

Unitec New Zealand

The Business of Export Education: Expectation Gaps in Living

Conditions for Chinese Students in New Zealand

Master of Business (MBus)

By Max Pu

ID: 1315899

DECLARATION

Name of Candidate: Su (Max) Pu

This Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the Unitec

degree of **Master of Business**

Candidate's Declaration

I confirm that:

This Dissertation represents my own work

The contribution of supervisors and others to this work was consistent with the

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Research for this work has been conducted in accordance with the Unitec

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Candidate Signature:

Date:

Supervisor's Signature:

Student number: 1315899

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DEDICATION

To my parents, my professor Dr Howard Frederick and Dr Andries Du Plessis, and my friends for their support.

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ABSTRACT

This study has researched how to improve the service quality and living experience of international students in New Zealand through exploring five questions:

- 1. What are the important factors considered by Chinese students when they choose New Zealand as a destination?
- 2. What are the current living conditions of Chinese students who study overseas in New Zealand?
- 3. What are the social lives for Chinese students in New Zealand?
- 4. How are their lives in New Zealand different from their expectation?
- 5. How can the New Zealand institutes improve their service quality to meet the needs of the overseas students?

This study has used quantitative questionnaires as the main research tool for data collecting among the Chinese international students. 135 questionnaires were handed out to 135 Chinese overseas students in 9 schools – 3 public universities, 3 private education institutes, and 3 language schools. By the end, there were 122 questionnaires completed and returned by the selected students.

The collected data was analyzed through the SPSS software. Mean value analysis, frequency analysis, and T-Test analysis were mainly implemented to summarize, compare and contrast the data.

There are no other research tools or data collection methods being employed in this research.

This study reveals that Chinese international students are mainly concerned with "being in an English speaking country", having the "opportunity to live in that country permanently", "ease of getting a student visa", "freedom of lifestyle", and "the quality of education" in selecting a country to study overseas in.

The study also discovers that students' satisfaction and perception about the service quality of New Zealand export education are based on five key factors: accommodation, study, social network, discrimination, and convenience of daily living.

Overall this study has found out the particular aspects which need to be worked on by the government and the education providers in order to meet the needs or expectation gap of the international students. It is likely to contribute to New Zealand export education in several ways. First, its quantitative primary survey provides direct and updated sources from current Chinese international students. Second, this study has full coverage of living and studying perspectives. In addition, it takes detailed demographic factors into account. It could provide an example and resources for further study on a similar topic.

Although this study is not comprehensive and could not cover all aspects of overseas' students' life experience, it has given a big picture and reality-based information. In the future, even more particular perspectives such as the education institution's opinions or views about their service quality could be investigated in a further study.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Export education is one of the more important sectors in New Zealand, according to the economic contribution made by international education. New Zealand is one of top five overseas study destinations, following behind the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia. Nevertheless, the competition in international education is becoming intense (NZID, 2006) This paper was carried out to find out how these institutes can improve their service quality in order to increase the competitiveness of New Zealand. There were two main aspects to be investigated: (1) acknowledge the current factors that are part of international education in New Zealand; (2) find out what kind of quality of life is expected by overseas students when they come to New Zealand for study. In the quality of life parameter, living conditions are the main factors.

1.1 Background

This research project should be seen within the context of the New Zealand export education industry. The following sections will give more details and background on this aspect.

Prior to the late 1980s, New Zealand did not have enough international students, so that the educational system could not cover its costs due to the low proportion of full school payment. For this reason, the NZ government added new provisions to the 1989 Education Act to empower tertiary institutions and other schools to recruit more full fee-paying international students to New Zealand. Malaysia used to be a main source of overseas students in the mid 1990s. Chinese students and Korean students have accounted for the greatest growth across the export education sectors in most recent years (International Division, 2006). The current anecdotal evidence, around United at least, shows a huge growth in Indian and Russian students as well as

students from many other countries.

