns was made possible by means of comparing the collected data at two different points of time.

Several different statistical tests are employed to detect the correctness of assertions and the findings of this investigation. The data led to the conclusion that, unlike many beliefs, Americans seem to be the most preferred group for social interaction. And, basically, most Iranians in the survey held more favorable attitudes toward Americans at present than in the past.

In the final analysis, it was found that a strong link exists between the social interactional patterns prevalent in the host society and the favorableness of the sojourners' attitude toward the surrounding environment. It was also observed that individuals' characteristics do not play a determining role in their adjustment process; however, their marital status seems to be the single most important operating factor in this process to the extent that unmarried individuals performed higher on the adjustment scale than did the married respondents.

To:       Those whose participation made  
          this study possible.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Conceptualization of the Research Problem:**

This study is concerned with the process of social adjustment of Iranian students to American society. Interest in studying the adjustment of a group of people to a society other than their own has been the subject matter of many investigations during the past few decades. The direction of their attention varies considerably from one investigation to another. Some were interested in focussing on a systematic analysis of interaction between two groups, while others were basically concerned with demographic outcomes of such population movement from one region to another. Meanwhile, for some other scholars, the flight of individuals from one country to another was the subject matter of cultural transition.

Overall, there is a rich body of literature focussing mainly on the cause and consequences of these geographical transitions. Seemingly, each gave an insight into the process through which sojourners struggle to minimize obstacles resulting from living in another social context. Nonetheless, the adjustment was not treated as a process in many cases. Perhaps the reason for this, according to Zimmer

(1970: 72), is that many of these studies were limited to census data.

Studies of adjustment have developed an orientation which dealt with 1) an understanding of many push-pull factors (e.g., reasons for going abroad) and 2) the consequences generated from these decisions to go abroad. Addressing the first part, moving from one place to another was considered as an individual's tendency to be attracted to a more favorable place which is also accompanied by some unfavorable factors or combination of factors in the home environment (Burawoy, 1976: 1050). Individuals' tendency to leave their country of origin in this sense, according to George (1970), falls into two categories: In the one, the reasons for moving from one area to another are basically because of some socio-economic factors --e.g., need for higher education, better job opportunity, etc. In the other, the exodus takes place not only because of socio-economic reasons but also socio-political ones --e.g., religious persecution, racial discrimination, etc., which are sometimes dictated by the ruling class of the home country.

According to a report published by UNESCO (Parris, 1982), of major factors responsible for individuals' departure from their home countries are socio-economic and political relationships among nations. Uneven development among countries is a cause for such movement. For a long time, a growing number of students have been moving from the third world and other developed societies to a more

developed countries. Perhaps, attractiveness of advanced societies is due to their greater scientific sophistication and many other opportunities available in these countries (Adler, 1977: 18).

Regarding the second orientation, researchers direct their attention toward the consequences of sojourn attempting to understand phenomena such as adaptation, integration, assimilation, acculturation, etc. This reflects a comprehension of the degree to which an individual foreigner relocates him/herself in the recipient society. In this type of investigation, one tends to answer such questions as: How do individuals cope with the new environment? How does the host society respond to the sojourners' need? Do individuals associate with the host society? This list can go on.

Generally speaking, conditions that sojourners confront in the host country put them in a situation that Cicourel (1982) recognizes as "having to live in two cultures" which are not totally consistent. Cicourel raises the issue of the duality of such life in terms of a conflict between the old ways of doing things and the new. The theoretical construct of this problem can be intuitively answered as the following:

1. Total rejection of the host country.
2. Assimilation into the host environment and abandoning the country of origin. Or,
3. integrating with the hosts without forgetting their cultural heritage.

In any case the emphasis is on finding an appropriate

behavioral pattern which enables individual foreigners to function in the receiving society. This, in many instances, leads researchers to focus their attention on the actual day-to-day experiences of individuals that form their patterns of behavior in dealing with different situations while in the host society.

Thus, as it appears, the issue raised here requires a systematic approach to understand a particular behavior of individuals after entering into a new society. Perhaps universal generalization does not seem appropriate and may even be misleading in this context, since individuals with different characteristics may respond differently to the same stimuli. On the other hand, because of its importance, appropriate empirical indicators for investigating such problems must touch the reality of social life in these circumstances and cannot be created in a vacuum. Hence in dealing with the adjustment process of foreign nationals, researchers must begin with a clear definition of the issue at hand and be able to focus on those dimensions that are most useful for the purpose of their studies. In the following sections, the attempt is made to depart from the broader generalizations presented in the previous paragraphs and narrow the scope of this study to a reasonably researchable project.

#### **The Problem:**

An increase in the number of overseas students in the past decades has raised the consciousness of many

researchers to deal with this phenomenon as a problem (Williams, 1981). Due to the complexity of this phenomenon, areas to be covered for investigation are unlimited. The present study is concerned with only a few aspects of the individual's life in a foreign country. Hence the objective of this study is to examine a process known as the individual's social adjustment to the host country. To be more specific, the present study attempts to understand what it is like to be a foreigner, a stranger, and an alien in an environment which is foreign to the individual.

#### **Focus of the Problem:**

To some extent, studies on foreign nationals, particularly students and professionals, have been associated with "Brain Drain" phenomenon where newly qualified graduates have failed to return to their home country and preferred to stay in the host country. But the present project aims at an understanding and an analysis of a situation which results from having to live in a society other than one's country of origin. Particular attention is paid to an investigation of the adjustment of international students to American society -- specifically, Iranian students enrolled at Michigan State University as the case under investigation.

By international student, it is meant any citizen of a foreign country (and not a citizen of the United States) who is enrolled as a student in an academic institution in the U.S. and is working toward an academic degree. This

specification of the definition also applies to Iranian students in this study. The rationale for the selection of Iranian students as the case under this investigation is rooted, on one hand, in my own interest in knowing the situation that they have undergone during their sojourn -- specifically, after the breakdown of the U.S.-Iran political relations following the incident of "hostage crisis".

The incentive to conduct this investigation is rooted in the recent U.S.-Iran diplomatic relations. The actual breakdown in the socio-economic and political relationships between these two countries dates immediately a few weeks after the incident of "hostage crisis" ( as the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service calls it, Iranian crisis). The obvious consequences of this crisis and their effects on the Iranian population residing in the United States were two-fold:

First, the reaction that American officials showed toward Iranians in this country. This was seen from many restrictions which were enforced upon this particular nationality, e.g., actions which were taken by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. These restrictions were basically around controlling and checking the status of Iranian nonimmigrants in the United States which resulted in many controversies: Some believed it was an act of discrimination in terms of singling out one nation which is still reinforced by the U.S. government up to the present time.

For example, in mid-November of 1980, president Carter ordered that all Iranians must report their addresses and submit evidence showing their stay in the United States is in compliance with the laws under which they entered the country.<sup>1)</sup> A total of 56,694 Iranian students were identified and interviewed by the immigration officers, their photographs were also taken for the record --as though they were potential criminals. A total of 6,456 students were not in compliance and, therefore, were expelled. After deportation hearing, some 3,088 were ordered to leave the country. Later, the president announced that all Iranian visas were invalid and the visa holders could not enter or re-enter the country. As a result of the "Iranian control program," launched by the Department of Justice, 24,401 Iranians left the United States during the period of hostage crisis. Ironically a citation of outstanding accomplishment was awarded to the Immigration and Naturalization Service for its efforts during the crisis.

Second, it was the reaction that American people showed toward Iranians during that crisis. Although there are no empirical evidences reflecting the harsh treatment that Iranians received during that period, those who have followed the news for 444 days, and perhaps more, witnessed many episodes of discrimination, assault, and threat that Iranians confronted in the United States.

Furthermore, raising such a problem is, in fact, a reflection of my own life situation -- as an example among



many others who have experienced many problematic situations during their course of stay in a foreign country. Above all, my familiarity with social and cultural aspects of the Iranian students' life in the United States is another reason which inspires my interest in searching for an understanding of the aforementioned problem.

And finally, the present project aims at examining factors and the relations between these factors that are considered to be the determinants of Iranian students' adjustment to American society. These factors are selected based on their bearing on previous studies. The selected factors are classified into sociological, social psychological, cultural, and social structural variables. The observed effectiveness of these variables makes it a legitimate area that deserves research attention, not only for their importance and relevance to immigration policy development, but for the well-being of the people involved.

**The Guiding Research Questions:**

Obviously, the process of social and geographical transition from one society to another means an experience of change. That is, "Individuals undergo a shift from being embedded in the familiar to a constant confrontation with newness and unfamiliarity" (Fried, 1970: 25). Sometimes it leads to an attempt by the person to adjust to the way of life in the new environment. The lack of such attempt may lead one to total maladjustment. For some researchers it is not difficult to set up very specific behavioral dimensions

(e.g., food, clothing, etc.) in order to determine the adjustment level of individuals to a new environment; however, there are other important behavioral dimensions which represent "what the individual is doing instead of whatever s/he is acquainted to do" (Leland, 1978: 21). Although these behaviors are observable, it is difficult to systematize them into analytically usable scales.

Thus, looking at the manner in which individuals adjust to their new environment is still very important. The various factors that go into such behavior are not fully known; those variables known to be operative are not easily amenable to quantification. Therefore, in order to grasp the notion of the individuals' adjustment to a new environment, and in order to direct the course of the present investigation toward comprehending the mechanisms by which individuals adjust to a new milieu, the following questions are selected to be the guiding questions in this project:

1. What are the general characteristics of Iranian students?
2. What are the important factors related to their social adjustment to American society?
3. How are these factors related to each other?
4. To what extent do the selected factors determine the adjustment process of the participants of this study?

#### **Adjustment (A Definition)**

Adjustment is not a new concept, but because it has been so generally defined and broadly used, only recently have social scientists learned to ask productive questions about

it. The historical root of this concept can be traced to Greek philosophers, but the first formal measure of the term is generally credited to Flix Voison, a French psychiatrist, in 1843 (Coulter and Morrow, 1978: 215). Later, the concept of adjustment received special attention by psychologists. they have commonly defined the term as a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the surrounding environment. Hence, in its psychological sense, this definition implies that adjustment is a continuous phenomenon that individuals undergo in order to achieve a harmonious relationship with the environment. However, such a (psychological) definition of the adjustment process does not seem to be appropriate for the present investigation, since the process itself is treated to be a linear transformation or a steady modification of the individuals' prior behavior and outlook toward a seemingly ideal index of behavior.

Sociologists and anthropologists have developed and used various concepts to describe the basic process of transition from one way to another when people with different cultural backgrounds meet. Clearly, controversies on the notion of living in another culture exist in the findings of all studies; there is also no consensus among investigators whether it is a condition or a process; whether it is inevitable or unattainable. Thus, in addition to the lack of consensus on the application of the term, methods of inquiry, and findings, definitional divergences also seem to

be adding to this problem.

In any case, when people from two or more cultures are in contact with each other, such contact may necessitate choice. That is, can the old way of life be maintained? Or, must some refinement of the old attitudes and ways of behaving be made? Under such circumstances, there may exist some degree of (conscious or unconscious) agreement among groups for maintaining their own identity as a group. Such process is called accommodation.

Accommodation may be recognized as both cultures playing significant roles in the individual's life. Thus, both groups accept the situation in which they find themselves (Perrucci et al., 1977: 400). If this trend had a direction aiming to combine traits in order to produce a smoother functioning cultural whole, it is called adaptation (Punekar, 1974).

However, living in a foreign culture may inevitably draw the individual to accept and learn new values peculiar to the receiving culture and, therefore, changing to the dominant way which may accompany the depreciation of the past values. Thus, unless the newcomer takes steps to prevent it, the process of acculturation is taking place which simultaneously results in deculturation in terms of a gradual abandonment of the previous cultural traits such as language, values, world views, and beliefs. The process of acculturation refers to the borrowing of certain traits from one society by people of the other society (Richardson,

1961; Herskovits, 1955). Here acculturation is a one-way process in which the individual acquires some of the characteristics of the host culture. Hence, acculturation occurs as a result of social contact between groups of individuals having different cultures.

The above notion of acculturation may lead one to assume that it tends to express a behavioral pattern that other sociologists have defined as assimilation. It means a situation where newcomers lose their distinctiveness in terms of an overt change in the behavior. That is, persons adopt the culture of the receiving country, give up their distinctive life style, and, eventually, lose their identity as a member of the previous culture. Thus, assimilation is considered to be the end point of the process of acculturation through which individuals are integrated into the cultural milieu around them.

Although there are various definition of assimilation, they often present a generally accepted idea introduced by Park and Burgess (1921):

Assimilation is a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups by sharing their experience and history. (Park and Burgess, 1921: 43).

This notion of assimilation was utilized by many social scientists in order to distinguish between different aspects of assimilation. For example, Green (1960) emphasized on a clear distinction between "cultural and what he called

"social participation." For Gordon (1964), groups have two aspects: social structure and culture. Social structure is the crystallized social relationships, and culture is the way of a group's life (1964: 15). Thus, the study of assimilation, according to Gordon, must take into account the behavioral (equivalent of culture) and structural assimilation.

Both acculturation and assimilation have been employed to construct a theoretical framework for different researches on the problems facing foreigners as a result of living in another cultural environment. It is commonly agreed by many that both terms are points on a continuum from extreme cultural differences between sojourners and the hosts to a point where these two groups show no difference and are no longer distinguishable.

Shannon (1970: 5) claims that acculturation possibly occur in a short period of time, whereas assimilation is gradual and unconscious. He further argues that borrowing cultural traits may take place depending upon the nature of the contact between sojourners and the hosts; and it may also be related to the susceptibility of the individual foreigner whose cultural background provides him/her such potential for adapting to a new situation. On the other hand, assimilation is regarded as a total modification of behavior and that accompanies a change in social statuses, roles, and identity of the individual by which a person slowly comes to share the expectations of the other group.

Although other terms such as absorption, amalgamation, adaptation, etc., have been introduced by many researchers, it appears that they basically suggest the same notion discussed in the previous paragraphs which regards the conformity behavior. However, there exist slight differences<sup>2)</sup> between these two groups of concepts.

To conclude, in dealing with conformity behavior, the focus of attention is on a process where in the beginning there are elements peculiar to each group which might differentiate them from each other. On the other end of this continuum, it is likely for cultural integration to take place where distinctive differences have faded and the sojourner acquires new identity and perception of the self and learns new rules of behavior which are attributed to the culture of the receiving society.

Unlike the underlying assumption in the linear correlation between acculturation and assimilation, it can be argued that problems in adjusting to a foreign society arise in all shapes and circumstances. Even a positive personal adjustment does not mean that a person will no longer experience problems, obstacles, or depression. While emphasis here is on the conditions where individuals are developing a sense of being associated with the people of the host country through patterns of social relationships, one must keep in mind that no person is completely adjusted to the new social milieu. Any individual can be considered<sup>3)</sup> as having the potentials to adjust to a new environment.

With a slight modification of the above definitions and by introducing sociological factors into this process, we can view the process through a social psychological perspective. If we regard the adjustment process as changing through time, and if such process is feasible through interactional patterns, then we can realize that adjustment takes place through the process of interaction between the individual foreigner and other members of the host environment. Such process is, then, referred to the experiences that individuals acquire through changes in their social relationship patterns and their orientation toward the host society. Hence, adjustment involves a pattern of association and social participation and reorientation which is assumed to protect the person from having life strains, stresses, and other conflicting situations resulting from social isolation and loneliness. Thus, adjustment, in this context, means the ability of individuals to integrate into the larger system or the existing social reality.



**ENDNOTES**

1. All information and statistics in this part are derived from the 1980 annual report of Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Department of Justice.
2. Absorption, according to Eisenstadt (1955: 15), is a process learning of new roles, the transformation of primary group values, and the extension of participation beyond the primary group in the main sphere of the social system. Obviously, such definition resembles a process known as acculturation. But for Eisenstadt the completion of absorption is related to several connected phases. These are considered to be: 1) acquisition of various skills, 2) the ability to perform these skills or new roles, and 3) a gradual reform of beliefs system.  
Amalgamation has a different face. Strictly speaking, it refers to the biological process of fusion of two or more "gene pools" by interbreeding (Gordon, 1964: 71).
3. This is in reference to the composition of a highly complex set of interlocking systems that form the social structure into which the individual is thrust. This may encompass the ecological, social, psychological, social structural, cultural, economic, and political structure represented in a society. Since consideration of all of these factors seems to be a difficult task, for the sake of simplicity, by environment, it is referred to an amalgam of social, psychological, economic, and cultural factors affecting the life of an individual.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction:

The adjustment problem of foreign students has been the main concern of many studies for decades. The existing literature on the international students' adjustment to American society can be classified as: First, those whose primary concern is a cross-cultural comparison between different foreign nationals. This type of studies either focuses on the students from different nations on one campus, or their samples consist of several nations in different university settings. Second, studies which only focus on a selected nation and investigate students of that nation. In this case, the investigator is either interested in studying students at one particular university or the case may be a comparison between students of that nation in different universities.

While the aforementioned types of research focus on problems facing the foreign students, a third type of inquiry can be added to this list which aims at an understanding of the adjustment problem itself and suggests that individuals universally go through stages as they seek adjustment to the host culture.

All three types are either concerned with 1) individual changes over a period of time as a result of their sojourn, and issues related to the difficulties of adjustment (e.g., academic and nonacademic) in terms of detecting factors which are important to the overall success of a person studying in another country; or 2) they basically have attempted to explore the reason(s) for coming to the United States for the sake of comparison between returning and non-returning students. In any case, the overall results of these studies confirm the notion that most foreign students have had difficulties in their academic life as well as their social life and had experienced loneliness, emotional problems, and homesickness while studying abroad (Klineberg and Hull, 1979; Hull, 1978; Breuder, 1972; Ursua, 1969; Nash and Show, 1963; Watson and Lippitt, 1955).

Basically, this chapter deals with a survey of the literature that examines how different researchers operationally treated and defined the problem and how different concepts are used in order to address the issues and problems facing individuals living in a social context other than their own country of origin. The attempt is made to review two types of literature concerning the adjustment problems of individuals who, for one reason or the other, live in another society for an extended period of time: First, a general review of studies and their findings will be discussed. Coupled with this is an evaluation of the methods, theories, and techniques utilized in these

inquiries which detect their strengths and/or shortcomings in the field of quantitative investigations. Second, a brief review of the literature related to the case of Iranian students will be presented.

#### **Studies of the Adjustment Problem:**

Among studies which aim at the adjustment problem itself, Lysgaard's (1955) investigation on the Norwegian Fulbright grantees in the United States became a source for the subsequent investigations which introduced the importance of time factor in the process of adjustment. He proposed the famous U-curve hypothesis which means students' adjustment follows a U curve that consists of several phases:

1. Initial period after arrival of favorable reaction to new stimuli and with adjustment going smoothly.
2. Secondary period of depression and sense of alienation and criticism directed toward both the home and the host culture.
3. A third period of trying to integrate the differences between the two cultures.
- And,
4. a final period of growing satisfaction with insights gained and adjustment made. (Lysgaard, 1955: 46).

This can be interpreted that adjustment to a new environment appears to be easy to begin with; then follows a crisis; finally, the individual begins to become more integrated into the foreign community.

Lysgaard's hypothesis was further tested by several other investigators and it was favorably accepted by many when it was introduced in the 50's. Several other

investigators who utilize the U-curve assumption confirmed the universalistic character of the proposed hypothesis. Later, it was found to be inconclusive since it does not operate in all situations. However, its value as the starting point for other researchers cannot be discarded

Among studies which aimed to expand the U-curve assumption, Dubois' (1956) study is probably the most important work which aimed at an investigation of social and psychological factors related to foreign students' adjustment. She concluded that foreign students go through a series of adjustment periods during their sojourn in the United States -- which accords with Lysgaard's findings -- but the time frame varies considerably across individuals and cultures, and they can be overlapping. She further argues that different stages of the adjustment process are mainly conceptual categories rather than physical realities. This process has the following stages:

1. "Spectator" phase where the person is not integrated or involved in the host culture, but simply absorbing new data;
2. "Adaptive" phase where the person begins to participate. Negative reaction and frustration surface and the adjustment stresses are more strongly felt;
3. "Coming to terms" phase where the adaptive issues are brought into equilibrium. Judgments of both cultures are done on an increasingly objective basis; and,
4. "Pre-departure" phase where the importance of the return to home become prominent with increasing dissociation with the host culture and a reidentification with the home culture. (Dubois, 1956: 67-68).

A major study exploring factors related to the international students' attitude and their interaction with Americans was conducted by Coelho (1958). This study aimed at exploration of the process of acculturation by further testing Lysgaard's U-curve hypothesis. Samples in this study were interviewed three times during their stay in the United States. The data were compared; and, it was concluded that the phase of adjustment that Lysgaard postulated are applicable in this study. Coelho, then, formulated his own hypothesis that a foreign student's orientation to a reference group in the host culture would show increasing differentiation with the increased length of stay.

While Day's (1968) study confirmed that problems experienced by international students change according to the duration of their stay in the United States, Becker (1968) found that the U-curve hypothesis may be valid for those students who are from other developed countries, but it may operate in reverse for the students from less developed societies. The rationale is that students from less developed countries come to the United States with a higher degree of anxiety and hostility toward the United States in the earlier and later period of their sojourn but develop more favorable attitude toward the hosts in the middle of their sojourn.

There is also another possibility which was reported by Selby and Wood (1966). Their study on the adjustment pattern of non-European students indicated that the U-curve

hypothesis can be transformed into an angular V-curve. Selby and Wood found that students show a sharply dropping morale during the earlier period of their sojourn and more gradual raising in later part of a one year stay in the United States (1966: 140).

Numerous other studies were interested in testing other hypotheses regarding international students studying in the United States. The main focus of these latter investigations was to explore the importance of associational patterns and interpersonal relationships between sojourners and their hosts in the process of their adjustment. A popular assumption behind these studies was that the association with the people of the host country will facilitate the adjustment, since through interpersonal relationships individuals develop favorable attitudes toward the hosts (Selltitz et al., 1963).

Selltiz also found that the type of living arrangement has an impact on the interaction between sojourners and their hosts. This factor was assumed to determine the degree to which a foreign student has access to different opportunities which facilitate social relations between individuals. She found that foreign students who live in a house or residence where Americans also live have more opportunities to create social contacts. Although this hypothesis was generally supported by many social psychological studies, there seems to exist some disagreement among them particularly in cases where attitude

of racial discrimination or stereotyping is prevalent between parties or nations involved. Nonetheless, the time dimension which is implicit in this type of investigation plays an important role; and foreign students' interaction with Americans was found to be increasing with the increased length of time stayed in the United States (Goldsen et al., 1956).

Among studies which attempted to find a possible link between the foreign students' attitude toward the host country with the magnitude of their interpersonal relationships with host nationals over a period of time is the research conducted by Morris (1960). This investigation was conducted on 318 students from 65 nations who were studying in the United States. In the "Two-Way Mirror," Morris (1960) introduced the "national status" hypothesis which asserts that national status accorded to a foreign student's home country by the host country is directly related to his/her attitude toward the host society. A high correlation was found between the level of economic development of the country of origin and the national status measured by the students' feelings about the standing of their home country on several criteria. Morris also found that the national status is negatively correlated with the favorableness of attitude toward the host country.

Morris' study, while extremely subjective in its scope by utilizing subjective criteria such as individuals' attitudes toward the host and their home country, was



further developed by other researchers. For example, Chang (1973) found that the national status hypothesis is salient only among those foreign students who are highly involved with their home country and value their country more than other nationals.

Obviously, one of the most notable studies which deals with students in the United States is conducted by Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963). The Gullahorns focussed on the re-adjustment phase of American grantees who had returned from an overseas study experience. They found that these students' evaluation of certain situations had changed to a great extent which necessitates a reacculturation process in their home environment. Furthermore, their study indicated that entering a new culture may be interpreted as part of the process of socialization into the original culture; and as a consequence of previous socialization, the lack of material and moral support from the family at home country may influence their adjustment level while studying abroad (Gullahorn and Gullahorn, 1963: 34).

A review of the literature related to the exploration of factors associated with foreign students' adjustment to a culture other than their own must include the works of Klineberg (1964, 1976, 1979) who has done the most extensive studies that examined many hypotheses presented in previous investigations. Klineberg's (1964) study supported the idea that the type of contact between them and the hosts is a major factor affecting the perception of foreign students.

This study concludes that in order to overcome the barriers to international understanding and cooperation, foreign students must realize the relativity of their cultural perceptions

In the subsequent study in 1976, Klineberg investigated foreign students in seven different countries and concluded that contact between foreign students of the same nationality, other foreign students from other countries, and the people of the host culture was perceived as desirable in all seven countries. Such contacts seem more desirable if interpersonal relationships were based on friendship between students. This study was divided into three component levels:

1. Individual: It was found that, in spite of the adjustment problems, an overall happiness can be seen in most individuals who go abroad to study

2. Institutional: The majority of host institutions were also satisfied. They stated that foreign students' research and teaching abilities contributed to the regular educational program of the institution.

3. National and the international level: Klineberg's report is less clear on this level. Beyond the obvious outcome of international educational exchange which may contribute to the needs of developing countries for professional skills, there was no evidence in Klineberg's investigation that such educational programs lead to an improvement of the attitude which, consequently, strengthens

friendly relations between nations.

Klineberg's most recent work with Hull's collaboration (1979) also focusses on the foreign students' and their coping process. The purpose of this investigation was to study interrelationships among factors affecting the adaptation process. Its intention was to determine sources of satisfaction, difficulties encountered, and changes in the attitudes of the foreign students over time. They proposed the "modified cultural contact" hypothesis in this study. According to the modified cultural contact hypothesis, foreign students' satisfaction and comfortableness in interaction with local people and local culture during their sojourn has a positive correlation with general satisfaction with the total sojourn experience, not only academically, but also non-academically. Other findings of this study were based on examination of several different hypotheses including national status, length of sojourn, and interpersonal relationships. As a result, it generated a comprehensive degree of cross-national data.

There have been several other studies whose target population was a single nation which also confirmed the existence of adjustment problem of foreign students during their sojourn in the United States. Studies such as Hobbs' (1981) on Chinese students and scholars, Purhashem's (1981), Farzad's (1981), and Izadi's (1977) on Iranian students, Veroff's (1963) on African students, Bennett's (1958) on Japanese students, Beals' (1957) on Mexican students, and

Useem's and Useem's (1954a, 1954b) on Indians are in this category. The primary assumption of these studies is that differences in cultural background play a determining role in the consequences of foreign educational experiences.

#### **Studies on Iranian Students:**

A survey of the literature on the Iranian students' adjustment to the United States reveals the fact that Iranian students, as well as students from other overseas countries, are faced with difficulties in adjusting to American society. Many of the studies conducted on Iranian students simply followed the path initiated by previous researchers. They attempted to investigate the importance of factors which had bearing on the previous studies. Among factors which seemed to be important in the adjustment process are the length of stay and the interpersonal relationships with the hosts.

Naficy's (1966) report on the problems of Iranian students covers the major stages common to foreign students' sojourn in the United States: 1) early difficulties, 2) trouble and temptations encountered during the study period, and 3) termination of the program and decisions to return home and employment. As is obvious in Naficy's study, his primary concern is the "Brain Drain" or non-return of highly-trained people to take up needed positions in their home country.

Derived from the assumption of non-return, Valipour (1967) makes a comparative analysis between returning and

non-returning Iranian students in terms of three operationally defined variables: the degree of attachment to the home culture, the degree of acceptance of the host culture, and the degree of comparative opportunities at home and at the host country. With socio-economic background of the respondents, as the control variable, he found that returning Iranian students come from higher socio-economic background who had more satisfactory family life, closer ties with their families and friends.

Other investigators who were interested in conducting research on Iranian students as the target population can be classified into three groups:

1. Those who only aimed at an understanding of Iranian students' success or lack of success in academic achievement and tried to determine factors affecting such performance. Farzad's (1981) study of Iranian students in selected California universities, Purhasham's (1981) research on Iranian students across the nation compared with American students' academic achievement, and Izadi's (1977) inquiry of Iranian undergraduate students in Kansas are among this class of investigation. All these studies confirmed that language difficulties and financial problems of students are major sources of the academic adjustment problem of Iranian students while studying in the United States.

2. The second category of studies on Iranian students can be characterized as those which intend to explore the reason(s) for coming to the United States and factors

influencing the student's decision to return home after their graduation. Ardakani's (1976) on returning Iranian graduates, and Borhanmanesh's (1965) are among this kind.

3. The third type of investigations on the adjustment problem of Iranian students in the United States can be considered to be a more comprehensive type of inquiry. Researchers in this category attempted to investigate the adjustment process of Iranian students in the United States in three areas: social, personal, and, academic difficulties. Collection of the data on the background and personal characteristics of subjects is strongly recommended for the purpose of more sophisticated statistical analyses. In most of these types of studies, it was found that all three aforementioned aspects of adjustment have a positive correlation with sex, social class, area of study, academic standing, marital status, duration of the stay in the United States, language competency, and source(s) of financial support (Paydar, 1976; Hosseindoust, 1975; Moftakhar, 1975).

#### **Summary and Discussion:**

This brief review of theories and themes of various individual studies is undertaken to identify factors/variables that have been affecting adjustment of individuals to a culture other than their own. Obviously, without any exception, they all confirmed that almost all foreign students have some adjustment problems during their stay in a foreign environment. The adjustment problem of international students was determined to be associated often

with many complex factors; and adjustment would vary with each individual male, female, graduate, undergraduate, single, married, etc. The most important problems generated from living in another culture include language, unfamiliarity with social system, tradition, loneliness, financial problems, etc., which are supposed to have direct correlations with sex, age, field of study, length of stay, nationality, etc.

Most of the existing studies on adjustment recognize many push factors from home and pull factors from abroad that encourage sojourners to leave their country of origin; and, according to Rao, 1979, their order of importance vary from one country to another. Most factors associated with an individual's decision to go to another country are basically related to the characteristics of the country of origin. The reason(s) to go to another country may be social or political (Clark, 1970; Domrese, 1970), limitation in present technique in the field (Oldham, 1968), or the salary level is not adequate in the place of origin (Adams and Dirlam, 1968). In many developing countries discrimination based on race, religion, caste, and favoritism or some type of family and political connections are facts of life which play an important and determining role for sojourners to make any decision regarding departure or remaining in the country of origin (Rao, 1979).

It should be noted that studies reviewed in this section do not represent a "unit" which are theoretically focussed

and methodologically even (Spaulding et al., 1976).

Nonetheless, their all common characteristics to study the issues and problems of foreign students which are generated from living and studying in a social context other than their country of origin. But as Spaulding et al. (1976: 275), indicate, the body of the literature on foreign students is basically

1. quantitatively large;
2. methodologically uneven;
3. conceptually and theoretically unfocussed;
4. topically wide-ranging but seldom interrelated;
5. in results and findings, diverse, sometimes contradictory.

A large proportion of the existing studies on foreign students are just a single shot affair and there are very few longitudinal investigations which aim at detecting the notion of change in this context. The prevalent methods for collecting information appear to be questionnaire, interview, or combination of both. Seemingly, the self-administered questionnaire is preferred in cases where the researcher is dealing with samples of different universities. The most technically sophisticated researches used a variety of statistical correlation techniques. Among these are factor analysis and multiple regression analysis (de Olivera, 1982).

The findings of many studies cannot be generalized due to the nature of the sample under scrutiny. For example, the U-curve hypothesis, although important in terms of emphasizing the length of stay, did not seem to be operating



in all instances. Some studies, as was indicated in the previous paragraphs, showed a reverse U-curve for some nationals; the two-way mirror assumption was also found to be moderately confirmed in few studies that addressed it (Spaulding et al., 1976).

Although an investigation of factors affecting the flow of students to other countries is not the main concern of the present study, their importance cannot be disregarded since they portray the context in which such changes take place. Nevertheless, the present investigation is concerned with the adjustment problems of persons who live in a culture other than their own for an extended period of time. Such problems can fall into two categories: 1) adjustment to academic life in the country of destination; and, 2) social and personal adjustment to the culture of the receiving country. Hence, the emphasis on citing previous research activities was basically originated from their similarities with the present study in terms of sharing some criteria for measuring the phenomenon and the intended measurement techniques and methods for collecting and analyzing the data. However, the difference between the present study and the previous investigations is due to the differences in their theoretical frameworks because adjustment for many investigators, particularly those who worked on the U-curve assumption, seemed to mean having a favorable attitude toward the host country. As will be seen in the subsequent chapter, unidimensionality is avoided in this investigation

and it aims at fostering a theoretical framework which includes almost all contributing factors in this operation.

To conclude, in summarizing the literature reviewed here, one becomes aware of the fact that the various hypotheses tested in different studies examine only specific areas of interest which do not meet all cases. This can be interpreted not as a weakness in the theory building or design of the study, but as a sign of complexity of the factors and variables related to issues raised in the studies on the foreign students' adjustment. Thus, because of such limitations, making a definitive statement becomes almost impossible.

## CHAPTER III

### THE GUIDING THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

#### Introduction:

In this section, the attempt is made to formulate a theoretical framework suitable for studying the adjustment process of Iranian students by utilizing the guidelines employed in the studies reviewed in the previous chapter. The intention is to examine the validity and reliability of the variables employed in the previous investigations, to present a test of the relationships between variables that are indicators of the adjustment process, and to introduce a pattern of investigation through which an examination of the adjustment process can be made possible.

Hence, this research project consists of two parts: The first part studies the general characteristics of the individuals' adjustment process in terms of its underlying factors (i.e., the interconnectedness of variables constituting the adjustment). The second part explores the importance of individuals' personal characteristics. Hence, for this theoretical orientation, The following are the guiding factors among variables operating in the process of adjustment of individuals to a new social milieu. The reason for selecting these variables is their bearing on the

previous studies:

**1. Attributes (Correlates) of Adjustment:** The selected variables in this class are social interaction (e.g., interpersonal relationships or social contacts between sojourners and the hosts, social support provided for sojourners by the hosts) and the perceptual/evaluative aspects (e.g., the sojourners' general impressions and attitudes toward the host environment and their perceptions<sup>1)</sup> of their life situation in the receiving country). All together, the interactive relationships among the adjustment correlates indicate the adjustment process which will be discussed in detail in the subsequent pages.

**2. Personal Characteristics:** Obviously variables of this sort are numerous but included in this class are the respondents' gender, length of stay in the host country, marital status, financial situation (annual income), and language competency. These variables are particularly selected for their importance in the previous studies.

**Attributes (Correlates) of Adjustment:**

Adjustment is viewed as a process, a dynamic state through which individuals get acquainted with their surrounding sociocultural environment which enables them to interact with others in that milieu. Employing such a perspective enables us to view the adjustment process within a behavioral realm where social interactions are taking place. Coupled with this is the social psychological aspects of the adjustment which are recognized to be the perceptual

and evaluative dimensions of the adjustment. Furthermore, in dealing with these aspects of the individual's life in a foreign environment, one must take into account various conditions and circumstances that generate problems which demand resolution.

Thus, an analysis of the adjustment process becomes two-fold: On one hand, at the sociological level, it involves an investigation of the ability of individuals to encompass an associational pattern with their hosts which is assured to anticipate and respond to their needs; and, on the other hand, at the individual level, adjustment must be studied through the individual's aspiration, reorientation,<sup>2)</sup> and attitude toward the existing social realities. Therefore, both sides of this process must be taken into consideration if one is fully to comprehend the phenomenon itself.

1. **Social Interaction:** The basic attempt in this part is to investigate the interactional and communication patterns between individuals new to an environment and the members of the receiving society. The social networks between the individual foreigner and the community of the host environment will be analyzed through interpersonal relationships among them. It can be noted that three types of such social contacts may exist in the host society: The interpersonal relationships between the individual foreigner and the native inhabitants of the receiving country; the interpersonal relationships between the individual foreigner

and those from the country of origin who are residing in the host country; and, the interpersonal relationships between the individual foreigner and people from other overseas countries who are living in the host environment.<sup>3)</sup>

2. **Social Support Networks:** Generated from social interactional pattern is social support offered by the host which can be provided in different forms by different means. Social support is believed to be generated through primary face-to-face interaction among people. Social support can be provided in the form of moral and/or material support. It is represented by the degree to which the sojourner relies upon the hosts' help, guidance, and assistance in different situation, and the extent to which the sojourner perceives the hosts to be willing to offer them such help for the purpose of enhancing the easement of their life, though it may not be intentional.<sup>4)</sup>

In a broader sense, the interaction pattern, regarding the types presented in the last two paragraphs, can be recognized in terms of the related circumstances in which a primary face-to-face encounter takes place. Basically, these circumstances are regarded, in this investigation, to be informal type of contacts in day-to-day social activities. This may be considered as a pattern through which the individual foreigner becomes exposed to the behavioral patterns of the native inhabitants of the host country. The immediate consequence of such interaction is the degree of positive or negative feelings of each party toward the other

(Cicourel, 1982: 59).

**3. The Evaluative/Perceptual Aspects:** This aspect of the adjustment is related to the individual's evaluation and perception toward different aspects of his/her life situation in the host environment. Generally speaking, the focus of attention is mainly on the persons' general satisfaction with their life, be it their economic condition, professional and/or academic situation, or life condition in general. Thus, the attempt is made to investigate a social psychological state known as well-being of the person in the host society.

From the above indication of the component variables of the adjustment, the discussion will follow that further investigation of the variation in the adjustment level of individuals must take into account other independent variables affecting the adjustment process. Two categories of such variables can be recognized: Economic situation of sojourners, mainly, in terms of their financial situation; and, their demographic characteristics. Included in this latter part are the individuals' gender, marital status. Coupled with this are the persons' length of stay and their language competency. All together, variables described in this part are classified as the individual's personal characteristics.

**Conceptualization of Process:**

It becomes clear from the above indication of the variables operating in the process of adjustment that the focus of this study is on an assessment of some correlates of the adjustment. Hence, the attempt is made to introduce a study design which represent the existing relationships between the aforementioned variables. First, an assessment of correlation between the component variables of the adjustment will be provided. Second, variation in the adjustment level of individuals will be detected through an examination of the effects of the selected independent factors which aims to compare differences across different categories of respondents. The latter part is mainly devoted to an investigation of the effectiveness of personal characteristics on the adjustment process and their importance as the determining variables in this process.

The discussion of the relationships between variables in this investigation will be based on the following propositions which are treated as guiding assumptions in this project:

1. As the sojourners come into contact with the hosts, these people may become incorporated into their frame of references which may result in an enhancement of the individuals' favorable attitudes toward the hosts which, in turn, may increase the interpersonal relationships between sojourners and the hosts.

2. The adjustment correlates vary considerably among



individuals with different personal characteristics.

Of course, these assumptions are not meant to be proven right. In fact, the research is meant to test them, amend them, and add to them wherever necessary.

In the context of testing the first assumption of this research project, it is believed that as a consequence of daily contacts between sojourners and their hosts, the resulting situation would be formation of some attitudinal pattern toward the host. Such attitudes may in turn influence the individual's desire for future communication. That is, social interaction between sojourners and the hosts may generate a behavioral pattern through which the development of different patterns of affective attachment, respect, and empathy may occur. Such feelings are considered to be some sources which may prevent different sorts of disorder in the individual's life as a result of living in another sociocultural milieu. Therefore, the major important factor for minimizing disorders in the sojourner's life is the benevolent reception of the individual by the native residents; a pattern of behavior which is regarded as the "network of social support" (Coelho et al., 1980; Pearlin and Schooler, 1978; Caplan, 1974).

Social support is believed to be provided through the patterns of friendship in different areas such as academic and professional, love relationships, neighborhood setting, etc. Such supports are generated from a reciprocal interaction between individuals through patterns of

assistance, guidance and help that will, perhaps, enhance the newcomers' willingness to establish more interpersonal relationships with certain category of their hosts and eschewment of others.

Furthermore, a positive support through the primary face-to-face interaction is believed to increase newcomers' orientation toward the hosts and their reliance upon the native inhabitants of the receiving country. In order for the hosts to be helpful , they must provide this type of support in order to facilitate comfortability of life and minimize the impact of different problematic situations resulting from living in another society. As a matter of fact, the existence of such a support in the host country gives foreign nationals a sense of being welcome which may lead to reduction of tension, anxiety, and isolation. Encountering a warm reception from the hosts may generate a feeling in the individual that (s)he has been accepted by others which may, in turn, generate some degree of emotional reassurance. It is evident from Coelho's (1980) study that the absence of support may hinder the individual's adjustment. This occurs when a support network has not been built strongly enough to protect the person in the host environment.

Although a continuous interaction between sojourners and their hosts may rest on the communality of interests and shared similarities among individuals, a mere interaction may not always produce a favorable attitude of one toward

the other party. Thus, with respect to the interactional patterns, one needs to know the type of experiences that sojourners undergo when trying to establish relationships with the members of the receiving society. Apparently, it becomes impossible to function in another culture unless a person has a clear understanding and respect for that culture; otherwise, it may seem to be a mere tolerance of those who are different.

Thus, in agreement with the results of previous studies, in the area of attitude formation, it can be suggested that the individuals' attitudes are reflections of their experiences in the host environment. And, these experiences are generated from the daily encounters between sojourners and their hosts. Hence, when speaking of the attitude, it must be recognized that it is not meant to be mere feelings toward the existing social realities, but a combination of the individual's cognition, consciousness, and understanding of the surrounding sociocultural environment which generates certain tendencies in the person to act accordingly (Franklin, 1982: 16).

The argument presented in the previous paragraphs can, thus, be summarized in the following hypotheses:

1.1. The frequency of interpersonal relationships between foreign nationals and their hosts in the receiving country is correlated with the degree and provision of support in the hosts country.

1.2. The higher the frequency of interpersonal

relationships between foreign nationals and their hosts, the more favorable will be the individual's attitudes toward the hosts.

1.3. The greater the amount of support an individual experiences in the host country, the more favorable will be his/her attitudes toward the hosts.

1.4. The more favorable the individuals' attitudes toward the host, the more frequent will be the interpersonal relationships between foreign nationals and their hosts.

To be more precise about the relationships between the above mentioned variables, it can be argued that the provision of support may result in having more frequent contact with the hosts; and, the willingness to receive more support from them may be a consequence of the more positive attitude toward the hosts. Figure 1. represents an illustration of the mutual relationships between the component variables of the adjustment utilized in this investigation. (The arrows represent the direction of the relationship.)

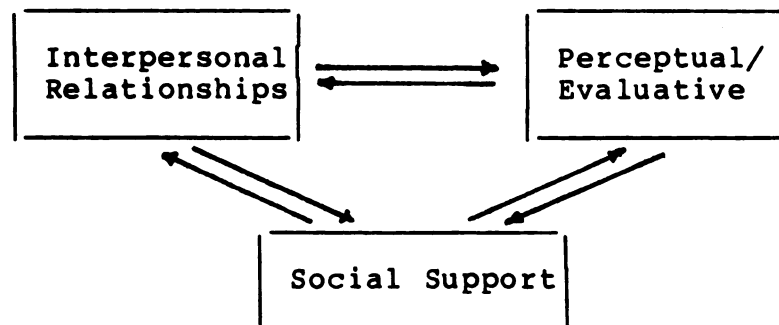


Figure 1. The Adjustment Pattern

Thus far, the focus of attention was on the adjustment pattern itself. By presenting the above argument and the related hypotheses, it was suggested that variables constituting the adjustment process have a close relationship with each other; and the intention of the proposed hypotheses was to detect this claim. In the discussion that follows, the attempt is made to investigate the importance of different independent factors affecting the adjustment of an individual in terms of their effectiveness in causing variations in the adjustment correlates. Hence, the following discussion aims at detecting the correctness of the second assumption of this study that the adjustment process of individuals varies according to the differences in their personal characteristics.

In search of an answer to whether the adjustment process is affected by the individuals' personal characteristic, each adjustment correlate is examined by the selected variables. Thus, when talking about adjustment, it is meant to take into consideration all three correlates. The following hypotheses will examine the relationships between the adjustment variables and personal characteristics:

First, the adjustment correlates are examined across different categories of the respondents' gender. Related hypotheses are:

2.1.1. The frequency of interpersonal relationships

between sojourners and their host varies according to the sojourners' gender.

2.1.2. The amount of social support experienced in the host country is correlated with the sojourners' gender.

2.1.3. Attitude toward the hosts varies among the male and the female respondents.

Second, the relationships between the respondents' marital status and their adjustment to the new environment will be examined. It is believed that the respondents' marital status will have a considerable effect on their adjustment correlates. The direction of the following argument is tended to be in favor of the single individuals, for they seem to possess greater opportunities in terms of integrating with the hosts. Hence, the following hypotheses:

2.2.1. Unmarried individuals will have more frequent interpersonal relationships with their hosts than married respondents.

2.2.2. Unmarried individuals are exposed to greater amount of social support provided in the host country.

2.2.3. Unmarried individuals will have more favorable attitudes toward their hosts.

Third, an investigation of the relationships between the sojourners' length of stay and the adjustment variables will follow:

2.3.1. The longer the length of stay, the more frequent will be the interpersonal relationships with the host.

2.3.2. The longer the length of stay, the greater will

be the support level received by an individual in the host environment.

2.3.3. The individuals' attitude toward their hosts varies at different stages of their stay in the host country.

It can be noted that the existence of a favorable attitude toward the hosts and acquisition of a strong support from the host may also enforce an individual's decision to stay in the host country for a longer period of time.

Fourth, further investigation of the variation in the adjustment variables will be based on an examination of the importance of the individuals' competence with the language spoken in the host country in their process of adjustment. The rationale behind this is the fact that the ability of individuals to open a reciprocal relationship with the native inhabitants of the host society corresponds with their ability in mastering the language spoken by the hosts. Hence,

2.4.1. the more competent with the language spoken in the host country, the more frequent will be the interpersonal relationships with the hosts.

It can be argued that the interpersonal relationship with the host through primary face-to-face interaction also plays an important role in the process of acquisition and development of learning the language spoken by the hosts. It is through such social interaction that a person becomes

acquainted with the proper usage of the language. Thus, social interaction with the hosts can also be considered as a source for developing the individuals' ability to utilize a foreign language. Since interpersonal relationship was regarded as a source of variation in other component variables of adjustment, it is assumed that language competency may indirectly influence the magnitude of social support and the individual's attitude toward the host society. Therefore,

2.4.2. the more competent with the language spoken in the host society, the greater will be the amount of support an individual experiences in the host environment. And,

2.4.3. the more competent with the language spoken in the host country, the more favorable will be the sojourner's attitude toward the host environment.

Finally, it is predicted that the adjustment variables to be highly correlated with the individuals' financial situation. Whether or not an individual who is in a better financial standing reports higher on the adjustment index will be discussed after the analysis of the collected data. Related hypotheses are:

2.5.1. There exists a correlation between the individual's financial situation and frequency of their interpersonal relationship with the hosts.

2.5.2. The amount of support that an individual is exposed to in the receiving country is correlated with his/her financial situation.



2.5.3. An individual's attitude toward the host environment is correlated with his/her financial situation.

**Discussion and Conclusion:**

As was indicated, adjustment is treated as a process through which the individual is confronted with a constant state of confrontation with the surrounding sociocultural environment and its refinement for the individuals' well-being. Seemingly, the purpose of such behavior is to establish stability and order in one's life while living in another society in order to be able to continue living within that milieu. This matrix of behavior necessitates a change in the attitude of individuals toward the group or society with which they intend to associate. One possible outcome of this process is believed to be the development of a sense of belonging to the new environment fostered by the person who is adjusting to that milieu.

Further changes in the individual's behavior may also take place as a result of their associational pattern with the hosts with the passage of time. Such changes, according to Useem and Useem (1963), occur on the individual level such as an acquisition of a new self-identity (e.g., self-image, national identity), and an attempt to get along with the hosts.