A report from International Division (2008) stated that: To study overseas has become fashionable for many young people. New Zealand has become one of the most popular choices for export education. In New Zealand, the export education sector experienced a significant increase from 2001 to 2003. This is shown in the total enrolment for international students, which increased sharply (by 61%) from 2001 to 2002. However, this figure has been declining in recent years. From 2002 to 2007, the figures have dropped by 30% (Refer to Appendix 1) (International Division & Ministry of Education, 2008). Some people believe there is a crisis in New Zealand's export education sector, due to significantly decreased enrolment, negative comments from the insiders (education providers), and negative media reporting (Butcher & McGrath, 2004). Bad publicity was received about a recent incident when a Chinese student was kidnapped and murdered by his fellow language students (China Post, 2007).

Over the past decade, Chinese international students have made up the greater proportion of overseas students (Zhang & Brunton, 2007). The number of Chinese students who were granted student visas increased dramatically from 28,607 in 2001 to 61,935 in 2003. However, the figure dropped sharply to 28,887 in 2007 (Refer to Appendix 2) (International Division & Ministry of Education, 2008). Export education has been an important source of income for the NZ government. Owing to the decreased export education rates, the economic benefits generated by export education sector has also declined, from \$2.21 in 2004 to \$1.82 in 2007 (International Division & Ministry of Education, 2008).

Furthermore, McKinlay (2002) has pointed out that costs were the most important factors for international students choosing New Zealand as an overseas education destination. The costs in New Zealand were closer to the living standards to Asian countries, and it is an English-speaking country. Butcher and McGrath (2004) also

indicated that some international students choose New Zealand because "it is cheap and easy", and some choose New Zealand because they would obtain a degree from a Western tertiary education institute and improve their English speaking and writing skills (Butcher & McGrath, 2004, p.541). However, there are still other important factors influencing the decision making of foreign students, and these involve the quality of education delivered, living conditions, safety, cultural environment, reputation in the international educational market and so forth.

Expectation gap is a term meaning the difference between the expectation and the perception of the actual experiences. In the international educational market, the term can be used to describe the difference between international students' expectation on the quality of the experience, and their perception of the actual quality of educational service received (Mai, 2005). Many studies have focused on or been involved with the expectation gap. A comparative study about student satisfaction in higher education between the US and the UK has outlined some influential factors contributing to satisfaction and the expectation gap. Service quality and word of mouth communication are two of these (Mai, 2005).

1.2 Importance of the Research

1.2.1 Problem Statement

To date, there is a downward trend for NZ in its popularity as a foreign educational destination for Chinese students. Facing the declining figures of Chinese international students, it is crucial for the NZ government to find out the reasons for the reduction, especially for the reduction in Chinese students, which used to make up the major proportion of overseas students. Moreover, it has been pointed out that, even though the Chinese market is playing an increasing role in NZ's export education, some educational and socio-cultural aspects of Chinese students education here has not

always been reported positively. Hence there are rising questions about the perception of Chinese international students towards their New Zealand education and their satisfaction towards their educational and socio-cultural experiences in New Zealand (Zhang & Brunton, 2007).

1.2.2 Reasons for this Research

There are different factors affecting students' selection of the location for overseas study, such as school facilities, export education policies, and social networking. The living conditions are one of the most important factors. In addition, the current global economic recession would lead to some negative impacts toward the export education market in New Zealand. The NZ government is strongly concerned with its national competitive advantage in the competitive global export education market (International Division, 2008). On the other hand, it is important to research and evaluate the ongoing changing expectations of Chinese international students. Thus, it will be difficult to provide a high educational quality service and sound living conditions, if the relevant authorities of New Zealand and educational service providers do not find out the changing expectations of Chinese international students. Therefore, this research is strategically concerned with some specific factors which could create the quality educational experience to attract more Chinese international students as well as increasing their satisfaction with studying in New Zealand.

1.3 Research objectives

The objective of this project is to measure and evaluate the expectation gaps about the service quality and living conditions of Chinese students in Auckland. The project mainly focuses on the expectation gap about certain "service quality" issues such as living standards, accommodation, health and safety, living expenditures, hygiene, culture, and acceptance by the local people.

1.4 The statement of research questions

In order to measure and evaluate the expectation gaps about living conditions of Chinese students in Auckland, the main research question is "To what extent do living conditions in New Zealand meet the expectations of Chinese students?" This question was investigated through four sub-aspects:

- 1. To investigate Chinese students' expectations on a number of service quality aspects related to living conditions.
- 2. To compare Chinese students' expectations with their actual experiences of living in New Zealand.
- 3. To ascertain the leading gaps (expectation- perception gaps) in the experience of Chinese students living in NZ.
- 4. Based upon these findings and a search of relevant literature, to make recommendations about what government and tertiary institutions should do to narrow the expectation gap.

The analysis of expectation gaps in service quality amongst Chinese students who have resided in Auckland for six months or more, suggests possible and suitable actions for the government and tertiary institutions to take in order to narrow the gaps and improve the service quality. Export education is an engine of growth and prosperity, not only for the student but also for New Zealand. The study ultimately seeks to improve the export education sector. This led to five sub-questions:

- 1. What are the important factors for Chinese students in choosing New Zealand as an international study destination?
- 2. What aspects of service quality and living conditions are different from the students' expectations?
- 3. What are some of the factors that make up how these expectations might influence Chinese students' perceptions of living conditions in New Zealand?
- 4. What service quality aspects are Chinese students satisfied with?
- 5. What service quality aspects do Chinese students wish to improve?

1.5 Research Design

In order to obtain information about the service quality in New Zealand export education from the Chinese international students' point of view, quantitative surveys were conducted amongst Chinese international students. Based on previous secondary research, self-completed questionnaires and consent forms were handed out to 135 students. The quantitative data were analyzed by Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Furthermore, a set of questions were contained in the questionnaire as well as an information sheet to explain the objectives of the study and how the information will be used.

The questionnaire is designed to focus on perceived costs and benefits for students to come to study in New Zealand; the expected living conditions and standards, their satisfaction towards life in New Zealand, the perception about their own living conditions in terms of accommodation arrangements, living standards (financial ability), life styles and frequent leisure activities socio-cultural experiences, health and safety; and their perception about what the local government and education providers have done to enhance their life quality and living conditions.

Furthermore, the target sample is 135 Chinese international students who enrolled in language schools, private training establishments (PTEs) and public tertiary education institutions. As indicated in table 1, those 9 schools were chosen based on their popularity among Chinese international students (those schools are relatively more recognized by Chinese international students, and often referred to or recommended by immigration agents in China) as well as the long history of those schools in the market. Fifteen students that fitted the filter criteria were selected from each of those 9 schools, a total of 135 respondents.

Table 1 Target schools for the survey

	Educational service providers	The samples
Language schools	Edenz College	15
	Taylors College	15
	ACG College	15
Private tertiary institutes	AIS St Helens	15
	Wollongong College Auckland	15
	Victoria College	15
Public tertiary institutions	University of Auckland	15
	Massey University	15
	Auckland University of Technology	15

1.6 Limitations of the Research

Some limitations have been identified in the current project due to the design and situational restrictions.

- The first limitation is language bias in the light of the questionnaire being designed in English, and some Chinese students thinking about the answer in Chinese and translating it into English. This could have caused bias in the translation or understanding.
- The second limitation is sample bias, which means the sample was drawn by the researcher one time at each school. The time and location that the researcher drew the sample might also cause bias to the sample.
- The third one is distribution bias, in that the questionnaires and interviews were distributed and conducted in Auckland only and only to Chinese students.

Thus, the geographic location is a big limitation for the research, since the feelings and experiences of respondents from a particular city can neither cover the whole of New Zealand nor export education in New Zealand in general. Apart from that, the

institutes chosen for this study also restrict the outcomes of the research. Since organizations need to be selected for this research, the study could not cover all industries and all sectors. This must limit the reliability and availability of this study.

1.7 A Brief Exposition of Chapters

The following outline demonstrates the overall flow of this study:

- **Chapter One**: highlights the objective, research questions, and research limitations, and overviews the whole project.
- Chapter Two: reviews previous research from literature sources about New Zealand export education, services quality elements in export education, and methods and frameworks used in survey, data collection and data analysis.
- Chapter Three: outlines the methodology used in the research approach. It includes the explanation of the sampling plan, limitation of the methodology and the study, and the process of data collection and data analysis.
- Chapter Four: presents the main results obtained from the quantitative questionnaires.
- **Chapter Five**: provides a discussion of the main research findings in the light of appropriate future improvements in service quality.
- Chapter Six: presents the summary of the research project, reviews the research
 process and results, and evaluates the contributions of the research results to
 export education in New Zealand. Recommendations and future research is
 presented last.