Although the manner in which problems are faced and resolved by sojourners during their stay in another country is admittedly an important and research deserving social process, consensus on the label that should be affixed to

the process is lacking. Adjustment can be discussed in an ambiguous mix of terms like "acculturation," "adaptation," "coping," "integration," "fitting in," "assimilation," and many other words. But, it can be noted that the common theme in these terms is the notion of change through which individuals tend to associate with the hosts. Nevertheless, in the context of this project, adjustment is considered neither as a psychological nor as a social structural condition ("state," "trait," or "quality"). It is seen as a process that has social structural antecedents and social psychological consequences. A skeletal representation of the process is shown in Figure 2 which sees the process as continuing through time, with feedback process continually modifying interactional and attitudinal dimensions.

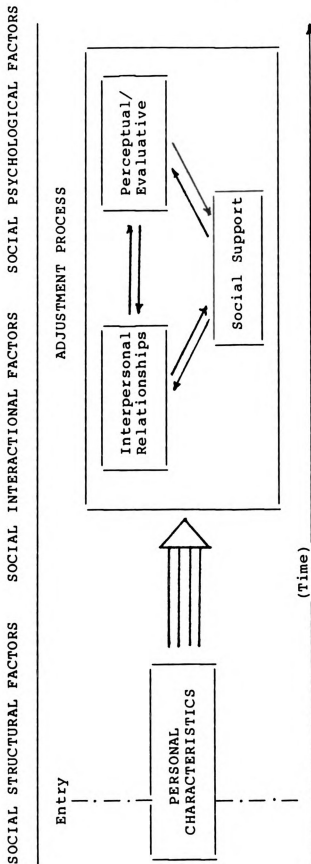


Figure 2. THE PROCESS

\*. Arrows represent the direction of the relationship.

**ENDNOTES**

1. From this point on, the term "host" is used to represent the native inhabitants of the receiving country. It indicates an array of individuals including American friends and neighbors, colleagues, professors, etc.
2. Obviously, the aforementioned variables are not the only factors constituting the adjustment process. As was indicated in the review of the literature, a research strategy on the adjustment process of foreign nationals may employ different variables measuring different aspects of the process. For the purpose of this investigation, it is intended to narrow its scope to those indicated in the text.
3. Friends and compatriots from the country of origin and from other overseas country who are experiencing similar problems are good sources to be referred to at a time of crisis. Undoubtedly, an analysis of the social networks between the sojourner and these people will benefit the results of this investigation to a great extent. Since adjustment, in this study, is defined in terms of social networks between sojourners and their hosts, the important role that compatriots may play in this dilemma was not taken into consideration. It is hoped that this deficiency will be eliminated in future studies.
4. It should be noted that by such networks it does not mean a dependency situation for sojourners upon which a total reliance on the host for their help is expected. Whereas, in this case, it means a mutual supportive network which is established between parties involved in a day-to-day interaction.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction:

Up to this point, theoretical and empirical studies and orientations related to the present investigation have been examined. By employing various variables utilized in the previous studies and generating a set of hypotheses, this research project intends to examine the replicability of previous findings in terms of their applicability to the case of Iranian students.

The interconnectedness of the selected factors in this study bears upon a measurement of the situation not based on a single variable, but mainly based on the multidimensionality of the phenomenon itself.

Since adjustment is treated as an ongoing process, it appears that it requires an extensive life history investigation. Employing such perspective necessitates a type of investigation which must be comparative in nature based on the perceived differences in the individuals' behavioral pattern. Although such procedure seems to be expensive and time consuming, the type of information sought in the present study was obtained directly from the respondents by utilizing a pseudo-longitudinal method. For

this purpose, the survey method was employed which allowed the investigator to design a questionnaire measuring the present situation of the respondents as well as their past when they first came to the United States and slightly thereafter. The survey method appeared to be more suitable for acquiring quantitative data for the purpose of replication and generalization to a larger population with known limits of error ( Warvick, 1975).

#### The Sample:

The population of this investigation consist of the Iranian students enrolled at Michigan State University<sup>1)</sup> during the spring term, 1984. According to the latest information available at the Office of International Students and Scholars at Michigan State University, there were 86 Iranian students who had registered for classes during that term. Due to the small size of the population under this investigation, it was decided to conduct the survey on all Iranian students. Preliminary screening of the population was done through examination of the information provided by the aforementioned office. A list of the students' names was obtained from the "Student Directory" (a Michigan State University publication). A classification of the students according to their sex and level of education is shown in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4.1. CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Graduate	Undergraduate	Total
Male	54	12	66
Female	15	5	20
Total	69	17	86

The application of survey method was provided by the use of the face-to-face interview schedule. The collected data were combined with information gathered by informal observation and unstructured friendly conversations in different settings. For further modification, clarification, and correction of items, the questionnaire was pretested on five randomly selected international students. Later, the final and developed version of the questionnaire served the purpose of this investigation. All surveys were conducted by the researcher.

By the time that the collection of the data was near completion, seven Iranian students had graduated and moved to other places, five refused to cooperate, and the remaining 13 were unidentified due to the change of their addresses. A post card was sent to the available addresses of these students to inform them about the nature of this study. They were also requested to contact the investigator in order to set up an appointment for the interview. It was assumed that the post office would either forward these cards to their new addresses or return them to the sender.

Two cards were returned to the sender and the remaining portion did not respond to this request. A disposition summary of population is shown in Table 4.1.

**TABLE 4.2. DISPOSITION SUMMARY OF POPULATION**

Classification	Number of Cases
Individuals Surveyed	61
Students Graduated	7
Refused Interview	5
Addresses Unknown	13
Study Population	86

#### **Operationalization of Variables:**

Addressing the problem presented in the previous sections necessitates measuring the variables selected for the purpose of this research project. Several meaningful orderings of the numerous variables can be constructed. For the purpose of this investigation, a classification and discussion of the variables follows:

1. **Personal Characteristics:** Although this class of variables covers a variety of different kinds, the intention of this study is to choose those which had bearing on the previous studies. These variables are gender, length of stay, marital status, language competency, and financial situation. Since these variables appear to be self-explanatory, the related information are obtained through



responses given to the related items in the questionnaire. The respondents' financial situation is measured by their annual income regardless of its source(s)<sup>5)</sup>. A subjective measure of language competency was provided based on the respondents' confidence and their own perception of their linguistic skills<sup>6)</sup>. This measure included the respondents' overall ability in writing, reading, comprehending the English language, and giving oral presentation.

**2. Adjustment Variables (Correlates):** The major areas to be covered in this section include information about the students' interpersonal relationship with host nationals, the amount of social support provided for students in the receiving country by the hosts, and the individuals' perception and attitudes toward the host environment and their evaluation of their life situation in the host society.

**2.1. Interpersonal Relationship With host Nationals:** As part of the social interactional pattern, this is examined by the extent that individuals maintain social contacts with host nationals through patterns of friendship and informal social gathering. Indicators of this variable are assumed to be frequency of spending time with the hosts, frequency of inviting them for an informal social gathering, frequency of being invited by the hosts for an informal social gathering, and length of time spent in each visit. It is believed that the aforementioned variables aim at measuring the nature and intensity of contact between Iranian students and Americans.

2.2. Social Support Variables: The emphasis here is on the type of social interaction based on the amount and frequency of help and assistance (e.g., favor), and guidance that sojourners may receive from Americans in different circumstances. Overall, the experience of being supported by others operates in a manner that is described by Henderson (1980) as a significant affectional contact. It is assumed that such supports are provided by the hosts in an understanding manner to reassure the sojourners on the existence of some type of affiliation and empathy. Variables measuring the support are the respondents' comfortableness in asking the hosts for help, frequency of asking for help, and frequency of receiving help from the hosts.

2.3. Evaluative/Perceptual Aspects: This part of the adjustment mainly deals with the personal aspects of the individuals' life while in the host country. Operationally, this is measured through perceptual and attitudinal variables such as individuals' perception of satisfaction with life situation, general attitudes toward the hosts, perception of Americans' attitude toward foreigners, perception of hospitality/discrimination in the United States, attractiveness of American life style, trust and respect toward the hosts, and perception of Americans' friendliness.

#### **Assessing Measures of the Adjustment Correlates:**

In order to measure the adjustment correlates, a series of independent questions were asked each of which is assumed

to reflect one aspect of the adjustment process. A Likert type of scale was employed to measure these variables. The indicators varied from the low to the high based on a five, and occasionally six, point scale for each question. After the collection of the data, the SPSS computer program was utilized to compute raw frequencies for the relevant variables. Recoding of variables was also done to reduce scale values to three: Low; Medium; and, High in each case.

Indices were constructed for each adjustment variable based on the combined scores of items in each set assuming that the overall score reflects that particular variable which provides a reasonable measure of the correlate under scrutiny. Such technique is usually used to measure a combination of the values of several variables into a composit measure. It is assumed that "such indices will predict or gauge some underlying continuum which can be only partially measured by any single item or variable which is included in the index" (Nie et al.,1970: 529).

Before constructing indices, two statistical tests were employed to detect the importance and contribution of each item to the total body of the index: 1) Pearsonian product moment correlation which indicated the correlation between items in each set; and, 2) Cronbach's reliability test ( $\alpha$ ) which determined the strength of the correlation between each item in the set with the combination of the remaining items in the index. In fact, these procedures were used for selecting index items which had the highest correlation with

other items and performed stronger contribution for constructing the index. The remaining items were, therefore, excluded from the measurement. Additional recoding of indices were also accomplished in order to maintain index values to three in each case.

#### **Data Analysis: Statistical Techniques**

All information derived from the survey were coded and prepared for statistical analysis by computer. All items were predicted to contribute to the purpose of this research project.

In order to test the hypotheses, several statistical procedures were used to ascertain the correctness of the findings. In those instances where the relationships between the adjustment correlates were under investigation, crosstabulation of variables was utilized which accompanied partial correlation analysis. This was done based on the theoretical framework of this project that the relationship between any pair of the adjustment correlates can only be detected if the effects of the remaining variable is taken into account. In all instances where crosstabulation of variables were utilized, the differences between groups were compared by using both Pearsonian product moment correlation and (raw) Chi-square test of significance. The purpose was to include both parametric and nonparametric statistical tests, respectively. Differences between subgroups were noted when they were significant at 0.05 level.

When assessing the relationships between personal

characteristics and the adjustment variables, the attempt is made to investigate these relationships by both separate and joint treatment of the variables. That is, once each adjustment correlate is separately tabulated by each personal characteristic variable, then, the adjustment correlates are treated in a collective manner and tested for the effects of the individuals' personal characteristics. In this latter case, two possibilities are likely to occur:

1) On one hand, the adjustment correlates may be correlated with each other in an additive form; hence, the adjustment level is described by a linear combination of the respondents' scores on each correlate of the adjustment. This index is, then, tested for the effects of the personal characteristics by employing multiple regression analysis. The purpose is to detect the degree to which the adjustment index will regress on the selected individuals' personal characteristics; and which factor plays the most influential role in causing variation in the individuals' adjustment.

2) On the other hand, one may assume that the adjustment variables are correlated with each other in an interactive manner. In this case, canonical correlation analysis is utilized to measure the maximized correlation between the adjustment variables and the individuals' personal characteristics. A comparison between the findings of these tests and the extent of their variations is hoped to indicate and justify the validity of the conclusions of this research project.

## ENDNOTES

1. The researcher is excluded from this list.
2. It was intended not to include Iranian students in pretesting since their exposure to the content of the questionnaire was predicted to have an effect on the outcome of the actual survey.
3. See Appendix A for a complete statement of items. These numbers in the parantheses indicate the percentage of respondents who fall into that specific category. Whenever the sum is not equal 100, the remaining proportion falls into the "Not Applicable" category.
4. It must be noted that other variables such as age and the family structure in terms of the nationality of the respondents' spouse were excluded from this list for the following reasons: First, the average age was 30 years old and the majority of the respondents fall within the range of 25 to 35 years age cohort which diminishes between group variation to a great extent. Second, the respondents' family structure in terms of their spouse's nationality was also disregarded in this investigation due to the limited number of the participants who were married to a non-Iranian spouse (only 10 percent). See Appendix A, Question 4.
5. It could have been either their parental support and personal savings or the salary they have earned while working.
6. It is customary to judge the students' linguistic skills based on their scores on the English proficiency test (such as TOEFL and/or G.R.E.). These objective measures of language competency did not seem to be a useful technique in this study, since the greatest proportion of respondents did not take either tests: 66 percent of respondents did not take G.R.E. and 54 percent did not take TOEFL. Most of those who have taken either tests were not able to remember their scores. See Appendix A, Question 62.

## **FINDINGS**

## CHAPTER V

### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

It is basically accepted by many researchers that certain personal characteristics of individuals living in a foreign country play important roles in their process of adjustment. In the discussion that follows, attention is paid to exploring the general personal characteristics of Iranian students participating in this study. It is intended to focus on important factors such as sex, age, marital status, length of stay, academic standing, financial situation, and linguistic skills. While this part of the study deals with each one of the aforementioned variables independently, an analysis of the effect that such personal characteristics may have on the adjustment variables will be discussed in a separate chapter.

Based on the collected information, Iranian students surveyed in this study can be described as being heterogeneous and having diverse background characteristics. In most cases, responses given to a particular set of questions regarding personal information varied considerably from person to person. Nevertheless, it appears that they share one thing in common; that is, higher educational attainment is the primary motivational factor for



1)  
encouraging them to come to the United States. Table 5.1  
presents a summary of the respondents' personal information.

**TABLE 5.1. PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

VARIABLES	CATEGORIES	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
<b>Sex</b>			
	1) Male	45	73.8
	2) Female	16	26.2
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Age</b>			
	1) Under 24 Years	10	16.4
	2) 25 - 29 Years	15	24.6
	3) 30 - 34 Years	24	39.3
	4) 35 Years +	12	19.7
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>			
	1) Single	31	50.8
	2) Married	30	49.2
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Spouse's Nationality</b>			
	1) country of Origin	24	80.0
	2) Other Oversea Countries	2	6.7
	3) American	4	13.3
	Total	30	100.0

TABLE 5.1. CONT.

VARIABLES	CATEGORIES	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
<b>Length of Stay</b>			
	1) Less Than 5 Years	19	31.1
	2) 6 - 7 Years	26	42.6
	3) More Than 8 Years	16	26.2
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Academic Degree Before Entering The U.S.A</b>			
	1) High School Diploma	24	39.3
	2) B.S. Or B.A.	31	50.8
	3) M.S. Or M.A.	6	9.9
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Academic Degree Working Now</b>			
	1) B.S. Or B.A.	11	18.0
	2) M.S. Or M.A.	11	18.0
	3) Ph. D.	39	64.0
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Academic Major</b>			
	1) Education	7	11.5
	2) Social Science	13	21.3
	3) Engineering	19	31.1
	4) Natural Science	17	27.9
	5) Others	5	8.2
	Total	61	100.0

TABLE 5.1. CONT.

VARIABLES	CATEGORIES	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
<b>G.P.A.</b>			
	1) Below 3.00	14	23.0
	2) 3.00 - 3.50	24	39.3
	3) Higher Than 3.50	23	37.7
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Academic Progress</b>			
	1) Slower Than Anticipated	29	47.6
	2) Right On Time	26	42.6
	3) Faster Than Anticipated	6	9.8
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Financial Sources</b>			
	1) Personal Savings	18	29.5
	2) Teaching/ Research Assistantship	35	57.4
	3) Other Sources	8	13.1
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Income</b>			
	1) Less Than \$5,999	18	29.5
	2) \$6,000 - \$7,999	18	29.5
	3) \$8,000 or More	25	41.0
	Total	61	100.0

TABLE 5.1. CONT.

VARIABLES	CATEGORIES	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
<b>Living Arrangement</b>			
	1) Relatives (including Spouse and Children)	31	50.8
	2) Compatriots	12	19.7
	3) Live Alone	8	13.1
	4) Americans	6	9.8
	5) Other Nationals	4	6.6
	Total	61	100.0
<b>Linguistic Skills</b>			
	1) Poor	15	24.6
	2) Average	24	39.3
	3) Good	22	36.1
	Total	61	100.0

As is indicated in Table 5.1, the majority of respondents were male (74 percent) and 26 percent were female. This corresponds to the actual proportion of male to female found in the population. The raw data indicate that respondents' age varies from 19 to 49 years old. After recoding the frequency distribution on age, it was observed that a great many of Iranian students were located in the 30<sup>2)</sup> to 34 years old category (39 percent). Respondents under 24 years old constitute 16 percent of the sample and 24 percent

of all participants in this study are found in the 25 to 29 years old category. The remaining proportion (19 percent) are either 35 years old or older.

Of 61 students surveyed, 51 percent were single. (This also includes two cases who were married before but are presently single.) A total of 49 percent of the sample are married and live with their family, e.g., spouse and children. The majority of married respondents indicated their spouse is from their country of origin: 80 percent of all married participants. Only 13 percent of the respondents have American spouse and seven percent who are married to other nationals.

As the data in Table 5.1 suggest, the length of stay in the United States varies from less than five years (31 percent) to more than eight years (26 percent) and 43 percent stated that they have been in this country for six to seven years.

Basically most students came to the United States either with a high school diploma (39 percent) or a bachelor degree (51 percent). Whereas only 10 percent had completed their Master's program in the home country. No one in this sample had received a Ph.D. degree prior to their arrival. Incidentally, it appears that most Iranian students are working toward their Ph.D. degree at present: 64 percent of all respondents surveyed in this study are found in the Ph.D. category of the academic standing at present, compared with 18 percent at the Master's level and the remaining 18

percent who are still at the undergraduate level.

As is the case with most international students, a great proportion of Iranian students are majoring in Engineering and Natural Sciences (31 percent and 28 percent, respectively). approximately 12 percent of the respondents are enrolled in the college of Education, 21 percent are becoming social scientists, and only eight percent are studying other majors.<sup>3)</sup>

Their academic performance seems to be satisfactory when compared with other students in their department. The majority of respondents indicated their Grade Point Average is above a three point: 39 percent of the sample reported their G.P.A. was between 3.0 - 3.5, 38 percent are found among students with high academic performance (with a G.P.A. greater than 3.5), whereas only 23 percent of the sample indicated their Grade Point Average was below three point at the time when this study was conducted.<sup>4)</sup>

Nonetheless, many students mentioned that it is taking them a longer time to fulfill their degree requirements than expected. Although 43 percent of all respondents reported their academic progress accords with the time required by the university policy, only 10 percent are completing their degree faster than it was anticipated, whereas 48 percent indicated their progress in the academic area is slower than anticipated. One reason for this is basically the amount of time spent on other activities, e.g., work, for earning money to afford many expenses such as tuition fees, room and

board, etc, instead of devoting themselves totally to the academic aspects of their life.

Unlike other international students, most Iranian students do not receive any type of financial support from their government. And, because of the recent policy and restriction imposed on the money exodus by the government of Iran, many parents are not able to send money for their  
5)  
children.

In terms of the source(s) of their financial support, the majority of Iranian students are receiving either teaching or research assistantship from the academic institution in which they are enrolled (57 percent). About 30 percent of the sample are supported by their parents. There are also a few students whose source of income is neither parental support nor are they receiving any type of financial support from their department. This latter category are involved in doing other on campus jobs (13 percent).

The overall income level of Iranian students seems to be sufficient to pay their expenses while in the United States. It was observed that 41 percent of the sample have an annual income of \$8,000 and above, 30 percent earn something between six to seven thousand dollars, and the remaining 29 percent reported their annual income was less than six thousand dollars.

The greatest proportion of Iranian students live with their relatives, e.g., spouse or siblings (51 percent), 20

percent are living with other Iranian students, 13 percent are also living alone, 10 percent are living with American students or families, and only seven percent are living with other nationals.

Although many international students may have problems in terms of mastering a foreign language at a high level of proficiency, Iranian students' ability to communicate in the English language seems to be satisfactory. Based on the collected information in this study, speaking, reading, and comprehending the English language do not seem to be problematic for the majority of respondents of the present study. The main difficulty for most Iranian students appears to be their writing ability. Nonetheless, the overall index of the linguistic skills shows that Iranian students, as a group, consider themselves as having above average command of the English language: Whereas 36 percent of the respondents were highly satisfied with their language proficiency and 39 percent indicated their ability in mastering the language to be on the average level (a total of 75 percent of the sample constituting the above average category in this respect), Only 25 percent mentioned they have difficulties in utilizing the English language in their every day life due to their lack of sufficient knowledge and practice regarding this matter.



**ENDNOTES**

1. Such assertion is derived from my own informal observation and conversation with the respondents. Although in some cases different reasons were given for such visits, educational purpose is the primary factor motivating individual to come to the United States.
2. The average age calculated for the sample is 30 years old.
3. Among those who are categorized as others, two respondents indicated that they are majoring in Medical Technology and the rest were in the process of changing their major.
4. The computed mean for G.P.A. is 2.15 with a standard deviation equal to .77 indicating the Grade Point Average of the sample falls somewhere around 3.50. See Appendix A, Question 64.
5. Parents are allowed to send only \$8,000 for each student per year. This allowance is limited to a two-year period for a Master's candidate, and four years for students at the Ph.D. or undergraduate level.
6. The type of work available is usually manual such as custodial (maintenance), food processing and the like.
7. A frequency distribution of these items is presented in Appendix B, Tables B1, B2, B3, B4, respectively.

## CHAPTER VI

### CORRELATES OF THE ADJUSTMENT PROCESS OVER TIME

#### Introduction:

A dynamic study of the adjustment process of foreign nationals lies in an investigation of the "process" itself through which individuals modify their already learned patterns of behavior and acquire new modes of thought, beliefs, and attitudes while being in a foreign country for a period of time. Unfortunately, most studies focussing on this phenomenon lack such characteristic: They have focussed on the adjustment problem at a given point of time pointing out "what individuals' adjustment is" rather than inquiring "what individuals have become" during the course of their stay in the host country.

Hence it becomes the main focus of this chapter to examine those findings that reveal the notion of change which occurred in different aspects of a person's life while being in the receiving country. The following paragraphs, thus, aim at discovering the trend through which participants of this study underwent varying degrees of change in their personal relationship with Americans, in their attitudes toward the surrounding environment and the life situation, and in the degree of support received in the

host country. It is believed that a comparison of the component variables of adjustment at two points in time will benefit our understanding of such processes. Therefore, each indicator measuring different aspects of the adjustment process is separately analyzed with respect to responses given at two different points of time, namely, at present and in the past when they first came to the United States or slightly thereafter.

#### **Interpersonal Relationships:**

The reported pattern of face-to-face contact indicates that Iranian students, over the extended period of their stay, have developed more frequent personal relationships with Americans, maintained an extensive contact with other Iranian students, and showed less interest in having more frequent communication with people from other overseas countries. Apparently, compatriots are not the only group of people with whom participants of this study desired to develop interpersonal relationships, Americans also seemed to be the most preferred group for such contacts. The constructed index of interpersonal relationship measuring different aspects of the face-to-face relationship between Iranian students and other groups is presented in Table 6.1.<sup>1)</sup>

From the data in Table 6.1, it appears that more respondents have face-to-face contact with Americans at present than in the past. Although the calculated mean in Table 6.1 does not show this change, the increasing pattern of face-to-face relationship is more evident in Table B5,

Appendix B, where the differences in contact level is shown over time.

**TABLE 6.1. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH  
DIFFERENT NATIONAL GROUPS**

Interpersonal Relationship	Americans		Compatriots		Other Nationals	
	Present	Past	Present	Past	present	Past
1) Low	24.6% (15)	32.8% (20)	8.2% (5)	3.3% (2)	55.7% (34)	42.6% (26)
2) Medium	41.0% (25)	26.2% (16)	24.6% (15)	8.2% (5)	29.5% (18)	29.5% (18)
3) High	34.4% (21)	41.0% (25)	67.2% (41)	88.5% (54)	14.8% (9)	27.9% (17)
Total	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)
Mean=	2.09	2.08	2.59	2.85	1.59	1.85
SD =	.77	.86	.64	.44	.74	.83

At present, 41 percent of the respondents in this study have medium frequency of interpersonal relationship with Americans, 34 percent are those who were highly communicative with their hosts, whereas only 25 percent reported having minimal interaction with this group. Evidently, there were more Iranians with the higher frequency of personal relationship with Americans in the past, but the overall above average pattern of face-to-face contact between Iranian students and Americans seems to be less in the past than at present: 67 percent of the sample surveyed in this study reported an above average frequency of social contacts with Americans in the past as compared to

75 percent with the same amount of contact at present.