1.8 Summary

The objective of this research project is to measure and evaluate expectation gaps about service quality and living conditions of Chinese students in Auckland. The project mainly focuses on the expectation gap about certain "service quality" issues such as living standards, accommodation, health and safety, cost-of-living, hygiene,

culture, and the way they are treated by New Zealanders. In this study, the research surveys Chinese students only and the main research question is "To what extent do living conditions in New Zealand meet the expectations of Chinese students?" The research method mainly used is the survey, and the target sample is 135 Chinese international students who enrolled in nine educational service providers in Auckland, involving three language schools, three Private Training Establishments (PTEs) and three public tertiary education institutions.

The following chapter provides an in-depth literature review of expectation gaps about service quality and living conditions of Chinese international students in New Zealand.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a brief overview of the components in the research was given. The research project aims to measure and evaluate the expectation gaps about the service quality and living conditions of Chinese international students in New Zealand. This chapter will conduct the literature review in relation to past experience and changing factors which could influence expectation gaps about service quality and living conditions of international students. The chapter includes two main sectors. The first part discusses the export education market in New Zealand and what factors are important for overseas students who choose New Zealand as a destination. The second part discusses the current situation of export education in New Zealand and the measurement of the service quality, including the SERVQUAL model (service quality framework), and the respondent-driven sampling plan. The second part also focuses on the theory of expectation gaps.

2.2 The current International Education Market

The New Zealand International Division (NZID) belongs to the Ministry of Education. It releases statistical data, as well as quantitative information and research about the international education sector. In 2006 the New Zealand International Division pointed out that international education was becoming a significant contribution to the economy. There were almost two million tertiary students studying outside their countries, and it was predicted that the number would reach five million in the next 20 years. Global demand for international higher education was expected to increase from 2 million in 2003 to 7.6 million in 2025 (IDP Education Australia, 2003). Of that number, 3.4 million are expected to study in one of five top English-speaking

countries – the United States, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Nonetheless, the market share of overseas students for these top five countries is predicted to drop from 46.8 per cent in 2003 to 44.3 per cent in 2025. Hence, it is expected that there will be fewer international students choosing those top five countries as other countries' own export education industries grow. Being one of those countries, New Zealand is expected to be affected negatively.

The same research shows that 93 per cent of international students are forecasted to come from the Asia region in 2025. The market share of Asian students is expected to increase from 79 per cent in 2003 to 93 per cent in 2025. Asian countries will dominate the top ten countries for international student sources with China and Malaysia the two main countries accounting for the increased demand. In 2025, the number of Chinese students is forecast to be 115,298, and the ratio of Chinese students to Malaysian students will be 3:1. The market share of European Union students will decline from 8.5 per cent to 2.9 per cent from 2003 to 2025 (IDP Education Australia, 2003).

Regarding international student mobility, NZID (2008) also points out that the mobility of students has been increasing steadily. Competition between countries and institutions is intense and there are many diverse forms of service delivery. Programme structures, credit systems and recognition agreements are being reformed, and the curriculum is being internationalized. There are more complex and interdependent institutional arrangements, and the sources of students are more diverse (International Division, 2008).

IDP Education Pty Ltd (IDP) is a global company offering student placement and English language testing services. It believes that education quality and employment outcomes are the two key drivers for the growth. Among the top five English-speaking destination countries, Australia, the United States and the UK are more driven by the quality of education and employment outcomes, while these seem

less significant drivers for New Zealand and Canada (IDP Education Australia, 2003).

2.3 The Export Education market in New Zealand

There are only 8 universities and 20 polytechnics (community colleges) in New Zealand (Naidoo, 2005). Prior to the late 1980s, New Zealand did not have enough international students, such that the educational system could not cover its costs due to the low proportion of full school payment. As a result, the NZ government added new provisions to the 1989 Education Act to empower tertiary institutions and other schools to recruit more full fee-paying international students to New Zealand. Malaysia used to be a main source of overseas students in the mid 1990s, but Chinese and Korean students have accounted for the greatest growth across the export education sector in recent years (NZID, 2008). What's more, anecdotal evidence shows a significant growth in Indian and Russian students as well as students from many other countries.