Further examination of the above data suggests that the proportion of participants with more frequent contact with the host is far greater than those who were not interested in communicating with their hosts. But, as the time went by, more individuals became involved in establishing more frequent contacts with Americans.<sup>2)</sup> In spite of a decline in the total percentage of individuals at the high level of interpersonal relationship with Americans at present, the overall pattern of interaction explained in the previous paragraph still persists in the final analysis. That is, the collective responses of the participants of this study indicate that the actual communication with Americans, both at present and in the past, falls over the mid point of the original 3-point extent scale, indicating medium frequency<sup>3)</sup> of contact inclining toward the high level.

Comparing the magnitude of differences in contact measures between past and present, the data show the following:<sup>4)</sup> 1) Among students with low interpersonal relationships in the past, 55 percent remained at low level at present time, but 45 percent have developed more frequent contact. 2) Those with medium contact in the past, 50 percent have increased their contact with their hosts, six percent have decreased contact and 44 percent remained at the same contact level. Additionally, the majority of respondents with the highest frequency of contact in the past seems to have maintained the same level of interaction

with Americans at present (48 percent), 40 percent of them have become moderately interactive with Americans, whereas only 12 percent reduced their relationship to the minimum frequency of contact.

According to the above findings, an improvement in the adjustment can be seen in areas where the interpersonal relationships with Americans are taken into consideration. The development of face-to-face contacts between the respondents of this study and their hosts over a period of time, thus, indicates a pattern of change which is occurring at least in one area of the adjustment process of Iranian students to the new environment.

It was also observed that most participants of this study sustained more extensive contact with their compatriots, in spite of a slight reduction in the proportion of respondents who had high personal relationship with people from the home country. In either cases, both at present and in the past, the greatest proportion of individuals are found in the high category of interpersonal relationship with compatriots (67 percent at present and 89 percent in the past).

Social interactions with compatriots seem to be declining with the passage of time. As the data in Table 6.1 suggest, it seems that many respondents decreased their interpersonal relationships with their compatriots to the medium level. And these were basically those students who had more extensive contacts with their compatriots in the

past.

On the other hand, social contacts between the respondents of this study and other nationals who live in the United States have never been overwhelmingly extensive and deeply rooted. A great many of Iranian students did not have high frequency of interpersonal relationship with people from other overseas countries either in the past or at present. Those who have had more frequent interpersonal relationship with other nationals constitute only 15 percent of the sample surveyed at present and 28 percent of the past.

The proportion of respondents with low frequency of contact with people from other overseas countries seems to be far greater than any other categories both at present and in the past: 56 percent of all students at present are found in the low category of contact with other national, and only 29 percent have only moderately interacted with this group of people. Although the same pattern of behavior is observed from the data measuring social interaction with other nationals in the past, there appears that more individuals had more extensive interpersonal relationships with these people in the past.

According to the findings presented in the previous paragraphs, it can be concluded that Iranian students have developed an increasingly more extensive contacts with Americans over the period of time they have stayed in this country. A lack of interest in increasing their daily

communication with people from the home country and also other nationals was seen among many.

### **Social Support:**

This section deals with changes which have occurred in the magnitude of social support provided for Iranian students in the United States. Although the main frame of analysis in this study is designed to investigate the importance of supports provided by the hosts, the extent that compatriots and other nationals partake in creating a more comfortable life condition in the receiving society cannot be disregarded. Hence an attempt is made to compare different groups in terms of the provided support which will lead to the detection of the most supportive group in this dilemma. Individuals' responses with respect to this dimension of the adjustment process are shown in Table 6.2.

**TABLE 6.2. SOCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY DIFFERENT NATIONAL GROUPS**

Social Support	American		Compatriots		Other Nationals	
	Present	Past	Present	Past	Present	Past
1) Low	37.7% (23)	49.2% (30)	13.1% (8)	16.4% (10)	16.4% (10)	23.0% (14)
2) Medium	44.3% (27)	36.1% (22)	19.7% (12)	36.1% (22)	34.4% (21)	41.0% (25)
3) High	18.0% (11)	14.7% (9)	67.2% (41)	47.5% (29)	49.2% (30)	36.0% (22)
Total	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)
Mean =	2.00	1.66	2.54	2.31	2.32	2.13
SD =	.72	.77	.72	.74	.74	.76



According to the statistics presented in Table 6.2, the number of individuals who have experienced some degree of support provided by different groups has increased considerably at present when the two time periods are compared. It appears that more respondents confirmed being exposed to different types of support at present than in the past when they first came to the United States and slightly thereafter. Nonetheless, there exists a great difference in the magnitude of support between the aforementioned groups both at present and in the past: Americans seemed to be the least supportive group, compatriots are believed to be the most supportive ones, and other nationals are located in the middle.

The reported pattern of social support provided by Americans shows an increase over the period of time since the respondents' arrival till the present time. Despite the fact that a great proportion of Iranian students have not been supported by Americans in the past (49 percent), those who received moderate support in the past constitute 36 percent of the sample, and only 15 percent indicated they had been highly supported when they first came to the United States and slightly thereafter. Incidentally, the greatest proportion of the respondents who were presently supported by their hosts are found among the moderate group (44 percent). Compared with 18 percent in the high category of support at present, 38 percent of the respondents received little or no support at all.

Further elaboration of the above findings revealed that changes in the proportion of respondents who indicated being more frequently supported in the past was not a result of the direct transformation of individuals from the lower to the higher categories. On the contrary, there were students who were highly supported in the past but are found not to be tremendously impressed by Americans' support at present and vice-versa. It was found that 60 percent of those who experienced low support in the past still face the same amount of support from their hosts at present, 27 percent of them shifted to the middle and 13 percent indicated they were highly supported by Americans at present.

Among Iranian students who had been moderately supported by their hosts in the past, 68 percent still hold the same position at present, whereas, with the passage of time, the support level for 18 percent are reduced to the lowest possible, and 14 percent of them are found among highly supported respondents.

Among individuals who were highly supported by Americans in the past, 44 percent are still benefitting from such high quality of support at present, 44 percent of them are experiencing a moderate support and only one person reported a shift to the low level of support at present.

In sum, in spite of the aforementioned changes in the pattern of social support provided by Americans, the trend seems to be toward an increase in the number of individuals who have become more exposed to a moderate or a high

frequency of support. This is accompanied with a reduction in the proportion of those who indicated experiencing low support in the past. Although changes in this area did not seem to be drastic, and many respondents remained in the same category of support provided by the host, a slight increase in the level of support may not be a strong indicator of changes in this aspect of the Iranian students' adjustment process in the recipient country. Nevertheless, as a part of the social interactional process, even such small change in the behavior of the individual must not be neglected.

According to the index of support provided by other Iranian students (compatriots), it appears that the greatest proportion of individuals surveyed in this study are among the highly supported group both at present and in the past (67 percent at present and 47 percent in the past, respectively). At present, 20 percent of Iranian students indicated they have received a moderate support by compatriots, and 13 percent received little or no support from other Iranian students. Also, only 16 percent of the sample experienced low support from their compatriots in the past, and 36 percent of them are found in the medium category of support at that time.

Further analysis of the collected data for this part suggests that basically most respondents who were either moderately or highly exposed to their compatriots support in the past turned to be the recipients of a high degree of

social support at present. For example, among students with low frequency of support received from compatriots in the past, 50 percent were still in the low category of support at present, whereas the rest of this group were provided more support at the later stage of their stay in the host environment (40 percent in the medium and 10 percent in the high category).<sup>6)</sup>

Only 18 percent of the respondents at the medium support level in the past remained in the same category at present, 73 percent indicated more support received with the passage of time, and for a small proportion (nine percent) the level of compatriots' support was reduced to the low at present.

The greatest proportion of respondents who were among the high support category in the past still consider their compatriots highly supportive (83 percent). Fourteen percent of them in the high category of support provided by other Iranians in the past are found in the medium support category at present, whereas only 3 percent were denied of any kind of support by people from their home country.

Other nationals also seem to be more supportive than Americans but less than compatriots. The overall pattern of support provided by people from other overseas countries shows that 1) the number of participants of this study who were exposed to a high frequency of support provided by other nationals at present is more than the proportion of highly supported respondents in the past; and, 2) the

greatest proportion of individuals is found in the moderate or the high categories of support than in the low.

With regard to the supportive behavior of other nationals, the data show that most students are at the same present level as they were in the past:<sup>7)</sup> Among that group of Iranians who were exposed to a minimum amount of support by people from other overseas countries in the past, 57 percent are experiencing the same amount of support at present, 14 percent are receiving moderate support, and other nationals support increased to the high level for 29 percent. Of those who were moderately supported by other nationals in the past, 64 percent maintained at the same support level at present, 32 percent of them are experiencing higher level of support, and only four percent indicated low support at present. Among highly supported group in the past, 82 percent are still being highly supported by other nationals, this amount of support for 14 percent dropped to the medium at present, and only four percent are receiving the lowest support level.

One of the reasons that compatriots and other nationals are viewed to be highly supportive is the fact that in many instances both groups have experienced similar situations in the host country. Perhaps similar feelings such as sympathy and self-example can be regarded as the basic and motivating factors for directing such behavioral pattern toward those who are experiencing similar problems and difficulties as a result of living in a different social context: They all are

considered to be "foreigners," anyway.

#### **Evaluative/Perceptual Aspects:**

The individuals' attitude and personal evaluations derived from the experiences of living in a foreign society are examined in this section. The collected data for this part suggest that participants of this study hold diverse attitudes toward their surroundings. Such diversity of opinion becomes more apparent particularly in the area of attitudinal aspects measured at "present," whereas there seems to be more agreement among Iranians surveyed in this study in the "past" in terms of their perception of the surrounding environment, their life situation in a foreign country, and their ideas of people with whom they encounter.

Generally speaking, most respondents seemed to hold more favorable than unfavorable attitude toward Americans and their life situation in the surrounding environment both at present and in the past. But the proportion of those who expressed more favorable attitude in the past is greater than the proportion of respondents who are holding similar opinion at present. Overall, Iranians describe Americans as friendly, somewhat trustworthy and respectful; American life style seems to be very attractive for the majority of respondents; the United States is considered a hospitable environment in which to live. Nevertheless, Americans are regarded as being very individualistic in many respects: 8)  
 "They are good people but they look out for themselves."

Such a view of the United States expressed by Iranians

participating in this study appears to be somewhat similar to the findings of other studies conducted on foreign nationals. However, it cannot be said that all foreigners develop a typical attitude toward their hosts; particularly, as was mentioned earlier, not even Iranians hold similar attitudes and perceptions toward Americans, since the general impression of individuals is observed to vary considerably from person to person. Therefore, depending upon the situation encountered, the types of problems experienced by individuals and their severity, the expressed attitudes change from time to time. Table 6.3 shows the evaluative/perceptual aspects of the Iranian students' adjustment process.

**TABLE 6.3. INDEX OF THE EVALUATIVE/PERCEPTUAL ASPECTS**

Categories	Present	Past
1) Low Favorable Attitude	16.4% (10)	8.2% (5)
2) Moderately Favorable Attitude	37.7% (23)	65.6% (40)
3) High Favorable Attitude	45.9% (28)	26.2% (16)
Total	100.0% (61)	100.0% (61)
Mean=	2.29	2.18
SD =	.74	.56

According to the data presented in Table 6.3, living in the United States for a period of time has some effects on the attitude formation of individuals studied in this project. The data suggest that the preconception about the United States are basically favorable among Iranians at the time of arrival. The collected data for the past shows that 66 percent of all respondents held moderately favorable attitude toward Americans in the past and 26 percent were highly in favor of the United States in many aspects (totalling 92 percent of the sample with more or less favorable attitude), whereas only eight percent had low favorable attitude during the first few months after their arrival.

Apparently, more respondents are shifted toward the high favorable attitude over the period of time they stayed in the United States: 46 percent of all individuals surveyed in this study showed high favorable attitude at present and 38 percent developed moderately favorable attitude (totalling 84 percent of the sample with more or less favorable attitude), whereas only 16 percent expressed low favorable attitude in this case.

Although, there appears to be an increase in the number of respondents with low favorable attitude toward their surroundings at present, the general pattern of favorability of attitude mentioned in the previous paragraphs still persists. That is, the proportion of participants in this study who hold more favorable attitude tend to be greater



than those who expressed an unfavorable attitude toward their hosts, their surrounding environment, and their life situation in the receiving society.

This reduction in the number of respondents with more favorable attitude at present is detected by further elaboration of the above findings. It appears that individuals' attitude and perception have changed, to some degree, from one category to another over the period of time spent in the host environment.<sup>9)</sup> For example, among those who expressed unfavorable attitude in the past, 60 percent have not changed their attitude since the time of their arrival, whereas the remaining proportion were more prone in developing more favorable attitude during their sojourn. Among those with moderately favorable attitude in the past, 50 percent still hold similar attitudes toward their host country, 35 percent turned to being highly in favor of Americans at present, and only 15 percent became less impressed by their surroundings as the time went by.

The most striking part of this finding is that that almost all respondents who had high regards for their hosts in the past still think the same way (81 percent), 13 percent of them have changed their mind and shifted to the moderate category of the evaluative/perceptual dimension at present, and only six percent developed somewhat unfavorable attitude toward their surrounding environment.

To conclude, the above findings indicate that Iranian students' behavior and outlooks toward the host environment

have dramatically changed as a result of their sojourn and experiences they have acquired over the period of their stay in the United States. Although some of these changes seem to be in favor of the direction toward a positive adjustment to American society, there are also few cases who show a tendency to lean toward the opposite pole. Characteristics of these individuals will be discussed in the following chapters.

**ENDNOTES**

1. Unlike the findings of many studies that sojourners tend to increase their ties with people of their home country, respondents of this study showed greater preference in communicating with Americans. When they were asked "if you had the opportunity to increase the number of your close friends, from what group would you like to choose them?", a great proportion (41 percent) indicated "Americans." For more detail, see Appendix A, Question 35.
2. This conclusion is drawn based on the comparison made on the collected information for both present and the past. A more comprehensive analysis of the relationship between time (length of stay) and changes in the component variables of adjustment is presented in chapter VIII.
3. The overall mean score for these indices are 2.09 (SD= .77) and 2.08 (SD= .86) for present and the past, respectively.
4. These findings are derived from a comparison made on the collected data for present and the past. In order to calculate percentages used to define such findings, the relation between categories of present and the past was calculated by means of crosstabulation. For more detail, see Appendix B, Table B5.
5. See note 4 and Appendix B, Table B6.
6. See note 4 and Appendix B, Table B7.
7. See note 4 and Appendix B, Table B8.
8. A complete frequency distribution of the respondents on items mentioned here is presented in Appendix B, Tables B9 (Appendix A, Question 51); B10 (Appendix A, Question 24, 25); B11 (Appendix A, Question 53); B12 (Appendix A, Question 50); and, Appendix A, Question 20, respectively.
9. See note 4 and Appendix B, Table B13.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE INTERDEPENDENCE FEATURE OF THE ADJUSTMENT CORRELATES

#### Introduction:

In this part, the attempt is made to examine the validity of the first assumption of this study that the individuals' adjustment to a new environment can be measured by demonstrating the interconnectedness of the operating variables which constitute the adjustment process. These variables are regarded to be: 1) the interpersonal relationship between an individual and the hosts; 2) the amount and frequency of social support provided for the individual in the host environment; and 3) the person's attitudes and perceptions regarding his/her life situation in the host country and the surrounding environment. In order to examine the aforementioned assumption, tests of correlation coefficient and crosstabulation of variables are utilized which will detect the nature of the relationship among the component variables of adjustment.

An adequate representation of a system of relationship among variables mentioned in the previous paragraph requires further elaboration of the hypothesis to be tested in this part. That is, in this project, it is assumed that there exists a relationship between any combination of the two

variables and the third variable, when introduced into this collectivity, has an effect on this frame of supposedly already existing relationship among previous variables. To be more specific, it can be argued that the interpersonal relationship between the hosts and the individual has an effect on the degree of social support provided in the receiving country which in turn affects the development and formation of the evaluative and perceptual aspects of the adjustment process.

Finally, it can be argued that the way that foreign students perceive their hosts plays an important role in the process of establishment of interpersonal relationship with the hosts and, hence, it becomes an outlet for an increasing pattern of involvement of individuals with the natives which will open doors for mutual and reciprocal help, assistance, and many other forms of sympathetic support.

Statistical analyses utilized in this part are twofold:

- 1) A simple crosstabulation between any possible combination of two variables is performed with the accompanying test of significance and the related correlation coefficient value;
- 2) a partial correlation coefficient is provided to test the the original relationship between any two variables at a time, while the effect of the remaining variable is held constant. In conjunction with the partial correlation analysis, crosstabulation of each desired pair of variables is presented to accompany the correlation analysis which regards the effect that the third variable may have on such

relationships.

### Interpersonal Relationships And Social Support:

The original bivariate association between Iranian students' interpersonal relationships with their hosts and the amount and frequency of social support provided in the host environment is presented in Table 7.1.

**TABLE 7.1. SOCIAL SUPPORT BY INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Social Support	Interpersonal Relationships		
	Low	Medium	High
Low	46.7% (7)	52.0% (13)	14.3% (3)
Medium	46.7% (7)	36.0% (9)	52.4% (11)
High	6.6% (1)	12.0% (3)	33.3% (7)
Total	100.0% (15)	100.0% (25)	100.0% (21)
<hr/>			
2			
X = 9.75	p < .05		
r = .34	p < .005		

According to the data in Table 7.1, variables measuring social interaction between individuals seem to be moderately correlated with each other ( $r = .34$ ) and such correlation is proven to be highly significant ( $p < .005$ ). This can be interpreted as changes in the frequency of contact between individuals covary with changes in the frequency of social support that the individual foreigner experiences in the host country.

Comparing the data in different categories of

interpersonal relationships, it was found that 47 percent of those who established minimum amount of interpersonal relationship with the hosts also experienced the minimum amount of social support provided for them in the host country, 47 percent of low interactive individuals indicated they received a moderate amount of support, and seven percent were among those who expressed being highly supported by their hosts. At the medium level of interpersonal relationship, 52 percent of respondents received low support, 36 percent indicated having experienced only moderate support, and 12 percent reported they were highly supported by their hosts during their course of stay in the United States. Respondents with more extensive interaction with natives indicated a relatively high support being provided for them. At the high level of interpersonal relationships with the hosts, only 14 percent encountered little or no support at all. The majority of respondents who had more frequent communication with their host are among moderately and highly supported persons (52 percent and 33 percent, respectively).

The data in Table 7.1 also suggest that individuals with more frequent interpersonal relationship with their hosts are more inclined to indicate that a greater level of social support was provided for them, whereas individuals with less frequent social contact with their hosts are more prone to have received minimal support. The computed value of correlation coefficient between the respondents' report on

the magnitude of their interaction with the hosts and the amount and frequency of support provided in the host country verifies this assertion. Restated, the more frequent the interpersonal relationship that an individual may have with the host, the greater will be the social support provided for such person in the host environment.

Although the above findings are the first indication of support for the hypothesized relationship between individuals' intention in opening channels of communication with their hosts and the amount of social support encountered in the host country, it cannot be solely relied upon since it is believed that individuals' attitude toward the host environment plays an important role in this connection. For this purpose, further elaboration of the relation between interpersonal relationship and social support is needed. Therefore, the entire relationship between these variables must be examined while the effect of evaluative/perceptual aspects of the adjustment process is taken into account.

In order to test the effects of individuals' attitudes and perceptions of the host country on the relationship between interpersonal relationships and social support, a first-order partial correlation is computed between these aspects of an individual's adjustment to a foreign environment. This partial is .24, at  $p < .4$  level of significance.<sup>2)</sup>

Seemingly, introducing the third dimension of the



adjustment process into the original bivariate association has some effect on the relationship between the respondents' interaction with the hosts and their experiences of being supported by natives. The reduction in the value of the original correlation indicates such an effect. While this value is not dramatically reduced, it is still quite substantial. The original association between the amount of social support provided in the host country and the interpersonal relationship has now been clarified considerably. It can be argued that based on the reduction in the value of correlation the original association between these two aspects of adjustment reported in this study is, to some extent, spurious. That is, the evaluative/perceptual aspects of an individual's adjustment are acting to create such spurious relationship between the person's interpersonal relationship with the hosts and the amount of social support provided for him/her in the receiving country.

The simple correlation between interpersonal relationships and social support indicates that approximately 12 percent of the variance in the level of social support reported by respondents is determined by the extent of already established interaction between them and their American friends and neighbors.<sup>3)</sup> The degree of variation in the social support provided in the host environment is directly affected by the interpersonal relationship with natives. The value of partial correlation

for this part indicates that 6 percent out of the original 12 percent of the explained variance in the level of social support experienced by respondents is, in fact, due to the direct effect that individuals' interaction with the hosts has on the magnitude of social support, while the remaining six percent is originated from the individual's attitude toward the surrounding environment which is also affected by the interactional patterns prevalent in the host country.

Thus, changes in the level of social support provided for individual foreigners in the host country are, on one hand, results of changes in the degree of interpersonal relationship that they develop with the hosts during their stay in the receiving country; and, on the other hand, they are generated by variations that take place in the respondents' attitudes toward their hosts. A more detailed interpretation of the relationship between these aspects of an individual's adjustment is shown in Table 7.2.

A comparison of the data in both Tables 7.1 and 7.2 suggests that the degree to which the respondents have developed an attitudinal pattern toward their hosts does account for variations in the level of social support they experience in the host country. Although the trend of variation in social support seems to be identical in both situations, the dispersion of individuals in subcategories of interpersonal relationship becomes more conspicuous when the effect of the evaluative/perceptual aspects of adjustment is taken into consideration. That is, the level

TABLE 7.2  
SOCIAL SUPPORT BY INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS CONTROLLING FOR EVALUATIVE/PERCEPTUAL ASPECTS

Social Support	Low Favorable Attitude			Moderate Favorable Attitude			High Favorable Attitude		
	Low IR *	Medium IR	High IR	Low IR	Medium IR	High IR	Low IR	Medium IR	High IR
Low	75.0% (3)	100.0% (6)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (2)	40.0% (4)	14.3% (1)	40.0% (2)	33.3% (3)	14.2% (2)
moderate	25.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (3)	40.0% (4)	72.4% (5)	60.0% (3)	55.6% (5)	42.9% (6)
High	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	16.7% (1)	20.0% (2)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	11.1% (1)	42.9% (6)
Total	100.0% (4)	100.0% (6)	100.0% (0)	100.0% (6)	100.0% (10)	100.0% (7)	100.0% (5)	100.0% (9)	100.0% (14)

\*. IR = Interpersonal Relationship

and frequency of social support changes drastically when the effects of the respondents' attempt in communicating with Americans and their attitudes toward them were jointly taken into account.

First, respondents with low favorable attitude are examined. At this level, basically, most respondents with low interpersonal relationships with their hosts are found to be among the least supported group (75 percent) and the rest (25 percent) reported they have experienced only a moderate support from their hosts. No one with low interpersonal relationship with Americans at the low favorable attitude level has reported being highly supported by their hosts. All respondents with an unfavorable attitude who only moderately interacted with Americans indicated the existence of low social support in the host country. Only six individuals in the moderate interpersonal relationships category with low favorable attitude toward their hosts were among the low support group. Apparently none of the highly interactive respondents with a an unfavorable attitude toward Americans were exposed to any type of support.

Second, individuals who developed a moderately favorable attitude toward Americans are taken into consideration at different levels of interpersonal relationship. At this level, those who had low contact with Americans, only 33 percent said they have received low support, 50 percent indicated only a medium amount of support was provided for them while in the Unites States, and 17 percent received

high support. Among Iranian students with moderately favorable attitudes toward Americans with a moderate frequency of contact with the hosts, 40 percent reported they received a minimum amount of support, 40 percent indicated moderate support received, and the remaining 20 percent were among highly supported group in this category. Apparently, the majority of Iranian students who have developed a high degree of interpersonal relationship with Americans, with a moderately favorable attitude toward them, were more inclined to express that they have been only fairly supported while in the United States (72 percent), whereas the remaining 28 percent were equally distributed in both the low and the high categories of social support variable (14 percent in each category, respectively).