International Division (2008) states that studying overseas has become fashionable for many young people. New Zealand is one of the most popular choices for export education. In New Zealand, the export education sector experienced a significant increase from 2001 to 2003 (International Division & Ministry of Education, 2008). Naidoo (2005) points out that the export education sector contributed NZ\$530 million to the local economy, while the sector created more than 20,000 jobs and contributed NZ\$1.7 billion to the New Zealand economy by 2003. Between 1999 and 2003, the enrollment of international students in New Zealand's public and private education providers saw an increase of 318 per cent (Mallard, 2004). This is also shown in the figure that the total enrolment for international students sharply increased by 61% from 2001 to 2002.

However, the figure has been dropping in recent years. The figure dropped by 30%

from 2002 to 2007 (Refer to Appendix 1) (International Division & Ministry of Education, 2008). This has led to a crisis in New Zealand's export education sector, which was reflected in significant decreased enrolment, negative comments from the insiders (education providers), and negative media reporting (Butcher & McGrath, 2004). For example, a 2007 incident, involving the kidnapping and murder of a Chinese student by his fellow language students, was widely reported (China Post, 2007).

The amount of Chinese international students makes up a substantial proportion of overseas students in New Zealand (Zhang & Brunton, 2007). Commensurate with China's rapid economic growth, there are many Chinese students tending to study abroad - 1.4 million Chinese students at the end of 2008. In New Zealand, the number of Chinese students who were granted student visas increased dramatically from 28,607 in 2001 to 61,935 in 2003, and after the peak, the number of Chinese students currently maintains a relatively stable level at about 30,000 in New Zealand (International Division & Ministry of Education, 2008).

At present, the New Zealand government and the Ministry of Education are adopting many methods to attract Chinese international students to study in New Zealand. These include making it easier to obtain a Visa, offering government scholarships, having an Open Work Visa policy and so on. In particular, the New Zealand government signed a free trade agreement (FTA) with China in the middle of 2008. Importantly, the FTA will not only stimulate the international agreement between New Zealand and China, but also increase New Zealand's reputation in the China market so as to induce more Chinese international students to study here (International Division & Ministry of Education, 2008). Moreover, the lower exchange rate makes New Zealand outstanding education industry more competitive in market place. Lower education investment could attract more parents to send their children especially for Chinese parents to New Zealand for higher education.

2.4 Expectations about studying in New Zealand

How to improve the service quality and living experience of international students in New Zealand is the main project of this research. The following paragraphs emphasis factors which will have a significant influence on Chinese international students who choose New Zealand as an education destination.

According to Bassett & Baraban (2004), studying abroad is becoming an increasing trend that practically consists of the shifting of the students from the developing nations to the developed nations. Many researchers and scholars recognize that studying abroad could bring many benefits to those international students, both in their life experience and their career development. Due to the higher cost for international students studying abroad than staying in their home countries to study, both the parents and the international students have more expectations about their studying abroad. These involve obtaining foreign knowledge, expanding their views in the world, obtaining more opportunities, and establishing their personal networks with others from different cultures (Bassett & Baraban, 2004).

According to Sugahara, et al., (2008), there are many reasons to support the international students' selection of a course at a foreign university. The author found that job expectation can be viewed as one of the most important factors influencing international students' choice. As job expectation consists of both local and foreign job expectations, if New Zealand could provide an appropriate policy for international students to have more chance of finding a job in New Zealand there would be much benefit for these international students, and meet their job expectations.

On the other hand, their job expectation in their home country could also influence their decision to study abroad. Importantly, language and culture barriers can be seen as two vital factors influencing the study and living conditions of Chinese international students in New Zealand. According to Yang et al., (2006), there are

three major factors that could influence the cross-culture communication of Chinese international students studying in New Zealand. These involve personal characteristics, communicative competence and adaptation to the foreign language environment.

Moreover, according to report of International Division (2008), the job search facilities of schools are barely used by Chinese International students. They usually get a job from local Chinese newspaper or word-of-mouth (recommendation from friends) in New Zealand. And most of those jobs are pure labor work, such as cleaner, dishwasher, waiter/waitress and plasterer etc. These experiences could not provide their much help on their future study or career. New Zealand government and education provider should increase the promotion and put more effort on help these International students find jobs that suit their training.

Wang (2005) finds from his research that Chinese traditional culture and family expectations are the motives driving more and more Chinese students to study abroad. The author considers that the Chinese education system is based on Confucian principles, and traditionally Chinese parents pay close attention to support and sponsor their children's studying so that they receive the education. After China's rapid economic growth, rich parents started to send their children to study overseas so they could obtain a better competitive advantage and a better life in the future. The traditional view of education in China is that a better education creates more fortune and happiness in the long term. Therefore, studying internationally became a trend in China within the high income families due to the parents being afraid that their children might lose opportunities in the future if they studied at home (Wang, 2005).

In the New Zealand international education context, McKinlay (2002) has pointed out that the total studying cost is an important factor for international students in choosing New Zealand as an overseas education destination. The costs in New Zealand are closer to the living standards of Asian countries, and it is an English-speaking country.

Therefore, a great number of international students come to New Zealand to learn English. Butcher and McGrath (2004) also indicated that some international students choose New Zealand because "it is cheap and easy", and some choose New Zealand as they can obtain a degree from a Western tertiary education institute and improve their English speaking and writing skills (Butcher & McGrath, 2004, p.541).

Moreover, the English learning environment and a degree which is accredited in the English-speaking world also attract students to come here to study. Foreign students also expect to make friends with Westerners. Interestingly, IDP's research revealed that the perceived quality of education and employment outcomes were less sensitive factors for New Zealand, though they were key drivers in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia (IDP Education Australia, 2003). In other words, Chinese students may come to NZ less to get a job than to have a personally fulfilling experience.

Furthermore, third parties have different perceptions about the Chinese students' needs and wants, costs, benefits, and level of satisfaction. For example, immigration representative routinely represent New Zealand as a safe learning environment with sufficient pastoral care and support for international students. The reasons for students choosing New Zealand is because of the education system, English-speaking environment, supposedly "world-class" institutions and courses, warm hospitality and a safe environment (AS Education Center, 2003). Butcher and McGrath(2004) believe that proactive pastoral care is the key to addressing the gap between the expectation and the students' actual experiences, and will help international students have a more fulfilling overseas life experience in New Zealand (Butcher & McGrath, 2004).

The Ministry of Education has put in place two key protections for international students – the Code of Practices and the International Education Appeal Authority (IEAA). Students can seek help from IEAA when the codes of practices are violated by education providers (Ministry of Education, 2008). NZID (2008) has outlined a

number of key requirements for helping the export education sector develop and grow continuously in a way that maximizes the benefits and minimizes the risks. They believe those core requirements are: ongoing investment in research and development; a supportive and systematic approach to institutional development; procedures and techniques for lifting the level of communication about international education issues; extending relevant information within the sector; processes for maintaining continuous improvement in quality control; on-shore regulatory and policy framework to balance growth and managing risks; initiatives to increase off-shore knowledge about export education systems; and mechanisms for achieving self-management of the sector (NZID, 2008).

At present, the education service and socio-cultural experiences of Chinese students in New Zealand has not always been positive. There have been some negative news stories taking place around Chinese international students studying in New Zealand. According to Zhang & Brunton (2007), there are increasing questions concerning the perceptions that Chinese international students have towards their New Zealand education, and about their satisfaction towards their educational and socio-cultural experiences during their time here.

2.5 Living Conditions of Chinese Students in NZ

These paragraphs present the service quality and living conditions that Chinese international students are experiencing in New Zealand, linking to the research question 2 (What aspects of service quality and living conditions are different from Chinese students' expectations?) mentioned in chapter 1.

Quality of life and living conditions can be related to many aspects of the students' experiences, and particularly strongly related to students' self-assessment of their study progress, friendship with the local people and the level of support they receive (Deloitte, 2008). Of course, the expectations of overseas students towards New

Zealand living conditions are varied much as they have varied attitudes toward life. Some students come to New Zealand with a lot of money. They buy cars, go to casinos, and flaunt their wealth. On the contrary, some international students are not as wealthy as the stereotype. They need to struggle to pay their rent and buy their daily meals. They work part-time and study full-time, and cannot afford the expensive air ticket to return home for holidays.