Lastly, an analysis of the collected data for students who developed high favorable attitude toward their hosts at different levels of interpersonal relationship would follow that: Whereas 40 percent of the respondents at the low level of interaction with the hosts indicated they have not received any support by Americans, 60 percent experienced only a moderate support, and no one in this group mentioned being highly supported by their hosts. Among respondents with medium frequency of interpersonal relationships with Americans who reported a highly favorable attitude toward their hosts, 33 percent did not receive a satisfying amount of support from their American friends or neighbors, 56 percent of them indicated they were only moderately

supported, and those who were highly supported constitute only 11 percent of this group. Respondents with high tendencies to involve themselves in social relations with the hosts in the highly favorable attitude group were more prone to the moderate and the high level of support from their hosts (43 percent in each category). Only 14 percent of individuals in this group received low social support from their hosts.

In sum, the above findings suggest that among individuals with similar patterns of attitudes toward their hosts, the amount and frequency of social support experienced in the host environment is correlated with the frequency of interpersonal relationships with the hosts. Whereas the difference in the level of social support has almost disappeared in the moderately favorable attitude category, it is more pronounced in the extremes, namely the low favorable attitude group and the high favorable attitude group.

#### **Social Support And The Evaluative/Perceptual Aspects:**

This section will examine the relationship between the magnitude of social support provided in the host country with the respondents' attitude and perception toward their surrounding environment. Table 7.3 shows this relationship.

The data in Table 7.3 reflect a clear pattern of positive association between social support and the evaluative/perceptual aspects of a person's life during the course of his/her stay in a foreign country. It is evident

TABLE 7.3. EVALUATIVE/PERCEPTUAL ASPECTS BY SOCIAL SUPPORT

Evaluative/ Perceptual	Social Support		
	Low	Medium	High
Low Favorable Attitude	39.2% (9)	3.7% (1)	0.0% (0)
Moderately favorable Attitude	30.4% (7)	44.4% (12)	36.4% (4)
High favorable Attitude	30.4% (7)	51.9% (14)	63.6% (7)
Total	100.0% (23)	100.0% (27)	100.0% (11)
<hr/>			
2			
X =14.52	p < .006		
r =.39	p < .001		

from the data shown in Table 7.3 that the greatest proportion of individuals in the low category of social support is found among respondents who do not favorably perceive the host environment (39 percent). A total of 30 percent of Iranian students at this level of support hold a moderately favorable attitude toward Americans, and the other 30 percent are found in the highly favorable attitude category.

The greater proportion of respondents who have been moderately supported by their hosts are found among the highly favorable attitude category. The data suggest that 52 percent of all moderately supported individuals perceived their host environment very favorably, 44 percent are moderately in favor of their surroundings, whereas only four percent expressed little or no regards for their hosts.

The same trend of variation in the attitude of persons seems to be present among highly supported group: 64 percent of Iranian students at the high support category reported highly favorable attitude toward Americans, 36 percent showed only a moderately favorable attitude, and no one had said anything degrading about their American friends. These findings suggest that individuals who have experienced less support from their hosts are more likely to express less favorable attitude toward them. On the other hand, persons encountering greater amount of social support in the host country are prone to develop more favorable attitude toward their surroundings.

The computed value of correlation coefficient between social support and the magnitude of the evaluative/perceptual aspects confirms the above assertion. This value indicates the existence of a statistically significant and positive association between these two aspects of the adjustment process ( $r = .39$ , and  $p < .001$ ). It can be interpreted that a slightly more than 15 percent of the explained variance in the attitude of the respondents of this study is due to the effect that the provided support in the host environment has on the attitude of individuals. It should also be noted that, due to the small size of variance, such an interpretation of the variation in the value of the evaluative/perceptual aspects of individuals' life in a foreign country is not taken as the only possible interpretation of the formation of either positive or



negative attitudes by the respondents of this study. For this purpose, it is also intended to take into account the effects that the interpersonal relationship may have on the original bivariate association. This will be examined in detail in the following paragraphs.

In order to see whether the original relationship between these variables changes considerably, a first-order partial correlation is computed for the effect of an individual's experience of receiving social support on the favorableness of his/her attitude toward Americans while the degree of interpersonal relationship between the sojourner and the hosts is held constant. This partial is .31 now at <sup>4)</sup>  $p = .007$  level of significance.

A comparison between the computed value of correlation coefficient at two different levels of analysis shows the possible effect that the frequency of interpersonal relationship has on the variation in the person's attitude toward his/her surroundings. From the value of the partial correlation computed in this section, one can indicate that more than 60 percent of the explained variance in the attitude of individuals is directly due to the extent that individuals perceive their hosts being supportive and helpful, whereas the remaining 40 percent of the explained variance in the attitude of the respondents is reflected <sup>5)</sup> from the effect of interpersonal relationship. Hence, it can be concluded that the extent to which a person acquires and develops a favorable attitude toward his/her surrounding

environment is partially affected by the degree to which s/he experiences support provided in the host country and, on the other hand, it is also dependent on the amount of already established interaction with the native inhabitants of the host country.

The above findings can be further elaborated by means of crosstabulation which will benefit our understanding of the relationship that exists between the component variables of the adjustment process. This relationship is shown in Table 7.4.

With regard to the variation in the magnitude of social support provided in the host environment, the data in Table 7.4 show that the general attitudes of individuals with similar degree of interpersonal relationships with the hosts vary considerably from one person to the other. An interpretation of the data in Table 7.4. follows:

At the low level of the interpersonal relationships with the hosts, among those who received low support, 43 percent expressed low favorable attitude, 29 percent were only moderately in favor of the surrounding environment, and the remaining 28 percent expressed high regards for Americans and were highly satisfied with their life in the United States. At this level of interpersonal relationships with the hosts, 14 percent of Iranian students who received moderate support are found in the low favorable attitude category, 43 percent of them showed moderate attitude, and 43 percent favorably perceived Americans. Highly supported

TABLE 7.4  
EVALUATIVE/PERCEPTUAL ASPECTS BY SOCIAL SUPPORT CONTROLLING FOR INTERPERSONAL  
RELATIONSHIPS

Evaluative/ Perceptual	Low Interpersonal Relationships			Medium Interpersonal Relationships			High Interpersonal Relationships				
	Low		High	Low		Moderate	High	Low		Moderate	High
	SS *	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS
Low Favorable Attitudes	42.8% (3)	14.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	46.1% (6)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
moderate	28.6% (2)	42.9% (3)	100.0% (1)	30.8% (4)	44.4% (4)	66.7% (2)	33.3% (1)	45.4% (5)	14.3% (1)		
High Favorable Attitudes	28.6% (2)	42.9% (3)	0.0% (0)	23.1% (3)	55.6% (5)	33.3% (1)	66.7% (2)	54.5% (6)	85.7% (6)		
Total	100.0% (7)	100.0% (7)	100.0% (1)	100.0% (13)	100.0% (9)	100.0% (3)	100.0% (3)	100.0% (11)	100.0% (7)		

\*. SS = Social Support

individuals at the low level of interaction are not found among low interaction group to a considerable degree; only one person at this level of social support indicated a moderately favorable attitude toward American. Thus, in a situation where a minimum amount of interaction between individuals is more prevalent, persons experiencing moderate support are more likely to develop better attitudes toward their hosts than the others.

With regard to the differences in the amount of social support, persons who have only moderately established channels of communication with Americans are more pronounced in the higher categories of evaluative/perceptual aspects of the adjustment process. The majority of respondents with an intermediate level of interaction who received low support did not hold a favorable attitude toward Americans (46 percent), 31 percent indicated a moderately favorable attitude, and only 23 percent expressed high favorable attitude. At this level of interpersonal relationships, those who were only moderately supported by Americans perceived their hosts with more favorable attitudes (56 percent in the high and 44 percent in the moderate category of favorableness of the attitude). The majority of highly supported group at the intermediate level of interpersonal relationship have developed a moderately favorable attitude toward their hosts (67 percent), whereas the remaining 34 percent are found among those who hold more favorable attitudes toward their surrounding environment. It is not

clear whether social support at this level of interpersonal relationships with the host has any functional effect on the attitudes formed by individuals. This conclusion is derived from the fact that the dispersion of the respondents into different categories of social support and the evaluative/perceptual dimensions of the adjustment process does not follow any regular pattern of distribution.

On the other hand, respondents with the highest frequency of interpersonal relationships with the host basically hold more favorable attitudes irrespective of the amount of social support encountered in the host country. Among highly interactive individuals, 67 percent of poorly supported Iranians expressed high favorable attitude toward their hosts, 34 percent held a moderately favorable attitude, and no one is found to express unfavorable attitudes. At this level of social interaction with the hosts, 55 percent of those at the medium level of support favorably perceived their hosts and the remaining 45 percent expressed a moderately favorable attitude. Basically, the majority of highly interactive respondents at the high level of social support reported favorable attitude (86 percent); only 14 percent held a moderately favorable attitude.

A comparison between the data presented in Tables 7.3 and 7.4 suggests that the trend of association between the magnitude of social support and the evaluative/perceptual aspects of the adjustment process is, to some extent, identical in both situations. Thus, it can be concluded that

individuals who were highly supported by their American friends and neighbors are more likely to have better attitude toward them.

The development of a high favorable attitude toward Americans becomes more pronounced in situations where individuals show greater interest in opening channels of communication with their hosts. Accordingly, persons who received little or no support at all tend to have less favorable attitude toward Americans. In short, the way that the respondents of this study perceived their surroundings is believed to be originated from: 1) The degree of social support provided by natives for the individual foreigner in the host society; and, 2) the amount, density, and intensity of social interaction that exists between the hosts and sojourner. It is through such daily encounters that persons are exposed to the system of relationships prevalent in the host country.

#### **Interpersonal Relationship And The Evaluative/Perceptual Aspects:**

In order to complete this investigation and support the idea that variables constituting the adjustment process are interconnected with each other, the following section examines the relationship between the respondents' attitude and its effect on the existing pattern of interpersonal relationship in the host country. This relationship is shown in Table 7.5.

TABLE 7.5. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS BY EVALUATIVE/  
PERCEPTUAL ASPECTS

Interpersonal Relationships	Perceptual/evaluative		
	Low Favorable	Moderately Favorable	High Favorable
Low	40.0% (4)	26.1% (6)	17.9% (5)
Medium	60.0% (6)	43.5% (10)	32.1% (9)
High	0.0% (0)	30.4% (7)	50.0% (14)
Total	100.0% (10)	100.0% (23)	100.0% (28)

2  
 $X = 8.48$        $p < .08$   
 $r = .33$        $p < .005$

Statistics presented in Table 7.5 indicate a pattern of positive association and highly significant correlation between the attitude of a person toward the surrounding environment and the interpersonal relationship that exists between sojourner and the hosts. As the collected data measuring this relationship show, those who have developed more favorable attitudes are more likely to be among the most communicative individuals; and, generally, respondents with less favorable attitude toward the hosts were less interested in having social contacts with Americans.

Basically, among those with low favorable attitude, 40 percent expressed they had little or no interaction with Americans, 60 percent had only moderately maintained their interaction with their hosts, and none among the low

favorable attitude group was highly interested in having social relations with natives.

Among respondents with a moderately favorable attitude toward Americans, a great proportion developed a medium frequency of contact with their hosts (44 percent), whereas 26 percent of them did not show a considerable amount of communication with their hosts. Iranians who were highly communicative with Americans constitute 30 percent of the moderately favorable attitude category.

Many respondents with more favorable attitudes are found among those with high frequency of interpersonal relationship with the hosts (50 percent). Among individuals in the highly favorable attitude category, 18 percent are found at the low level of interaction and 32 percent of them were only moderately interested in communicating with their hosts.

Based on the above results, further statistical analysis indicates that 11 percent of the variation in the interaction patterns between individuals is originated from the way that individuals perceive their surrounding environment. Further inquiry based on computation of a partial correlation between these variables, while the effect of the magnitude of social support provided in the host country was removed, indicates that the original association among these variables is reduced considerably but still statistically significant ( $r = .23$ ,  $p = .04$ )

The reduction in the value of correlation coefficient



between interpersonal relationship with the hosts and the evaluative/perceptual dimension of the adjustment process implies that the degree to which a person perceives the host country to be supportive has an effect on the individual's attempt in developing channels of communication with the host. That is, interpersonal relationship between sojourners and the hosts is largely due to, on the one hand, the degree to which they possess favorable attitude toward the hosts and, on the other hand, it is affected by the amount of social support that persons encounter during the course of their stay in the host country.

Further investigation shows that about 5 percent out of the original 11 percent variation in the value of interpersonal relationship with the host is due to the direct effect of a person's attitude, whereas the remaining six percent of the explained variance in the value of interpersonal relationship is the effect that evaluative/perceptual aspects of the adjustment have on the social support system which in turn is causing variation in the interactional pattern. Hence, it can be stated that individuals' willingness in opening channels of communication with American and their actual contact is a simultaneous reflection of both the degree of social support provided for them in the host country and the extent of the favorableness of their attitudes toward their hosts.

The above argument is further elaborated by presenting the relationship between these variables of adjustment by

means of crosstabulation. It is believed that through such procedure one may have a better grasp of changes which occur in different subcategories of these variables when controlled for the effect of social support. Table 7.6 demonstrates the relationship between respondents' attitude and the interpersonal relationship with the hosts while the effect of social support is held constant.

The differential distribution of respondents shown in Table 7.6 suggests that the amount of social support received by individuals in the host environment does account for the actual contact that they make with natives during the period of their stay in the receiving country.

In a situation where persons with low social support are taken into consideration, the majority of individuals with varying degrees of attitudes and perceptions tend to be only moderately interactive with their hosts. At this level of social support, 33 percent of Iranian students who expressed unfavorable attitude are found among less interactive respondents, 67 percent were only moderately communicative with Americans, no one at this level of support-attitude showed high frequency of interpersonal relationship with Americans. At this minimum support level, respondents with moderately favorable attitude toward their hosts are found among individuals with the medium frequency of interpersonal relationship (57 percent), 29 percent of them are among the less interactive respondents, and 14 percent are found having a high degree of association with Americans. Among

TABLE 7.6  
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS BY EVALUATIVE/PERCEPTUAL ASPECTS CONTROLLING FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT

Interpersonal Relationships	Low Social Support			Moderate Social Support			High Social Support		
	Low FA *	Moderate FA	High FA	Low FA	Moderate FA	High FA	Low FA	Moderate FA	High FA
Low	33.3% (3)	28.6% (2)	28.6% (2)	100.0% (1)	25.0% (3)	21.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	25.0% (1)	0.0% (0)
moderate	66.7% (6)	57.1% (4)	42.9% (3)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (4)	35.7% (5)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (2)	14.3% (1)
High	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	41.7% (5)	42.9% (6)	0.0% (0)	25.0% (1)	85.7% (6)
Total	100.0% (9)	100.0% (7)	100.0% (7)	100.0% (1)	100.0% (12)	100.0% (14)	100.0% (0)	100.0% (4)	100.0% (7)

\*. FA = Favorable Attitude

respondents with highly favorable attitude and low social support, 43 percent are found at the medium level of the interpersonal relationship with their hosts, and the remaining proportion of the respondents are equally divided in the low and the high interaction categories (28 percent in each).

Among the moderately supported individuals, almost no one with low favorable attitude has shown an interest in having any kind of interpersonal relationship with Americans.<sup>6)</sup> However, the data in Table 7.6 show the existence of a more frequent interpersonal relationship with the hosts in the moderately supported group for those who have developed stronger favorable attitude toward their surroundings. Overall, among Iranian students who were only moderately exposed to their hosts' support and developed a moderately favorable attitude toward them, 42 percent reported more extensive interaction with their hosts, 33 percent initiated a medium frequency of social contacts with Americans, and 25 percent showed no interest in communicating with the hosts. Among individuals with highly favorable attitude in the moderate category of social support, 21 percent indicated a low interpersonal relationship pattern with Americans, whereas 36 percent of them reported their social contacts with Americans were at the intermediate level, and 43 percent were highly interactive with natives.

Among highly supported groups, the greatest dispersion

of respondents across different categories of the interpersonal relationship with the hosts is seen at the high level of the evaluative/perceptual dimension of the adjustment process. Absolutely no one with an unfavorable attitude in this situation is seen in any category of interpersonal relationships with Americans. The majority of respondents with a moderately favorable attitude toward their hosts have established only a moderate interaction with them (50 percent), 25 percent of them are found in the low category of the interpersonal relationship, and the remaining 25 percent were highly interested in communicating with their hosts. Among highly supported respondents, those who favorably perceived their hosts showed greater frequency of interaction with them (86 percent); the rest (14 percent) are found in the intermediate contact level.

It can be concluded that an increase in the favorableness of attitudes toward the host at different levels of social support provided in the host country accompanies an improvement in the pattern of interpersonal relationship between sojourners and the hosts. It was also observed that the association between evaluative/perceptual aspects of an individual life situation and the interpersonal relationship differs considerably at different levels of social support. Whereas it has almost disappeared at the lower level of social support, the interpersonal relationships with Americans became more apparent in the high category. In other words, the less a group benefits

from the support provided by the hosts, the lower will be the interpersonal relationship among those who develop less favorable attitude.

**Conclusion:**

The data presented and analyzed in this chapter examined the relationship among variables which are regarded as the component variables of the adjustment process of an individual to a foreign environment. The idea of interconnectedness of the variables constituting the adjustment process of an individual was developed throughout this chapter. It was suggested that there exists a relatively strong relationship between the amount of interpersonal relationship with the host, the extent of provided social support in the host society, and favorableness of the attitude toward the hosts.

It was observed that the original correlation between any combination of two variables is affected by the impact of the third one. The partial correlation coefficient computed for each combination of variables indicated the effects of the remaining variable. After pointing out the specific areas of concern, it became clear that for any changes occurred in either interpersonal relationship, social support, or the evaluative/perceptual aspect of this process, the same trend of fluctuation is predictable in the value of the other two component variables of adjustment.

When the effect of interpersonal relationship on social support was under scrutiny, it was seen that the development

of a favorable attitude toward the host environment plays an important role in such relationship. Examination of the relationship between social support and the evaluative/perceptual aspects of adjustment revealed the importance of the effect that the interpersonal relationship dimension has on this bivariate association between the aforementioned variables. It was also pointed out, in the last section of this chapter, that individuals' attitude toward their hosts and the surrounding environment is one indicator of the development of interactional patterns between them which cannot be studied without considering the important effect that the provided social support in the host country has on such an association.

In short, it became clear from the above argument that the existence of a close relationship between the individual foreigner and the hosts is related to the magnitude of the social support provided in the receiving country which enhances the development of a favorable attitude toward the host society which in turn provides the ground for more interpersonal interaction with the hosts.

Thus, it is based on the above argument that this project attempts to analyze the adjustment process through the totality of the existing relationship among variables in a collective manner, since each variable of the adjustment process is presenting only one aspect of it. Hence, it is the intention of this project, particularly in the remaining chapter, to indicate the effect of factors that are

operating independently in the adjustment process where the adjustment is meant to be the total mode of the collectivity of the aforementioned factors rather than being considered separately.



**ENDNOTES**

1. I am also aware of the fact that these variables are not the only factors constituting the adjustment process of a person's life in a foreign country. As is the case in many social science research projects, this project tends to narrow down its scope to these three variables. However, the adjustment process is regarded as a function of the relationships between the aforementioned variables
2.  $df = 58$ .
3. The proportion of variance reported here is equal to the square of correlation coefficient.
4.  $df = 58$ .
5. These percentages are derived from the 9 percent explained variance computed from the value of correlation which is 60 percent of the original 11 percent variance in the value of the evaluative/perceptual aspects. For computation, see note 3.
6. Only one person indicated of having low interaction with their American friends in this group.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND THE ADJUSTMENT CORRELATES

#### Introduction:

As is indicated in the review of the literature, it is basically accepted by many researchers that certain personal characteristics of individuals living in a foreign social milieu play an important role in their adjustment process to that environment. Although there is no consensus on the findings of some investigations in the existing literature, their differences seem to be largely due to the various conditions under which their models were tested.

Nonetheless, it appears that depending upon the individuals' personal characteristics and their condition of stay in the host environment -- which are preconditions for a satisfactory social psychological well-being of those involved in this process, they react differently. Thus, it is in reference to this notion that an investigation of the adjustment process via its component variables must take into account different characteristics of individuals and their condition of stay in a foreign environment.

In conjunction with the aforementioned assumption, the attempt is made to explore the importance of factors such as sex, length of stay, marital status, linguistic skills, and

financial situation on the adjustment correlates of Iranian students participating in this study.

In the discussion that follows, two procedures are employed to examine the relationships between the above mentioned variables and the adjustment correlates: On the one hand, the adjustment correlates are independently tested by each background factor. This type of analysis is basically performed by means of crosstabulation, Pearsonian product moment correlation, and Chi-square test of significance.<sup>1)</sup> On the other hand, since the theoretical construct employed in this investigation assumes an interrelated feature among the adjustment correlates, the overall pattern of variation in the individuals' adjustment according to the effect(s) of their personal characteristics is also detected by performing both multiple regression and the canonical correlation analyses. In this latter type of analysis, factors operating in this system are treated in a collective manner rather than independently from each other. A comparison of the results generated from both procedures will, in fact, benefit and expand many findings presented in this study.

#### **1. Gender and the Adjustment Correlates:**

It is hypothesized that the adjustment process of Iranian students varies according to their gender. The collected information for this part will examine whether individuals' gender causes any difference in their adjustment process to a new environment. An assessment of

the relationships between these variables is shown in Table 8.1.

The data in Table 8.1 suggest that the adjustment correlates of Iranian students vary irrespective of their gender for the present sample. It appears that both male and female students are encountering similar experiences with regard to their adjustment process in the United States. The collected data show similar trend of fluctuation in the adjustment correlates for both male and female. Comparing the magnitude of differences between male and female respondents, the data show the following:

1.1. Statistical tests of the relationship between interpersonal relationships and the respondents' gender indicate that the frequency of contact with the hosts does not associate with the respondents' gender in this sample. Although the differences in the amount of social contact with Americans appears to be non-existent for both males and females, variation in the contact level seems to be more prominent within each category of the gender variable. Basically, the medium mode of interaction with Americans is the most prevalent type of social contact for both cases (40 percent for the male and 44 percent for the female respondents). Overall, 24 percent of all male participants and 25 percent of all female students are found in the low category of interpersonal relationship with Americans. A substantial proportion of both male (36 percent) and female (31 percent) participants indicated having more extensive

TABLE 8.1. GENDER AND THE ADJUSTMENT CORRELATES

Adjustment Correlates	Gender			Probability
	Male	Female	Number of Cases	
<b>Interpersonal Relationship</b>				
Low	24.4% (11)	25.0% (4)	24.6% (15)	
Medium	40.0% (18)	43.8% (7)	41.0% (25)	
High	35.6% (16)	31.5% (5)	34.4% (21)	
Total	100.0% (45)	100.0% (16)	100.0% (61)	<sup>2</sup> X = .11    p = .9 r = -.03    p = .4
<b>Social Support</b>				
Low	42.2% (19)	25.0% (4)	37.7% (23)	
Medium	44.4% (20)	43.8% (7)	44.3% (27)	
High	13.3% (6)	31.3% (5)	18.0% (11)	
Total	100.0% (45)	100.0% (16)	100.0% (61)	<sup>2</sup> X = 3.03    p = .22 r = .22    p = .04
<b>Evaluative/Perceptual Aspects</b>				
Low Favorable	17.8% (8)	12.5% (2)	16.4% (10)	
Moderately Favorable	40.0% (18)	31.3% (5)	37.7% (23)	
High Favorable	42.2% (19)	56.3% (9)	45.9% (28)	
Total	100.0% (45)	100.0% (16)	100.0% (61)	<sup>2</sup> X = .9    p = .6 r = .11    p = .18

social contact with their hosts. Thus, as the collected data indicate, both male and female respondents of this study reported similar pattern of interpersonal relationships with their hosts.

Further statistical analysis suggests that the respondents gender does not play a significant role in their daily encounters with the hosts. Since the association between these variables is found to be virtually nil ( $r = -.03$ ) and statistically nonsignificant ( $p = .4$ ), it can be concluded that the respondents' gender cannot be accounted for causing differences in their behavioral pattern in terms of their interaction with Americans.

1.2. An examination of the social support provided for students (Iranians in this case) by their host with regard to their gender showed a slightly different pattern of association between these variables. In this situation, once again, the majority of the respondents of this study indicated having experienced medium amount of support while in the United States (44 percent in each category of gender). However, there are more female respondents than male who received high support from Americans: 31 percent of female Iranians indicated that Americans were highly supportive whenever their assistance was needed, compared with 13 percent of male participants at the same support level.

Furthermore, it is found that a great proportion of male respondents were not overwhelmingly satisfied with the

amount of support provided for them in the United States (42 percent), whereas 25 percent of female Iranians experienced similar situation. Overall, that proportion of female participants who are provided with greater amount of social support exceeds that of male respondents. This is due to the fact that female respondents were more comfortable in asking for their hosts' support and, therefore, received more support from their American friends and neighbors. Hence, the existed differences between men and women in this survey is originated from the fact that Iranian women were more inclined toward relying upon Americans for their help and assistance in different situations than Iranian men. Though this difference between male and female is not substantial, it is statistically significant at .04 level.

1.3. A measure of association between the respondents' gender and their attitudes toward the surrounding environment clearly reveals that these variables are not strongly correlated with each other ( $r = .11$ ). Seemingly, the development of the respondents' attitude and perception takes place irrespective of their gender. Most respondents of this study across different categories of gender expressed more favorable than an unfavorable attitude toward their life situation in the United States; and, basically, the majority of respondents held high regards for Americans (42 percent of male and 56 percent of female respondents). Only 18 percent of male and 13 percent of female respondents were not satisfied with their life in the United States,

whereas the remaining proportion of both categories of gender reported a moderately favorable attitude toward their hosts (40 percent of male and 31 percent of female participants). Furthermore, the proportion of female participants in the highly favorable attitude category is found to be greater than the proportion of male respondents.

Thus, as it appears from the above findings, the respondents' gender does not play a determining role in their attitude formation toward their hosts. Since the majority of men and women expressed highly favorable attitude toward their surroundings, and since both sexes showed similar pattern of variation in their attitudes toward their hosts, it can be concluded that the evaluative/perceptual aspects of the Iranians' adjustment process does not correspond with their gender for the present sample.

## **2. The Length of Stay and the Adjustment Correlates:**

It is anticipated that Iranian students who have stayed in the United States for a longer period of time develop more extensive interpersonal relationships with Americans, experience greater amount of support from their hosts, and tend to express more favorable attitudes toward their hosts. A comparison of the overall adjustment correlates at different stages of the respondents' length of stay is shown in Table 8.2.

According to the data presented in Table 8.2, individuals surveyed in this study established diverse



TABLE 8.2. LENGTH OF STAY AND THE ADJUSTMENT CORRELATES

Adjustment Correlates	< 5 Years	6-7 Years	> 8 Years	Number of Cases
<b>Interpersonal Relationships</b>				
Low	21.1% (4)	26.9% (9)	25.0% (4)	26.6% (15)
Medium	52.6% (10)	34.6% (9)	37.5% (6)	41.0% (25)
High	26.3% (5)	38.5% (10)	37.5% (6)	34.4% (21)
Total	100.0% (19)	100.0% (26)	100.0% (16)	100.0% (61)
<sup>2</sup> $X^2 = 1.61$ $p = .8$ with $df = 4$ $r = .03$ $p = .38$				
<b>Social Support</b>				
Low	36.8% (7)	42.3% (11)	31.3% (5)	37.7% (23)
Medium	59.9% (11)	38.5% (10)	37.5% (6)	44.3% (27)
High	5.3% (1)	19.2% (5)	31.3% (5)	18.0% (11)
Total	100.0% (19)	100.0% (26)	100.0% (16)	100.0% (61)
<sup>2</sup> $X^2 = 4.78$ $p = .31$ with $df = 4$ $r = .16$ $p = .10$				
<b>Evaluative/Perceptual Aspects</b>				
Low Favorable	5.3% (1)	23.1% (6)	18.8% (3)	16.4% (10)
Moderately Favorable	47.4% (9)	38.5% (10)	25.4% (4)	37.7% (23)
High Favorable	47.4% (9)	38.5% (10)	56.3% (9)	45.9% (28)
Total	100.0% (19)	100.0% (26)	100.0% (16)	100.0% (61)
<sup>2</sup> $X^2 = 4.05$ $p = .39$ with $df = 4$ $r = -.03$ $p = .4$				

degree of social contact with Americans; the magnitude of social support experienced by the respondents varied from time to time; Iranians' attitudes toward their hosts seem to be different at different stages of their sojourn. An interpretation of the data will follow:

2.1. Among respondents with less than five years length of stay, the most prevalent type of interaction with the hosts seems to be the moderate type of social contact (53 percent). Interpersonal relationships with the hosts seem to be more extensive for individuals who have stayed in the United States for about six to seven years (39 percent). Iranians in the more than eight years length of stay category also showed more extensive contacts with their hosts (38 percent). Although the data corresponds with the predicted direction, it appears that respondents of this study are somewhat equally distributed across different stages of the length of stay.

Basically, in all strata of the length of stay, and in different situations, the tendency to communicate with Americans is high among the respondents of this study. Of course, such a tendency for having interpersonal relationships with Americans is partly related to their prior experiences in terms of receiving positive responses from their hosts for establishing channels of communication and a continuous mutual friendship. Nevertheless, because of such interest in interacting with Americans, the length of stay did not appear to be a strong factor determining the

extent of their contacts with Americans. This is also seen through the examination of the association between duration of the stay and the individual's interpersonal relationships with the hosts. The association between the respondents' interpersonal relationships and the length of stay is found to be extremely weak ( $r = .03$ ) and, statistically, nonsignificant ( $p = .38$ ).

2.2. Statistics indicating the relationship between social support received and the length of stay also suggest that the observed pattern of association between these factors does not support the predicted relation. When different categories of social support are compared based on the effect(s) of the respondents length of stay, it appears that basically the majority of respondents to be located at the lower level of the "support."

In general, most respondents whose length of stay in the United States was less than five years indicated medium support received (60 percent); the reported amount of support decreased to the low level for the majority of respondents in the six to seven years category of the length of stay (42 percent); and, it increased again to the medium level for 38 percent of Iranians in the more than eight years category of the length of stay. Surprisingly enough, the proportion of respondents who have been highly supported by their hosts during their sojourn is considerably lower for those Iranians who have stayed in the United States for less than five years. The differences between categories of

social support at the more than eight years length of stay is not substantial, but the medium type of support prevails over the other categories.

Thus, according to the above findings, although there exist slight differences between different levels of social support for individuals with different length of stay, these differences can not be considered statistically significant ( $p = .10$ ). Furthermore, the calculated value of the measure of association between the aforementioned variables indicates that the correlation between them corresponds with the predicted direction ( $r = .16$ ), but this association is to be considered rather weak. Hence, it can be concluded that although the individuals' experience of exposure to the support provided by the hosts, to some extent, correlates with their length of stay in the host environment, the latter variable does not seem to be a determining factor for the support that a person encounters in the host environment.

2.3. The above mentioned pattern of association also persists for the data examining the relationship between the evaluative/perceptual aspects of the adjustment and the respondents' length of stay. Most participants of this study expressed highly favorable attitude toward their surrounding environment at different stages of their sojourn in the United States. Particularly, among those who have stayed in this country for more than eight years, 56 percent reported highly favorable attitude, 25 percent showed a moderately

favorable attitude, and only 19 percent of them unfavorably perceived their host country.

In both "less than five years" and "between six to seven years" length of stay categories, the proportion of individuals who favorably perceived their host environment and were highly satisfied with their life situation in the United States appears to be greater than the proportion of Iranians who expressed an unfavorable attitude; dissatisfied individuals constitute only a small portion of this sample in both situations (5 percent and 23 percent, respectively). The remaining proportion of the respondents are evenly distributed in both the medium and the high categories of the attitudinal dimension of the adjustment process.

Since differences in attitudes at different stages of the length of stay do not appear to be highly significant, and since the development of an individual's attitude seems to be independent of the length of stay, It can be concluded that Iranians' attitude toward their host environment varies irrespective of their length of stay in the United States.

### **3. Marital Status and the Adjustment Correlates:**

Individuals' marital status is also assumed to be an important factor in determining the extent of their social contact with the hosts, their experiences of the available support in the receiving country, and their attitude formation toward their life situation and the surrounding environment. The relationship between the respondents' marital status and the adjustment variables are shown in

Table 8.3.

Statistics presented in Table 8.3 indicate the existence of a high correlation between the respondents' marital status and the existing interpersonal relationships between them and their hosts. However, the amount and frequency of social support provided by Americans does not show any significant association with the respondents' marital status. But it appears that the development of their attitude toward the surrounding environment and the life situation to be slightly affected by the respondents' marital status. This discussion follows:

3.1. In those instances where the relationship between Iranian students' marital status and their interpersonal relationships with Americans is under scrutiny, it was found that unmarried individuals have established relatively more extensive contacts with their hosts than married respondents. The majority of unmarried Iranians in this study indicated having a more frequent interpersonal relationships with Americans (55 percent); a great proportion of them maintained at the medium contact level with their hosts (32 percent); only 13 percent indicated they had little or no interaction with Americans while in the United States. By comparison, married respondents were mostly interested in having either a moderate (50 percent) or a low frequency of interaction with Americans (37 percent). Moreover, the difference between single and married respondents at different stages of interpersonal

**TABLE 8.3. MARITAL STATUS AND THE ADJUSTMENT CORRELATES**

Adjustment Correlates	Single	Married	Number of Cases
<b>Interpersonal Relationship</b>			
Low	12.9% (4)	36.7% (11)	24.6% (15)
Medium	32.3% (10)	50.0% (15)	41.0% (25)
High	54.8% (17)	13.3% (4)	34.4% (21)
Total	100.0% (31)	100.0% (30)	100.0% (61)
$\chi^2 = 12.3$ $p = .002$ with $df = 2$ $r = -.43$ $p = .0003$			
<b>Social Support</b>			
Low	38.7% (12)	36.7% (11)	37.7% (23)
Medium	45.2% (14)	43.3% (13)	44.3% (27)
High	16.1% (5)	20.0% (6)	18.0% (11)
Total	100.0% (31)	100.0% (30)	100.0% (61)
$\chi^2 = .16$ $p = .9$ with $df = 2$ $r = .04$ $p = .37$			
<b>Evaluative/Perceptual Aspects</b>			
Low Favorable	12.9% (4)	20.0% (6)	16.4% (10)
Moderately Favorable	32.3% (10)	43.3% (13)	37.7% (23)
High Favorable	54.8% (17)	36.7% (11)	45.9% (28)
Total	100.0% (31)	100.0% (30)	100.0% (61)
$\chi^2 = 2.06$ $p = .35$ with $df = 2$ $r = -.17$ $p = .09$			

relationship is found to be highly significant ( $p = .0003$ ) and the association between these variables is relatively strong ( $r = - .43$ ).<sup>2)</sup>

Apparently, there exists more opportunities for contact with the hosts for unmarried respondents which enable them to have more communication with Americans while in the United States. On the other hand, married Iranians are extremely bound to establishing their own small communities and enclaves so that each group develops a strong tie within itself. In this situation, it was observed that most married Iranians developed social contacts with other married Iranians, particularly those whose spouse is also an Iranian. Unmarried Iranians are usually excluded from such social interactions. Such segregation is merely due to the dichotomy based on the marital status of individuals. Hence, it seems that unmarried respondents are more mobile in terms of developing more frequent interpersonal relationships with other groups.<sup>3)</sup>

3.2. According to the data in Table 8.3, the amount and frequency of social support that Iranian students have experienced during their sojourn does not vary considerably when examined on the basis of their marital status. It was found that the majority of respondents in both categories of marital status were only moderately supported by their American friends and neighbors (45 percent of unmarried and 43 percent of married respondents). In both cases, the proportion of Iranians who were not satisfied with their



hosts' support were greater than those who expressed high satisfaction in this regard: 39 percent of unmarried respondents reported low support received, whereas only 16 percent of them were highly supported by Americans. By comparison, 37 percent of married individuals were found at the low level of support experienced, whereas 20 percent of them reported that a high degree of social support was provided for them by Americans.

Further statistical analysis revealed that the amount of social support encountered in the host country can be hardly associated with the respondents' marital status. This association is found to be extremely weak ( $r = .04$ ) and statistically nonsignificant ( $p = .37$ ). Perhaps other factors operating in this system of the relationships among variable have had greater impact on the magnitude of the social support which will be discussed in the subsequent part of this chapter. At present, it can be concluded that variations in the individuals' experiences of the social support provided by the hosts are independent of their marital status in this sample.

3.3. Although there appears that Iranians' attitude toward the host environment and their perception of their life situation in the United States to be somewhat related to their marital status, statistical tests show that the correlation between the above mentioned factors is very trivial ( $r = -.17$ ). Nonetheless, differences in attitudes persist among individuals at different levels of marital

status. It was observed that single Iranians tend to express more favorable attitude than married participants in this study (55 percent of unmarried respondents as compared with 37 percent of married participants). Among unmarried Iranians, 32 percent have developed only a moderately favorable attitude toward their surrounding environment and 13 percent expressed unfavorable attitudes. By comparison, the majority of married respondents hold a moderately favorable attitude (43 percent) and 20 percent of them reported an unfavorable attitude.

While the attitudes and perceptions expressed by the respondents of this study do not seem to be significantly correlated with their marital status and do not correspond with the predicted direction, as the data suggest, the attitudinal differences among members of each marital status category seem undeniably divergent, though trivial. This will be further examined in detail when the effects of other operating factors are under scrutiny in the subsequent sections.

#### **4. Linguistic Skills And The Adjustment Correlates:**

It is generally agreed by many researchers who are studying international students that language difficulties might account for the difficulties of adjustment of sojourners to the host environment. Language differences signifies, to some extent, the cultural differences, since it is considered to be an important part of every culture. Learning and the ability to use the language spoken in the

host country serves the function of sojourners. enabling the individual to be exposed to different aspects of social life in the host society. It is believed that interaction between individuals requires verbal communication and the urge to use the language which necessitates learning of the language spoken in the receiving society.

In this section, the attempt is made to investigate the relationship between Iranian students' linguistic skills and their adjustment correlates. Based on the constructed index of linguistic skills for Iranian students surveyed in this study, the overall ability for commanding the English language seems satisfactory. The collected data measuring the relationship between the aforementioned variables are shown in Table 8.4.

The data in Table 8.4 suggest that Iranians' ability to communicate in the English language does not have any effect on their adjustment correlates when investigated independently. It is found that variables measuring Iranian student adjustment vary from person to person irrespective of their ability to command the English language. An interpretation of the data in Table 8.4 follows:

4.1. Unlike many beliefs that sojourners' linguistic skills is a determinant factor for establishing channels of communication and interpersonal relationships with the hosts, Iranian students showed that the frequency of their social contact varies without any interference of their ability in speaking the English language.

**TABLE 8.4. LINGUISTIC SKILLS AND THE ADJUSTMENT CORRELATES**

Adjustment Correlates	Poor	Average	Good	Number of Cases
<b>Interpersonal Relationship</b>				
Low	40.0% (6)	16.7% (4)	22.7% (5)	24.6% (15)
Medium	40.0% (6)	41.7% (10)	40.9% (9)	41.0% (25)
High	20.0% (3)	41.7% (10)	36.4% (8)	34.4% (21)
Total	100.0% (15)	100.0% (24)	100.0% (22)	100.0% (61)
$\chi^2 = 3.39$ $p = .49$ with $df = 4$ $r = .14$ $p = .12$				
<b>Social Support</b>				
Low	40.0% (6)	25.0% (6)	50.0% (11)	37.7% (23)
Medium	46.7% (7)	54.2% (13)	31.8% (7)	44.3% (27)
High	13.3% (2)	20.8% (5)	18.2% (4)	18.0% (11)
Total	100.0% (15)	100.0% (24)	100.0% (22)	100.0% (61)
$\chi^2 = 3.54$ $p = .47$ with $df = 4$ $r = -.05$ $p = .35$				
<b>Evaluative/Perceptual aspects</b>				
Low Favorable	20.0% (3)	8.3% (2)	22.7% (5)	16.4% (10)
Moderately Favorable	53.3% (8)	45.8% (11)	18.2% (4)	37.7% (23)
High Favorable	26.7% (4)	45.8% (11)	59.1% (13)	45.9% (28)
Total	100.0% (15)	100.0% (24)	100.0% (22)	100.0% (61)
$\chi^2 = 7.27$ $p = .12$ with $df = 4$ $r = .14$ $p = .13$				

The pattern of distribution of respondents in different categories of interpersonal relationships indicates that those who consider themselves to be handicapped in commanding the English language showed less extensive contacts with Americans than those who believed they have better knowledge of this language. But in all strata of the language competency, the prevalent frequency of interpersonal relationships with the host is found to be the medium level of contact: Basically, 40 percent of respondent in all three categories of linguistic skills indicated having medium frequency of contact with Americans. Among students who evaluated their linguistic skills to be below average, 40 percent reported low contact and 20 percent initiated more extensive contacts with their hosts. Individuals in the average category are more inclined toward having more frequent interaction with Americans (42 percent); only 17 percent of them at this level of linguistic skills reported low frequency of interpersonal relationships with their hosts. The same trend of distribution of respondents is seen among students at the highest level of language competency. At this level, 37 percent were highly interactive with Americans, whereas only 23 percent showed less interest in having any type of social interaction with their hosts.

Perhaps the existence of a nonsignificant correlation between Iranians' ability to command the English language and their interpersonal relationships with Americans is due

to the fact that most respondents rated themselves as "high" on indices measuring their ability in conversing in the English language. And, on the other hand, since most of these students have been in the United States for a long period of time, they have already acquired the basic knowledge about the English language which enables them to fluently and freely communicate with their hosts.

4.2. An analysis of the relationship between the respondents' linguistic skills and the amount of social support experienced in the host environment indicates that the magnitude of support provided for Iranian students in this sample does not correlate with how fluent they speak the language spoken in this country.

It was found that the majority of respondents in both the poor and the average categories of language competency reported only a moderate support received (47 percent and 54 percent, respectively). A great proportion of the respondents of this study were not overwhelmingly satisfied with the amount of support provided for them while in the United States (40 percent in the poor, and 25 percent in the medium category of linguistic skills). And, basically, 50 percent of Iranian students with better knowledge of the English language reported low support, 32 percent of them are found to be only moderately exposed to the host support.

Apparently, with regard to their linguistic skills, most individuals participated in this investigation have been either moderately supported by their host or they were not

supported at all. Although Iranians have expressed different experiences regarding this matter, their linguistic skills do not seem to be an important factor for determining the amount of social support received in the United States.

4.3. An investigation of the relationship between language competency and the evaluative/perceptual aspects of an individual's adjustment process indicates that although knowing the language spoken in the host country may expose sojourners to many aspects of the hosts' culture, Iranians' attitude formation and their evaluation of the surroundings is not correlated with their knowledge of the English language. In all three stages of linguistic skills, the majority of respondents of this study hold either moderate or high favorable attitudes.

The collected data show that among those with relatively poor knowledge of the English, 27 percent expressed high favorable attitude, 53 percent held a moderately favorable attitude toward the surrounding environment, and the remaining 20 percent were not satisfied with their life situation while in the United States. Of those who considered their language ability to be the average, 46 percent showed high regard for their host and were extremely satisfied, 46 percent are found in the moderately favorable attitude category, whereas only eight percent expressed low favorable attitude. Respondents who were highly confident with their ability to communicate in English also seemed to hold a high regard for their hosts (59 percent).

From the above indication of the relationship between an individual's linguistic skills and his/her adjustment correlates, it can be concluded that language competency is an irrelevant factor in this sample. In neither case, does there appear to be a significant correlation between linguistic skills of Iranian students and their adjustment correlates. While there are evidences that language problem is important for shortcoming of sojourners' integration with natives, upon close scrutiny, this line of reasoning can be compromised and disregarded for the present study. That is, it hardly seems an acceptable idea that an individual who is able to fulfill the requirements for obtaining a degree in an American university could have serious problems with the language spoken in this country (Parlin, 1976: 43).

#### **5. Financial Situation And The Adjustment Correlates:**

In this part, an attempt is made to investigate whether individuals' adjustment to a new environment is correlated with their financial situation in terms of the individual's ability to afford different expenses created as a result of living in a different country.

Among major reasons for inclusion of this variable is the present economic situation that most Iranian students are confronted with while abroad. After the revolution of 1979, the present government of Iran has put restriction on the money exodus particularly for students. With the exception of few cases, the majority of Iranian students work their way out of this situation by accepting



employment at different places. Since most Iranian students are at the graduate level, the most prevalent type of employment is found to be either a teaching or a research assistantship position at the school where they are enrolled. Table 8.5 shows this relationship.

An interpretation of the data presented in Table 8.5 would follow:

5.1. The association between an individual's income and the frequency of interpersonal relationship with the hosts is seen to be extremely weak and basically non-existent ( $r = .08$  at .25 level of significance). Based on their economic situation, the collected data show that the respondents of this study are somewhat evenly distributed across different categories of interpersonal relationships with the host. Iranians with annual income of less than \$6000 did not show an outstanding differentiation in their frequency of social contact with Americans. The majority of respondents within \$6000 - \$7999 income bracket reported medium frequency of interpersonal relationships with their hosts (45 percent). The remaining proportion are equally distributed between the low and the high categories of interaction (28 percent in each category). Respondents with an annual income of higher than \$8000 showed similar pattern (48 percent are found in the medium category of interpersonal relationship with the hosts). However, there seems to be a greater tendency among this latter group in having more extensive social relationships with Americans: 36 percent of respondents with

**TABLE 5. FINANCIAL SITUATION AND THE ADJUSTMENT CORRELATES**

Adjustment Correlates	< \$5999	\$6000-\$7999	> \$8000	Number of Cases
<b>Interpersonal Relationship</b>				
Low	33.3% (6)	27.8% (5)	16.1% (4)	24.6% (15)
Medium	27.8% (5)	44.4% (8)	48.0% (12)	41.0% (25)
High	38.9% (7)	27.8% (5)	36.0% (9)	34.4% (21)
Total	100.0% (18)	100.0% (18)	100.0% (25)	100.0% (61)
<sup>2</sup> $X = 2.86$ $p = .58$ with $df = 4$ $r = .09$ $p = .25$				
<b>Social Support</b>				
Low	33.3% (6)	38.9% (7)	40.0% (10)	37.7% (23)
Medium	50.0% (9)	55.6% (10)	32.0% (8)	44.3% (27)
High	16.7% (3)	5.6% (1)	28.0% (7)	18.0% (11)
Total	100.0% (18)	100.0% (18)	100.0% (25)	100.0% (61)
<sup>2</sup> $X = 3.54$ $p = .47$ with $df = 4$ $r = -.05$ $p = .35$				
<b>Evaluative/Perceptual Aspects</b>				
Low Favorable	27.8% (5)	11.1% (2)	12.0% (3)	16.4% (10)
Moderately Favorable	27.8% (5)	55.6% (10)	32.0% (8)	37.7% (23)
High Favorable	44.4% (8)	33.3% (6)	56.0% (14)	45.9% (28)
Total	100.0% (18)	100.0% (18)	100.0% (25)	100.0% (61)
<sup>2</sup> $X = 5.41$ $p = .24$ with $df = 4$ $r = .15$ $p = .10$				

an income of more than \$8000 reported having more extensive contact with their hosts.

5.2. Considering the effect(s) of financial situation on the variation in the amount of social support experienced by the respondents of the present study, the data show that the greatest proportion of individuals located in the lower and the middle categories of the income level are basically those who have been only moderately provided some kind of support by their hosts (50 percent and 56 percent, respectively). And, the proportion of respondents in these categories of income who have experience low support is far greater than those found in the high support category. This situation changes for individuals with an annual income of more than \$8000. That is, Individuals with higher income reported less social support experienced while in the United States. It was found that 40 percent of these students have not been socially supported by their hosts at all. ( Or, may be they have not requested anyone for any kind of favor.) And, 32 percent were provided with a moderate support of their hosts whereas only 28 percent of them were highly satisfied with Americans' social support.