Living in New Zealand can be a detached, aloof and distant experience for some overseas students, who sincerely want to melt into the local culture and wish they had more from New Zealand, and a wider social network (Butcher & McGrath, 2004). According to Berno and Ward (2002), a great proportion of international students feel ambivalent about their relations with the local people, and many of them feel discriminated against. Canadian research also points out that international students are facing many kinds of stress, including acculturative stress (culture shock), language barriers, and lack of social networks. Therefore, they are more likely to suffer more psychological and social stress, as well as more psychosomatic and anxiety disorders and depression than local students (Sam and Eide, 1991). Berno and Ward (2002) showed that 31 per cent of overseas students expected to be stressed, whereas 49 per cent actually felt stressed. It is generally suggested that the annual living and accommodation costs for an international student is around NZ \$9,000 to \$10,000 which is expected to cover accommodation costs, textbooks, travel, food and limited entertainment (International Education Media, 2004). In Berno and Ward's research, 62 per cent of overseas students expected to have enough money, while only 51 per cent of students felt they did. Accommodation problems were also underestimated for the overseas students, in that 51 per cent expected to have a problem with their living arrangements, while 70 per cent actually experienced them. Moreover, only 37 per cent of overseas students felt they were accepted by New Zealanders, which is 35 per cent less than the expectation. There is also a significant gap between the expectation of, and the actual experience of, socialization. Ninety-one per cent of students expected to make friends with New Zealanders. However, the actual proportion turned out to be only half that (Ward, 2001). Overseas students expect to deal with social isolation, cross-cultural communication and relationships, culture shock, financial difficulties, anxiety, employment issues, immigration laws, and so on. (Sarkodie-Mensah, 1998). Another recent research study was carried out by Deloitte on behalf of the Ministry of Education in 2007 with the aim of improving support and care to international students. According to the results of this research, 72 per cent of overseas students were supported financially by their parents, while nearly one-fourth of respondents found it difficult or extremely difficult to pay their education fees in New Zealand (Deloitte, 2008).

A recent report describes a homestay father in Hokitika who punched a 15-year-old Chinese student who lived in his home and caused the student a cut lip, bruised ear and sore ribs. He was fined \$1000 as reparation to the student. Education providers were shocked about this incident (NZ Herald, 2008). Ironically, this student reported that his money had been stolen in his first homestay. The student said he would stay in New Zealand as he really enjoyed the environment of the West Coast, but he also said 'I have no comment on the people' (Steward and Mclean, 2008, p.2). This incident reveals that living in New Zealand can be hard and bitter for some Chinese students.

The 2007 Deloitte National Survey pointed to some positive facts that the living experience of international students actually does meet their expectations overall in New Zealand. They were reasonably satisfied with their accommodation arrangements and homestay. Nevertheless, and similar to the 2003 National Survey, Chinese students had the greatest expectation gap about their homestay and accommodation arrangements, as well as the social support, when compared to students from other regions such as the Middle East, North America, Germany, the Pacific Islands and other Asian countries. The students were less likely to recommend New Zealand as a destination for overseas studies (Deloitte, 2008).

2.6 Service Quality of International Tertiary Education

In this section, a scientific methodology is introduced to help measure and evaluate data collected from the research, linking to the research question: What are the leading expectation gaps in the experience of Chinese students living in NZ? The second part of this section links to the research question: What are the actual living experiences and education services of Chinese students in New Zealand?

2.6.1 SERVQUAL Framework

There are two common approaches for evaluating education quality: mechanistic and humanistic. The mechanistic approach is the assessment of experts and agencies through such instruments as the Research Assessment Exercise and the Quality Assurance Assessment. The humanistic approach emphasizes the *views of students* on service quality (Mai, 2005). The authors also point out that the SERVQUAL framework has been adopted for assessing education quality, and is mainly based on the fulfilment of students' expectations (Athivaman, 1997).