Nonetheless, statistical analysis shows a nonsignificant relationship between these variables ( $p = .3$ ); and the correlation between them is virtually nil. Thus, it can be suggested that individuals' income level cannot be accounted for causing changes in the amount of social support that they experience while in a foreign country.

5.3. Based on the collected information measuring the relationships between an individual's income level and his/her attitude and perception of the surrounding environment, respondents in all categories of income level tend to express more favorable attitude toward their surroundings. Among Iranian students with an annual income of less than \$6000, 44 percent reported high favorable attitude, 28 percent are found in the moderately favorable attitude category, and 28 percent are those who did not show any type of satisfaction with life in the United States. Although 56 percent of the respondents with an annual income of between \$6000 to \$7999 reported a moderately favorable attitude toward their surroundings, 33 percent of them are found to be highly satisfied with life and hold high respect for Americans. Only 11 percent of the participants (in \$6000 - \$7999 category) expressed low favorable attitude. At the highest income level, the greatest proportion of Iranian students favorably perceived their hosts (56 percent); 32 percent developed only a moderately favorable attitude toward the surrounding environment, and only 12 percent are found in the low category of the evaluative/perceptual dimension of the adjustment process.

Furthermore, with regard to the statistical tests examining the effect of individuals' financial situation on the social psychological aspects of their adjustment process, it can be concluded that Iranian students' attitudes and perceptions are basically formed in a

favorable manner which is not correlated with their income level since such relationship is seen to be weak ( $r = .15$ ) and statistically nonsignificant ( $p = .10$ ).

#### Discussion and Alternative Testing:

Unlike the findings of many previous studies on the adjustment process of foreign students that agree upon the importance of individuals' personal characteristics in this process, the results of the present investigation reveal that the selected personal characteristics do not bear any significant effect on the indicators of the adjustment process of Iranian students in the United States. The only exception was the respondents' marital status which plays an important role in the process of social interaction, but it does not show any significant correlation with social support; nor are the attitudes of the respondents of this study toward the surrounding environment heavily influenced by their marital status.

Statistical tests employed in this study were to examine a number of assumption pertaining to the adjustment process of Iranian students. And, although it appears that personal characteristics of individuals to be preconditions for the enhancement of sojourners' adjustment to a new environment, we have seen that they are not extensively operative in this investigation. One may argue that these tests may not seem sufficient enough to justify the correctness of the findings presented in the previous paragraphs. Hence in order to detect and compare the results of different statistical

tests and examine the compatibility of these findings, additional procedures are also employed and the results are compared in the following paragraphs:

1. **Multiple Regression Analysis:** In the discussion that follows, the attempt is made to investigate the relationships between an index of the adjustment correlates and the selected background variables in a collective manner. The relationships between the adjustment correlates are assumed to be linear. Hence, the adjustment index of Iranian students reflects an additive combination of their scores on each adjustment correlate. Then, by utilizing a multiple regression (or any other multivariate) procedure, one can detect the relative importance of the selected personal characteristics in causing variations in the index of adjustment.

The analysis employed in this part is a regression model based on the stepwise forward inclusion of variables in the regression equation. The stepwise regression analysis is selected for its peculiarity in detecting variables which have contaminating effects on the association between the dependent and the independent variables. The results are summarized in Table 8.6.

At first glance, statistics presented in Table 8.6 seem to be congruent with the findings presented in the previous sections. The computed value of unstandard regression coefficient (B), when all variables are included, shows the strength of correlation between personal characteristic

4)

**TABLE 8.6. REGRESSION TABLE; SUMMARY OUTPUT**

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**All Variables in the Equation (Steps)**

\*

Variables	B	STD Error	F	Significance
Length of Stay	.047	.22	.047	.83
Linguistic Skills	.075	.21	.135	.72
Marital Status	-.69	.30	5.336	.02
Gender	.55	.35	2.461	.12
Financial Situation	.20	.19	1.06	.30
(Constant)	2.02	.87	5.387	.02

**General Statistics**

		Analysis of Variance	df	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F
Multiple R	.38					
R Square	.14	Regression	5	11.661	2.39	1.832
Adjusted R Square	.65	Residual	55	71.809	1.30	
Standard Error	1.14	Significance Level for F= .12				

\*

**Summary (Stepwise Inclusion)**

Variables	F to Enter	Sig.	Multiple R	R Square	Simple Overall R	Overall F	Sig.
1. L of S	.5163	.48	.0931	.0086	.0931	.5163	.48
2. L S	.5317	.47	.1329	.0176	.1196	.5219	.60
3. M S	5.0697	.02	.3129	.0979	-.2889	2.0623	.11
4. Gender	1.8164	.18	.3553	.1262	.1746	2.0230	.10
5. F S	1.0606	.30	.3778	.1427	.0940	1.8322	.12

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- \* STD Error = Standard Error
- \* L of S = Length of Stay
- \* L S = Linguistic Skills
- \* M S = Marital Status
- \* F S = Financial Situation

variables and the composite index of the adjustment correlates. Among these variables, it is obvious that the respondents' length of stay and their linguistic skills have minimum correlation with the adjustment index to the extent that their effects on the variation in the adjustment level of respondents is virtually nil. Iranian students' financial situation seems to have a slight effect on their adjustment index, but it is not statistically significant ( $B = .20$  at .19 level of significance). Their gender seems to be only moderately correlated with their adjustment index, but it does not show any significant effect on the composite value of the adjustment correlates. The computed value of regression coefficient for the respondents' marital status is believed to have the highest and the most significant correlation with their adjustment index ( $B = -.69$  at .02 level of significance). The negative value of this coefficient indicated a higher score for unmarried respondents on the adjustment index. However, it could have been positive if the marital status variable was coded differently. Of course, marital status is only important relative to the variables which have almost no effect at all. Although it causes only a small variation in the adjustment index ( $r = .29$ ), it is the most significant variable for the present sample.

Furthermore, correlations among the selected personal characteristics are revealing in many respects. (See Appendix B, Table B13.) Of all of the personal



characteristics variables, the respondents' marital status correlates most highly with the composite linear combination of the adjustment correlates. Furthermore, the relation between personal characteristics variables is not multicollinear (a situation where all of the independent variables are highly correlated with each other). And their joint effect contributes only to 14 percent of variation in the adjustment index which is heavily due to the effect that individuals' marital status has on their adjustment process. This can be also detected from the fact that the pattern of significance levels of variables in different steps which shows at most only marital status has a significant effect on the respondents' adjustment process. Thus, it becomes the single most important explanatory variable. Hence, much of the variations in the composite index of the adjustment for the respondents of this study are mainly originated from their marital status.

By employing the F ratio (a criteria for variable inclusion), statistics in Table 8.6 indicate that the value of F does not increase beyond a certain point which shows that bringing additional variables in the equation does not improve the model. Clearly, the respondents' length of stay and their linguistic skills do not show any contribution to the joint effects of the personal characteristics variables on the adjustment process. In this situation, the significant effect of the personal characteristics variables is limited to the important role that the respondents'

marital status is playing (step 3). At steps four and five, once again, a decline in the F ratio and its level of significance indicates that the remaining variables must also be excluded from this equation. Thus, differences in the adjustment level of individuals must be explained within categories rather than between categories with different characteristics. That is, perhaps differences in religious affiliation, political interests, living arrangement, etc., are factors which could help us to further understand the existing differences among individuals in certain categories of the personal characteristics variables.

2. **Canonical Correlation Analysis:** On the other hand, one may take into consideration the possibility that the adjustment correlates, in this context, may be interactively related to each other. Thus, the additive mode of combination between these variables will no longer represent the actual measure of changes in the adjustment process.

By interactive mode of combination, it is meant a composite model variables in which its elements are highly interrelated with each other and any change in one will cause variation in the others. Since it is assumed that each correlate of the adjustment is measuring one aspect of the process which is not free from the effect(s) of the others, and since the interconnectedness feature between these variables was detected in the previous section, it may be wise if one is employing a multivariate analysis which regards factors in the above mentioned fashion. Among

procedures which best serve this purpose, canonical correlation analysis is regarded as the most appropriate.

Two considerations are made for choosing this method: 1) Since in many projects the investigator is dealing with one dependent variable and several independent variables, regression and/or factor analysis and analysis of variance may seem more desirable for their applicability to this sort of multivariate procedures. In this project, the adjustment process is treated as the dependent variable which consists of three indicators each of which is a variable per se. Therefore we are dealing with three interdependent dependent variables instead of one. Hence, the use of other techniques becomes problematic. 2) Other procedures attempt to investigate and maximize the explained variance and factors which may not be the composite of variables that best account for the set of dependent variables (Nie et al., 1970). By employing canonical correlation analysis, two sets of variable are independently created which represent the "dependent variables" and the "independent variables" set, respectively. An assessment of the correlation between these sets of variables is feasible by canonical correlation analysis.

Thus, the explanation of the dependent variables is not based on the separate treatment of each one, but rather all variables of the set are taken together simultaneously (Levine, 1977: 11) which deals with multidimensionality of the phenomenon. By employing this method, both the

adjustment correlates and the personal characteristics of the respondents of this study are grouped into two sets and the statistics derived from this analysis is presented in Table 8.7.

TABLE 8.7. CANONICAL COEFFICIENT AND RELATED STATISTICS<sup>5)</sup>

First Set		2
	Canonical Variate 1	C
Gender	-.112	.01
Length of Stay	-.263	.07
Marital Status	-.84	.71
Linguistic Skills	.32	.10
Financial Situation	.253	.06
Percent of Trace		19

Second Set		2
	Canonical Variate 1	C
Interpersonal Relationship	.884	.78
Social Support	-.649	.42
Evaluative/Perceptual	.389	.15
Percent of Trace		45

Solution	Canonical Correlation	Wilks Lambda	2 r c	2 X	df	Prob.
1	.53	.626	.28	26.4	15	.04
2	.27	.871	.07	7.7	8	.47
3	.25	.94	.06	3.5	3	.33

Statistics shown in Table 8.7 suggest the possibility of there occurring three solutions for existing probable correlation between different pairs of variables in both sets. The first canonical variates are correlated rather strongly ( $r = .53$ ); the second and the third show less

correlation ( $r = .27$  and  $r = .25$ , respectively) and they also appear to be statistically nonsignificant (this is derived from the Chi-square test where for the second solution  $p = .47$  and for the third solution  $p = .33$ ). The following analysis will be based on the statistics derived from the first solution since it contains all variables of both sets.<sup>6)</sup> The Chi-square test also indicates the statistical significance of this solution (it is equal to 26.4 now at  $p = .04$ ).

From the matrix of coefficient in the first set, it can be noted that respondents' sex, length of stay, financial situation do not substantially contribute to the variate of that set since the calculated value of their correlation coefficient with the variate is low ( $r = -.11$  for gender,  $r = -.26$  for the length of stay, and  $r = .25$  for financial situation). According to the data in Table 8.7, individuals' linguistic skills is also recognized as having a slight effect ( $r = .32$ ), though not substantially important, whereas the respondents marital status appears to be highly operative in this matrix of the adjustment process due to its high value of correlation coefficient with the first variate ( $r = -.84$ ).

It is evident from the statistics derived for the second set (the dependent variables) that Iranians' interpersonal relationships with Americans play an important role in this composite relationship between indicators of the adjustment process due to its high contribution to the variate of the

second set ( $r = .88$ ). Social support and evaluative/perceptual aspects of the adjustment process are put second in terms of their importance to the variate. Nonetheless, the calculated value of correlation for this latter set is relatively strong which indicates their definite interdependence and their contribution to the second variate; and about 45 percent of the explained variance (the percent of trace) in the variate of the second set is due to the direct effects that each variable has on the variate of the dependent variables set.

It is also evident from the statistics in Table 8.7 that the proportion of the explained variance in the adjustment correlates captured by its variates share a total of 28 percent of variance in the background characteristics variate; and, this is mainly due to the important effect that the respondents' marital status has on the adjustment correlates. This relationship is seen to be highly significant ( $p = .04$ ).

In sum, simultaneous treatment of variables indicates the results to be congruent with the findings presented in the previous sections where the effects of the selected personal characteristics variables on the adjustment correlates were examined independently. It appears that the associations between the respondents' adjustment correlates and their personal characteristics are weak and nonsignificant in most cases except for the respondents' marital status which is seen as a major reason for changes

across correlates of the adjustment process.

**ENDNOTES**

1. Basically, the association between variables are shown by the value of Pearsonian correlation coefficient and its significance level and the value of Chi-square is only presented in these tables to accompany the former. The latter is also the raw value of Chi-square.
2. The negative sign only indicates the direction of this correlation which confirms the notion that unmarried individuals have established greater interpersonal relationships with Americans. It is also due to the coding procedure of the variable.
3. Obviously, one can intuitively come to a conclusion that individuals who are married to an American will perform greater frequency of contact with them due to their family ties and the spouse's influence in establishing and developing such contacts. Since the proportion of Iranians who have American Spouse was low in this investigation, supporting this assumption with such limited number of cases did not seem justifiable; thus it was not included in the theoretical framework.
4. Statistics presented for each step are results of the association between the newly introduced variable with the adjustment index where the effects of variables in the previous steps are taken into consideration.  
 (B) is the unstandard regression coefficient used in this analysis. Its value was compared with the standard regression coefficient, the result did not seem to be different in the final analysis.  
 The term "constant" is the Y intercept and the R square signifies the explained variance.
5. Canonical correlation analysis may not seem as popular as other methods of multivariate analysis. Hence, many terms used in Table 8.7 deserve clarification. The basic elements of canonical correlation procedure employed in this investigation are defined as the following:
  - a. Canonical variates: Any linear combination of pairs of variables in the set. Correlation matrix shown in each set under the heading of "canonical variates" indicates the importance of the original variables in forming the variate of that set.
  - b. C square is the squared correlation value of each variable with others in the set which is the amount of explained variance of the set accounted for by that variable.
  - c. Percent of trace is defined as the sum of the squared elements of a column in the matrix divided by the number of variables in the set.



- d. Canonical correlation. The correlation calculated between the sets; and its square, which is equivalent to the eigenvalue, represent the amount of variance in one canonical variate that is accounted for by the other canonical variate in the other set.
6. Each solution represents a test of the relationship between a specific set of variables. The degree of freedom calculated for each solution represent the amount of variables entered in calculation. That is,  $df = p \cdot q$ , where  $p$  is the number of variables in the first set and  $q$  is the number of variables in the second set. Therefore, the total number of variables included in first solution is equal to  $(5 \times 3 =) 15$  which means all variables are taken into account.
7.  $df = 15$

## CHAPTER IX

### SUMMARY, CRITIQUE AND CONCLUSION

Due to the complex nature of this phenomenon, studies on the adjustment process of foreign students can take different forms and interests. The adjustment process of foreign students to a social milieu other than their country of origin is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Such process cannot be dealt with as a condition or state, since it embraces and results from the interaction of many factors operating throughout time. Factors operating in this system are numerous. Perhaps one's energy, time, resources, and many other factors may not allow one to take many equally important variables into consideration while studying the adjustment process. Admittedly, different research strategies employing different factors are not free from artificial classification of variables. Nonetheless, it appears that some factors have been more useful than other in many investigations. Therefore, many studies attempted to reexamine the selected factors which seem to have bearing on previous studies.

The data presented and analyzed in this investigation examined the relationship among factors which were regarded as indicators (correlates) of the adjustment process of

Iranian students to American society. The idea presented here was based on the interconnectedness of several factors constituting the adjustment process. It was suggested that there exists a statistically significant correlation between the selected variables utilized in this investigation.

After pointing out some specific areas of concern derived from different theoretical frameworks utilized in previous investigations, it became clear that the adjustment process of an individual foreigner to the host environment can be determined by relating their interactional and associational patterns with the hosts to their social psychological well-being. Throughout the course of this investigation, it was observed that individuals social interaction with the hosts is closely related to the way they perceive the receiving society. That is, changes occurred in the social interactional pattern are accompanying changes in the respondents attitude toward the surrounding environment; and vice-versa.

However, the selected personal characteristics are not playing significant roles in this process, with the exception of the respondents' marital status. Thus, contrary to the proposed hypothesis that individuals with different personal characteristics will report differently on the adjustment scale, these presumably differentiating factors do not seem to be primary conditions for causing variations in the adjustment process. One of the reasons that caused the respondents' marital status to have a stronger but

reverse correlation with their adjustment correlates is found to be the fact that married participants either consciously or unconsciously isolate themselves from many social activities with Americans by forming their own enclaves. This, in fact, reinforces the establishment of a network of in-group relationships rather than integrating them into the larger society.

In spite of a growing willingness that the majority of respondents showed to participate in everyday social activities and sharing affection with Americans, no one has agreed upon on becoming an American. Undoubtedly, as seems to be implicit in the findings of this study, Iranian students, as well as other foreign nationals in the United States, are confronted with a continuous struggle to get along with Americans. This was observed from their attempt to open channels of communication and social interaction with their hosts.

Since living in another cultural setting inevitably forces individuals to struggle for social, political, and economic security, Iranian students were also conditioned to participate in different aspects of American society while in the United States. Obviously, the outcomes of such participation in various activities seem to be either the benevolent reception of the hosts or their rejection, discrimination, and prejudice reactions against those who are unable to fit in this structure.

In this instance, it is seen that in the area of

interpersonal relationships with Americans, Iranian students have successfully established strong and extensive contact; but, where the provided support by the hosts was under scrutiny, this success is gradually diminishing. Such a pressure is reflected through Iranian students' expressions and attitudes toward various conditions of life in the United States.

The stay in the United States seems to help expose sojourners to different aspects of life in America. It is believed that, through such a developmental stage, sojourners learn more about differences between them and people of the receiving society. Although the duration of stay hypothetically seems to be an important factor reflecting the pattern of change in the individuals' behavior, one cannot determine exactly how long is long enough for the respondents to realize different opportunities for becoming familiar with different aspects of the host society. However this may be true, this study shows that Iranian students' social interaction with their hosts and their attitude formation toward the surrounding environment and their life in the United States are independent of their length of stay in this country. The observed irrelevance is due to the fact that most Iranians who participated in this study have already been in the United States for an extended period of time. And, three to five years is the lowest duration of stay which could very well mean enough time for getting acquainted with the host

environment.

In sum, the "Iranian students' dilemma" is, thus, originated from the dual nature of living in a different culture: On the one hand, their willingness to become more involved with other Iranians for establishing their own communities and small enclaves helps them to find people with similar interests, attitudes, and values. Such an attachment and being involved with communities of Iranians may indeed become an obstacle for their reorientation and will perform in a reverse fashion in their adjustment process since it isolates them from the larger social structure. On the other hand, their attempt to become more integrated into American society may result in an isolation from the home country which may lead to an another form of loneliness. As a result, as the "temporary" self-exiled individuals, Iranian students are conditioned to relate themselves to both situations. And the outcomes of this compensation seem to be frustrating for many, since neither the home country at present time nor the host county is perceived as an ideal place to live.

#### **IMPLICATION:**

Like many other scientific studies, this one did not focus on policy consideration. Instead, its primary goal was to provide factual information for others to use to make decision. Upon closer scrutiny, one may ask "what purpose, then, does this research serve anyway?" For this reason, a tentative guideline is presented in this part in order to

inform those who are interested in policy development regarding the cross-cultural educational exchange programs.

One particular value derived from the information presented in this study is its usefulness for both Iranians and American educational institutions. These information could be a useful source for individuals to re-evaluate their life situation in a country other than their own and compare it with that of others. The observed pattern of social relationships indicated a practice taken by the hosts which can be a lesson for those who intend to come to the United States.

On the other hand, for the United States officials, if they are sympathetic and willing to improve foreign students' satisfaction, this project indicated a few shortcoming aspects of life in a foreign social milieu. Hence, by removing these obstacles (i.e., by facilitating and encouraging social interaction between sojourners and the natives and by introduction and provision of social support), they can provide foreign students with more opportunities for a healthy and satisfactory life during their sojourn.

#### **CRITIQUE (LIMITATIONS):**

The present project attempts to provide a clear understanding of factors that are operative in the process of adjustment. The Iranian students' adjustment process may deserve more elaboration, i.e., re-examination of factors and variables may suggest other meaningful possibilities.

Although the data could be presented differently, but the question that whether one could generalize from these findings to other national groups remains partially unanswerable.

Clearly, among the most conspicuous limitations upon the present research project is the nature of its sample which does not allow for drawing inferences. Perhaps responses of those who did not participate in this study could have affected the findings. Thus, instead of studying the population of Iranian students at MSU, the researcher realizes that a representative sample of them would have been more beneficial for the purpose of this inquiry.

Possibly, an element of subjectivity in responses given to the questions might have played a role in many concluding assertions of this investigation. This problem might have been from the nature and the context of recent political situation in Iran, the intrusion of polemic ideologies in the relationship between individuals. This have created some degree of mistrust and suspicion among individuals. Therefore, the findings may have limited interpretive value regarding the adjustment process in general. This is more apparent in those areas where the questions are directed toward the matter of attitude and personal opinion.

In order to avoid oversimplification of the phenomenon, it seems more appropriate to be content with relating our findings only to the present population. Thus, as it appears, a certain need for revision and additional



discussions on at least a few areas seems inevitable in order to increase the validity and reliability of the data and the related interpretation. Such revision, which is in process, will be discussed in the following section.

#### **Recommendations for Future Studies:**

Questions regarding the life of individual foreigners in a country other than their own country of origin are not easily answered. In many instances, one single research project can not discuss all problems that are associated with this issue. The present inquiry is not excluded from such shortcoming. Although there is not a universal theoretical framework to guide researches on international students, there appears that several meaningful variables can be commonly used.

Among basic attempts regarding the issue of foreign students' adjustment to the receiving society, it must be recognized that investigators should attempt to study the phenomenon in a dynamic fashion in terms of conducting a comparative study -- specifically, longitudinal. Through this, the pattern of change in the individuals' behavior can be detected; and, it can give the researcher a clear insight into the process of adjustment itself.

The academic life in the host country is as important as other social activities initiated by the individual foreigner. One may further expand the horizons of such inquiries by relating foreign students' social and personal adjustment to their academic adjustment, since it is

interesting to know which one is the cause for the other one; and/or, if they are unrelated.

In the context of the above mentioned suggestions, one may look at differences in the adjustment process between those students with American spouse and those whose spouses are from the country of origin.

Furthermore, one could detect the degree of dissociation (i.e., emotional, physical, etc.) from the home country and its relationships with the pattern of association with the host country that sojourners may establish during their stay. Dissociation from the home country can be investigated through an examination of the frequency and amount of communication that sojourners have with members of their family, other relatives, and friends at home via mail and/or telephone conversation.

In this study, cultural factors have been neglected to some extent. It will be beneficial to picture the importance of cultural differences in the process of adjustment. In the subsequent studies, a certain emphasis must be put on including varying intervening cultural factors in the model and detect their impacts on the individual's adjustment process.

Foreign student research, unlike Walton's (1971) ideas, should not be confined within a context of American educational systems, since these people cannot be viewed merely as students. Being a student is only one part of their life in the recipient society. Thus, their life abroad

is not limited to an academic type of relationship with other people of the host country because they establish other types of social interactions with their hosts.

## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How Old Were You at Your Last Birthday? ..... Years.

2. What is your sex?

(74%) Male

(26%) Female

3. What is your current marital status?

(48%) Never Married

( 3%) Divorced

( 0%) Separated

( 0%) Widowed

( 0%) Married, not living with spouse

(49%) Married, living with spouse

IF NOT MARRIED, SKIP TO QUESTION NUMBER (8)

4. Where is/was your spouse from?

(43%) Your Country Of Origin

( 3%) Other Overseas Countries

Than Your Country Of Origin

( 6%) The United States

(48%) Does Not Apply

5. How many children (if any) do you have?

.....Number Of Your Children

IF NO CHILDREN , SKIP TO QUESTION NUMBER (8)

6. Are your children living with you?

(33%) Yes

( ) No

(67%) Does Not Apply

7. Do you have any problem with child care arrangements in the United States?

(15%) No Problem

(16%) A Slight Problem

( 2%) A Big Problem

(67%) Does Not Apply

8. Taking into account all visits you may have made, how many years have you been in the United States?

..... Number Of Years

9. Taking into account any previous enrollment, how many terms have you been in this university?

..... Number Of Terms

10. How many more terms do you expect to stay in this university?

..... Number Of Terms

11. How many more years do you expect to stay in the United States either for study or work?

..... Number Of Years

12. How would you rate your English in the following areas?

	Very Good	Good	Neither Good Nor Poor	Poor	Very Poor
Reading Texts, Etc.	(45%)	(39%)	(16%)	( )	( )
Writing Papers, Etc.	(20%)	(44%)	(30%)	(7%)	( )
Comprehension	(38%)	(41%)	(21%)	( )	( )
Giving An Oral Presentation	(20%)	(54%)	(21%)	(4%)	(2%)

13. Have you taken TOEFL (Test Of English as a Foreign Language)?

(46%) No

(54%) Yes, And The Score Was:

( 2%) 400 - 449

( 7%) 450 - 499

(19%) 500 - 549

(19%) 550 - 599

( 7%) 600 and over

(46%) Does Not Apply

14. What is your major field of study? (Please be specific.)
- 

15. What academic degree did you have when you first entered the United States?

(39%) High School Diploma Or Below

(51%) B.S. Or B.A.

(10%) M.S. Or M.A.

( ) Ph.D.

( ) Other \_\_\_\_\_

16. What is the academic degree you are working for now?

(18%) B.S. Or B.A.

(18%) M.S. Or M.A.

(64%) Ph.D.

( ) Other \_\_\_\_\_

17.What is the source of your financial support?

- (30%) Personal Saving, Parents, And Relatives
- ( 2%) Fellowship Or Scholarship From Your Government
- (31%) One Half Time Teaching Assistantship
- (18%) One Half Time Research Assistantship
- ( 3%) One Quarter Time Teaching Assistantship
- ( 5%) One Quarter Time Research Assistantship
- ( 7%) Other University Job
- ( 2%) Off Campus Job, Related To Your Major
- ( 3%) Off campus Job, Not Related To Your Major
- ( ) Other

18.If employed as other than a TA or RA, what is your job?

Your Position: \_\_\_\_\_

19.Taking everything into account, compared with the United States, how similar is the culture of your country of origin?

- ( ) Very Similar
- ( 5%) Fairly Similar
- (25%) A Little Similar
- (71%) Not Similar At All

20.Would you say most Americans are

- (15%) Good And Try To Be Helpful
- (80%) Good But Look Out For Themselves
- ( 3%) Bad And Selfish (Or Inconsiderate%)
- ( 2%) Bad And Try To Rip You Off

21.How often have you experienced discrimination from the following people because of your race, sex, religion, or national origin?

	Frequently All The Time	Occasionally Sometimes	Never
Your American Friends And Neighbors	( 8%)	(54%)	(38%)
Your Major Professor (Or Advisor)	( 5%)	(45%)	(50%)
Other Professors And University Employees	( 8%)	(61%)	(31%)
Americans In General	(21%)	(66%)	(13%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 2%)	(38%)	(61%)

22.Do you think that Americans make degrading remarks about your country of origin?

- (25%) Yes, Often
- (39%) Yes, Sometimes
- (31%) Occasionally
- ( 5%) Not At All



23. How often do you hear the following people making degrading comments about your country of origin?

	Frequently All The Time	Occasionally Sometimes	Never
Your American Friends And Neighbors ( 4%)	(61%)	(36%)	
Your Major Professor (Or advisor) ( 2%)	(31%)	(63%)	
Other Professors And University Employees ( 3%)	(51%)	(46%)	
Americans In General (25%)	(69%)	( 7%)	
People From Other Overseas Countries ( 2%)	(53%)	(46%)	

24. At the present time, that is, in recent weeks and months, how much trust and respect do you have toward Americans?

	Very Much	Some	A Little Bit	None
Trust	( 8%)	(61%)	(26%)	( 5%)
Respect	(12%)	(66%)	(21%)	( 2%)

25. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, how much trust and respect did you have toward Americans?

	Very Much	Some	A Little Bit	None
Trust	(21%)	(54%)	(20%)	( 5%)
Respect	(23%)	(62%)	( 9%)	( 7%)

26. At the present time, that is, in recent weeks and months, how much do you think Americans would trust and respect people from your country of origin?

	Very Much	Some	A Little Bit	None
Trust	( 5%)	(25%)	(49%)	(21%)
Respect	( 5%)	(30%)	(43%)	(23%)

27. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, how much did you think Americans trust and respect people from your country of origin?

	Very Much	Some	A Little Bit	None
Trust	(15%)	(59%)	(21%)	( 5%)
Respect	(23%)	(54%)	(16%)	( 7%)

28. At the present time, that is, in recent weeks and months, would you say that in your social activities your friends are mostly

( 5%) American Born  
 (44%) People From Your Country Of Origin  
 ( 2%) People From Other Overseas Countries  
 (49%) Some From All Of The Above

29. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, would you say that your friends were mostly

( 4%) American Born  
 (32%) People From Your Country Of Origin  
 ( 2%) People From Other Overseas Countries  
 (23%) Some From All Of The Above

30. At the present time, that is, in recent weeks or months, how often do you spend your leisure time with the following people?

	Several Times A Week	At Least Once A Week	Once Every Two Weeks	Once A Month	Less Than Once A Month	Never
Americans	(23%)	(15%)	(23%)	(15%)	(15%)	(10%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(38%)	(47%)	( 3%)	( 3%)	( 7%)	(10%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	(16%)	(20%)	(11%)	(15%)	(26%)	(12%)

31. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, how often did you spend your leisure time with the following people?

	Several Times A Week	At Least Once A Week	Once Every Two Weeks	Once A Month	Less Than Once A Month	Never
Americans	(30%)	(13%)	(21%)	(13%)	( 8%)	(15%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(56%)	(33%)	( 7%)	( 2%)	( )	( 3%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	(18%)	(16%)	(23%)	(16%)	(13%)	(13%)

32. Approximately how much time do you spend with the following people in each visit?

Number Of Hours In Each Visit	Quite Bit Of Time (3 Or More)	Some time (1 - 3)	Not Very Much Time (Less Than 1)
Americans	(20%)	(51%)	(29%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(56%)	(34%)	(10%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	(10%)	(44%)	(46%)

33. Approximately how Many American Friends do you have?

( ) Number Of Your American Friends

34. How would you describe your experience in making friends with Americans?

( 3%) Very Easy  
(12%) Fairly Easy  
(24%) Not So Easy  
(46%) A Bit Difficult  
(15%) Very Difficult

35. If you had the opportunity to increase the number of your friends, from what group would you like to choose them?

(41%) Americans  
(25%) People From Other Overseas Countries  
(34%) People From Your Country Of Origin

36. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, how interested were you in making friends with the following?

	Very Interested	Indifferent	Not Interested
Americans	(70%)	(28%)	( 2%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(46%)	(46%)	( 8%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	(44%)	(51%)	( 5%)

37. At the present time, how often do you invite the following people to your place for an informal social gathering?

	Several Times A Week	At Least Once A Week	Once Every Two Weeks	Once A Month	Less Than Once A Month	Ne- ver
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( 5%)	( 7%)	(18%)	(18%)	(36%)	(16%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(11%)	(38%)	(23%)	(12%)	(10%)	( 7%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 4%)	( 4%)	(15%)	(18%)	(36%)	(25%)

38. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, how often did you invite the following people to your place for an informal social gathering?

	Several Times A Week	At Least Once A Week	Once Every Two Weeks	Once A Month	Less Than Once A Month	Ne- ver
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( 7%)	(13%)	(20%)	(15%)	(34%)	(12%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(21%)	(46%)	(13%)	(12%)	( 7%)	( 2%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 4%)	( 5%)	(23%)	(20%)	(30%)	(20%)

39. At the present, how often do the following people invite you to their place for an informal social gathering?

	Several Times A Week	At Least Once A Week	Once Every Two Weeks	Once A Month	Less Than Once A Month	Ne- ver
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( 7%)	( 8%)	(25%)	( 7%)	(38%)	(16%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	( 8%)	(33%)	(36%)	(12%)	(10%)	( 1%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 3%)	(10%)	(13%)	( 8%)	(38%)	(28%)

40. in the past, how often did the following people invite you to their place for an informal social gathering?

	Several Times A Week	At Least Once A Week	Once Every Two Weeks	Once A Month	Less Than Once A Month	Never
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( 3%)	(20%)	(13%)	(25%)	(28%)	(11%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(12%)	(41%)	(33%)	(10%)	( 2%)	( 3%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 2%)	( 8%)	(15%)	(18%)	(32%)	(25%)

41. At the present time, that is, in recent weeks and months, how comfortable do you feel asking the following people for help (either material or nonmaterial)?

	Very Comfort- able	Comfort- able	Indif- ferent	Uncom- fortable	Very Uncomfort- able
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	(13%)	(23%)	(23%)	(31%)	(10%)
Help Agencies	(10%)	(18%)	(36%)	(10%)	(26%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(18%)	(52%)	(10%)	(10%)	(10%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 7%)	(28%)	(34%)	(15%)	(15%)

42. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, how comfortable did you feel asking the following people for help (either material or nonmaterial)?

	Very Comfort- able	Comfort- able	Indif- ferent	Uncom- fortable	Very Uncomfort- able
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( 5%)	(20%)	(23%)	(41%)	(12%)
Help Agencies	( 3%)	( 7%)	(36%)	(26%)	(28%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(15%)	(53%)	(13%)	(12%)	( 8%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 5%)	(25%)	(34%)	(18%)	(18%)

43. Which one of the following people would you prefer the most to ask for any kind of help?

(AT THE PRESENT TIME)

(IN THE PAST)

(21%) Americans

(15%) Americans

( 8%) People From Other  
Overseas Countries

( 8%) People From Other  
Overseas Countries

(71%) People From Your  
Country Of Origin

(77%) People From Your  
Country Of Origin

44. How often do you ask the following people for any kind of help (either material or nonmaterial) in different situations?

	Always	Most Of The Time	Some- times	Never
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( )	(10%)	(75%)	(15%)
Help Agencies	( 2%)	( 7%)	(30%)	(62%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	( 3%)	(34%)	(56%)	( 7%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 2%)	( 7%)	(57%)	(34%)

45. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, how often did you ask the following people for any kind of help in different situations?

Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( )	(10%)	(64%)	(26%)
Help Agencies	( 2%)	( 7%)	(21%)	(70%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	( 7%)	(43%)	(48%)	( 3%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 2%)	( 7%)	(51%)	(41%)

46. How often do you receive help (either material or nonmaterial) from the following people in different situations?

	Always	Most Of The Time	Some- times	Never
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( )	( 9%)	(71%)	( 7%)
Help Agencies	( )	( 5%)	(26%)	( 7%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	( 5%)	(46%)	(41%)	( )
People From Other Overseas Countries	( )	( 3%)	(61%)	( 2%)

47. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, how often did you receive help (either material or nonmaterial) from the following people in different situations?

	Always	Most Of	Some-	Never
	The Time times			
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( )	( 2%)	(62%)	( )
Help Agencies	( )	( 5%)	(20%)	( 5%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	( 3%)	(41%)	(48%)	( 5%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( )	( 5%)	(49%)	( 5%)

48. At the present, that is, in recent weeks and month, how helpful do the following people seem to be in general?

	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Indif-ferent	Not Very Helpful	Reluctant To Help
Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	( 7%)	(67%)	( 3%)	( 8%)	( 5%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(26%)	(53%)	( 8%)	(82%)	( 5%)
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 2%)	(53%)	(33%)	(10%)	( 3%)

49. In the past, when you first came to the United States, and slightly thereafter, how helpful did the following people seem to you in general? (PLEASE USE THE ABOVE SCALE.)

Americans (Including Friends, Neighbors, And Faculty Members)	(15%)	(57%)	(13%)	(13%)	( 2%)
People From Your Country Of Origin	(30%)	(51%)	(13%)	( 7%)	( )
People From Other Overseas Countries	( 5%)	(38%)	(36%)	(21%)	( )

50. Taking everything into account, how hospitable do/did you find the American society in general?

(AT THE PRESENT TIME)

(10%) Very Hospitable  
(43%) Somewhat Hospitable  
(31%) Neither Hospitable  
Nor Inhospitable  
(15%) Somewhat Inhospitable  
( 2%) Very Inhospitable

(IN THE PAST)

(16%) Very Hopspitable  
(41%) Somewhat Hospitable  
(36%) Neither Hospitable  
Nor Inhospitable  
( 7%) Somewhat Inhospitable  
( ) Very Inhospitable

51. How friendly do/did you think the Americans are in general?

(AT THE PRESENT TIME)

(IN THE PAST)

(16%) Very Friendly And Easy  
To Get Along  
(56%) Somewhat Friendly  
(20%) Indifferent  
( 7%) Somewhat Unfriendly  
( 2%) Very Unfriendly

(15%) Very Friendly And Easy  
To Get Along  
(54%) Somewhat Friendly  
(26%) Indifferent  
( 3%) Somewhat Unfriendly  
( 2%) Very Unfriendly

52. Taking everything into account, how satisfied are/were you with your life in the United States?

(AT THE PRESENT TIME)

(IN THE PAST)

( 5%) Very Satisfied  
(41%) Somewhat Satisfied  
(30%) Neither Satisfied Nor  
Dissatisfied  
(16%) Somewhat Dissatisfied  
( 8%) Very dissatisfied

(12%) Very Satisfied  
(38%) Somewhat Satisfied  
(39%) Neither Satisfied Nor  
Dissatisfied  
(10%) Somewhat Dissatisfied  
( 2%) Very Dissatisfied

53. How attractive to you is/was the American life style?

(AT THE PRESENT TIME)

(IN THE PAST)

(13%) Very Attractive  
(26%) Somewhat Attractive  
(31%) Indifferent  
(20%) Somewhat Unattractive  
(10%) Very Unattractive

(13%) Very Attractive  
(39%) Somewhat Attractive  
(31%) Indifferent  
(13%) Somewhat Unattractive  
( 3%) Very Unattractive

54. Where do you consider to be your home?

(79%) Your Country Of Origin  
( 5%) The United States  
(16%) Other Place

55. Where did you consider your home to be when you first came to the United States?

(95%) Your Country Of Origin  
( ) The United States  
( 5%) Other Place

56. Have you ever felt at home in the United States?

(16%) Yes, Whenever I Am With People From My Country  
( ) Yes, Whenever I Am With Most American  
(30%) Yes, Whenever I Am With Both People  
(54%) I Have Never Felt At Home With Either People



57. How much have you become part of American society?

- ( 5%) Very Much
- (48%) Somewhat
- (28%) A Little Bit
- (20%) Not At All

58. How necessary is/was it for you to work to financially support yourself in the United States?

- | (AT THE PRESENT TIME)      | (IN THE PAST)              |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| (59%) Extremely Necessary  | (10%) Extremely Necessary  |
| (27%) Necessary            | (23%) Necessary            |
| (13%) Not Necessary At All | (57%) Not Necessary At All |

59. At the present time, how much do you experience the following financial problems while in the United States?

	Very Much	A Fair Amount	A Little Bit	Not At All
Meeting Your Living Expenses	(16%)	(16%)	(34%)	(33%)
Paying Your Tuition	(26%)	(12%)	(25%)	(38%)
Paying Your Rent And Other Bills	(23%)	(13%)	(30%)	(34%)
Paying For Your Transportation	(10%)	( 8%)	(39%)	(43%)
Paying For Your Recreational Activities (Such As Sport, Going Out To Eat, Etc.)	(12%)	(20%)	(43%)	(26%)

(IN THE PAST, WHEN YOU FIRST CAME TO THE UNITED STATES)

Meeting Your Living Expenses	( 3%)	(12%)	(18%)	(67%)
Paying Your Tuition	( 7%)	(13%)	(13%)	(67%)
Paying Your rent And other Bills	( 2%)	(13%)	(18%)	(67%)
Paying For your transportation	( 2%)	(10%)	(21%)	(67%)
Paying For Your recreational Activities (Such As Sport, Going Out To Eat, Etc.)	(3%)	(18%)	(31%)	(48%)

60. With whom do you live now in the United States?

- (20%) Student(s) From Your Country Of Origin
- ( 7%) Student(s) From Other Overseas Countries
- (51%) Relatives (Including Your Spouse)
- ( 2%) An American Family
- ( 8%) Students From The United States
- (13%) Live Alone (Either in an apartment or in a dormitory)
- ( ) Other (Please Be Specific) \_\_\_\_\_

61. How fast are you completing your degree requirements according to the time schedule set for obtaining a degree by the university?

- (10%) Faster Than Anticipated
- (43%) Right On Time According To The Schedule
- (47%) Slower than Anticipated

62. Did you take the GRE ( Graduate Record Exam) ?

(66%) No

(34%) Yes, And The Score Was .....

63. Compared with other students in your department, how does your academic performance rank?

(AT THE PRESENT TIME)

(25%) Among The Highest

(44%) Higher than The Average

(30%) Average

( 2%) Below The Average

( ) Among The Lowest

(IN THE PAST)

(30%) Among The highest

(46%) Higher Than Average

(25%) Average

( ) Below The Average

( ) Among The Lowest

64. What is your Grade Point Average (GPA)?

( ) Between 0.00 And 2.44

( 5%) Between 2.45 And 2.84

(18%) Between 2.85 And 3.24

(39%) Between 3.25 And 3.64

(38%) Between 3.65 And 4.00

65. The following scale indicates various income levels. Which level represents your annual income from all sources available for you in the United States?

(16%) \$3999 Or Less Annually

(13%) \$4000 - \$5999 Annually

(30%) \$6000 - \$7999 Annually

(30%) \$8000 - \$9999 Annually

(12%) \$10000 And Above Annually

**APPENDIX B**

**CONDESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND  
ADDITIONAL CONTINGENCY  
TABLES**

## APPENDIX B

### CONDESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND ADDITIONAL CONTINGENCY TABLES

**TABLE B1. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (ORAL PRESENTATION)**

Categories	Number of Cases	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
1) Poor	16	26.2		
2) Average	33	45.1		
3) Good	12	19.7		
Total	61	100.0	1.93	.68

**TABLE B2. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (READING ABILITY)**

Categories	Number of Cases	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
1) Poor	10	16.4		
2) Average	24	39.3		
3) Good	27	44.3		
Total	61	100.0	2.28	.73

**TABLE B3. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (COMPREHENSION)**

Categories	Number of Cases	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
1) Poor	13	21.3		
2) Average	25	41.0		
3) Good	23	37.7		
Total	61	100.0	2.16	.75

**TABLE B4. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (WRITING ABILITY)**

Categories	Number of Cases	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
1) Poor	22	36.1		
2) Average	27	44.3		
3) Good	12	19.7		
Total	61	100.0	1.83	.73

**TABLE B5. DIFFERENCES IN THE LEVEL OF CONTACT WITH AMERICANS OVER TIME**

Present	Past			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Low	55.0% (11)	6.3% (1)	12.0% (3)	24.8% (15)
Medium	40.0% (8)	43.0% (7)	40.0% (10)	41.0% (25)
High	5.0% (1)	50.0% (8)	48.0% (12)	34.4 (21)
Total	100.0% (20)	100.0% (16)	100.0% (25)	100.0% (61)

2  
 Raw X = 18.85 with df = 4, p = .0008  
 r = .47 p = .0001

**TABLE B6. DIFFERENCES IN THE LEVEL OF SOCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY AMERICANS OVER TIME**

Present	Past			
	Low	Medium	High	Total
Low	60.0% (18)	18.2% (4)	11.1% (1)	37.7% (23)
Medium	26.7% (8)	68.2% (15)	44.4% (4)	44.3% (27)
High	13.3% (4)	13.6% (3)	44.4% (4)	18.0% (11)
Total	100.0% (30)	100.0% (22)	100.0% (9)	100.0% (61)

2  
 Raw X = 16.89 with df = 4, p = .002  
 r = .40 p = .0006

**TABLE B7. DIFFERENCES IN THE LEVEL OF SOCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY COMPATRIOTS OVER TIME**

Present	Past			
	Low	Medium	High	Total
Low	50.0% (5)	9.1% (2)	3.4% (1)	13.1% (8)
Medium	40.0% (4)	18.2% (4)	13.8% (4)	19.7% (12)
High	10.0% (1)	72.7% (16)	82.8% (24)	67.2% (41)
Total	100.0% (10)	100.0% (22)	100.0% (29)	100.0% (61)

2  
 Raw X = 21.36 with df = 4, p = .0003  
 r = .52 p = .0000

**TABLE B8. DIFFERENCES IN THE LEVEL OF SOCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY OTHER NATIONALS OVER TIME**

Present	Past			
	Low	Medium	High	Total
Low	57.1% (8)	4.0% (1)	4.5% (1)	16.4% (10)
Medium	14.3% (2)	64.0% (16)	13.6% (3)	34.4% (21)
High	28.6% (4)	13.1% (8)	81.8% (18)	49.2% (30)
Total	100.0% (14)	100.0% (25)	100.0% (22)	100.0% (61)

2  
 Raw X = 36.65 with df = 4, p = .0000  
 r = .54 p = .0000

**TABLE B9. PERCEPTION OF AMERICANS' FRIENDLINESS**

Category	In The Past		At Present	
	N of Cases	%	N of Cases	%
1) Unfriendly	3	4.9	5	8.2
2) Indifferent	16	26.2	12	19.7
3) Friendly	42	68.9	44	72.1
Total	61	100.0	61	100.0
Mean =	2.63		2.63	
SD =	.57		.63	

**TABLE B10. TRUST AND RESPECT TOWARD AMERICANS**

Category	In The Past		At Present	
	N of Cases	%	N of Cases	%
1) Almost None	17	27.9	17	27.9
2) Some	30	49.2	29	47.5
3) Very Much	14	23.0	15	24.6
Total	61	100.0	61	100.0
Mean =	1.95		1.96	
SD =	.71		.73	

**TABLE B11. ATTRACTIVENESS OF AMERICAN LIFE STYLE**

Category	In The Past		At Present	
	N of Cases	%	N of Cases	%
1) Unattractive	10	16.4	18	29.5
2) Indifferent	19	31.1	19	31.1
3) Attractive	32	52.5	24	39.4
Total	61	100.0	61	100.0
Mean =	2.36		2.09	
SD =	.75		.83	

**TABLE B12. PERCEPTION OF THE U.S. AS A HOSPITABLE ENVIRONMENT**

Category	In The Past		At Present	
	N of Cases	%	N of Cases	%
1) Inhospitable	4	6.6	10	16.4
2) Indifferent	22	36.1	19	31.1
3) Hospitable	35	57.4	32	52.5
Total	61	100.0	61	100.0
Mean =	2.50		2.36	
SD =	.62		.75	



**TABEL B13. DIFFERENCES IN THE LEVEL OF THE EVALUATIVE/  
PERCEPTUAL ASPECTS OVER TIME**

Present	Past			
	Low Favorable Attitude	Moderately Favorable	High Favorable	Total
Low Favorable Attitude	60.0% (3)	15.0% (6)	6.3% (1)	16.4% (10)
Moderately Favorable	20.0% (1)	50.0% (20)	12.5% (2)	37.7% (23)
High Favorable	20.0% (1)	14.0% (14)	81.3% (13)	45.9% (28)
Total	100.0% (5)	100.0% (40)	100.0% (16)	100.0% (61)

2  
 Raw X = 17.69 with df = 4, p = .0010  
 r = .34 p = .0003

**TABLE B14. CORRELATION MATRIX**

	A D	L S	M S	Gender	F S
L S	.093				
M S	-.288	.064			
Gender	.174	.137	.009		
F S	.094	.269	.061	-.216	
L C	.119	.319	-.146	-.040	.184

L S = Linguistic Skills  
 M S = Marital Status  
 F S = Financial Situation  
 L C = Language Competency  
 A D = Adjustment Index

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