In the past decades, the study of service quality has attracted many academic and business attentions. Parasuraman et al. (1988) studied and designed the SERVQUAL instrument model which consists of five major dimensions of service quality, namely tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. SERVQUAL "is recognized as a tried and tested instrument that has been successfully applied in various different contexts" (Barnes, 2007, p317). Barnes (2007) adopted a modified SERVQUAL instrument to research the expectations and the perceptions of service quality within the Chinese students at a management school in the UK. The author found that as a research tool in educational service quality, SERVQUAL could identify the student expectations against their perceptions so as to identify service quality gaps (Barnes, 2007).

According to Zeithaml et al., (1996) and Robledo (2001), most service providers have

established their business goals to improve quality of service and customer satisfaction, so that the study of service quality has been associated with business competitive advantage to date. Furthermore, many service marketing scholars recognize that service quality will influence customer satisfaction and further affect customer loyalty and business profit (Best. 2004; Quester, et al., 2001). Kolter (2003) pointed out that business needs to create and develop a high quality of service that could create better customer satisfaction, so that satisfied customers could tell their friends and family members, which would influence their purchasing behaviors in the future.

Therefore, quality of service is difficult for researchers to measure. SERVQUAL is a service quality framework introduced by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry in the mid-1980s. It is used to measure the gap between customers' expectations and their actual experiences (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990s). Originally, SERVQUAL provided a measurement on ten service quality aspects. Later, the authors refined the model with five useful key SERVQUAL dimensions:

- *Tangible* refers to the appearance of the physical equipment and facilities, communication materials and personnel.
- *Reliability* refers to the ability to accurately and dependably provide the proposed service.
- Responsiveness refers to the willingness to provide help and excellence to customers.
- Assurance refers to the employees' knowledge and manner, whether they convey confidence and trust.
- *Empathy* is the caring and attention provided to the customers based on their individual needs (Buttle, 1996; Nyeck, Morales, Ladhari, & Pons, 2002).

These five dimensions are particularly useful in measuring the gap between customers' expected service excellence and their perception of the actual service

delivered. By using these five SERVQUAL dimensions, the researchers are able to understand customer expectations, perceptions of actual services, and specific service areas that need improvement. These SERVQUAL measurement dimensions can be applied to service quality in different industries with highly reliable scores. However, effectiveness can be impacted negatively by the failure to demonstrate the five dimensions (Surveyz, 2005). Figure 1 indicates seven gaps of service quality and Gap 5 (the difference between expected service and perceived service) measures current service quality (Shahin 2005). There are three factors influencing the consumer's expectations, which are word of mouth, personal needs and past experience (Shahin 2005).

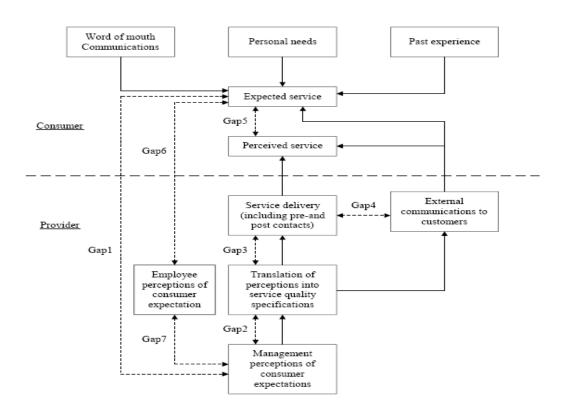


Figure 1 Seven gaps in service quality

Source: ICTNET.ES 2005

2.6.2 Current Services Quality in NZ Export Education

NZID pointed out potential risks and concerns about the international education sector in New Zealand. First, a great number of small education providers could affect the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall industry owing to varying levels of providers' experience and expertise. Second, the quality of pastoral care to the overseas students is not at all guaranteed certain, and it needs to be improved. Third, the diversification and balance of the whole international education industry have become problematic since New Zealand over-relies on a small number of source countries.

In addition, the acceptance and recognition of qualifications from New Zealand education institutes by other countries is also a risk. Apart from that, different regions participate unevenly in the international education industry. From the figure below, the number of overseas students (foreign fee-paying students) in Auckland significantly surpasses other regions. The numbers of foreign students are extremely low in some regions such as Gisborne, Taranaki, West Coasts and Southland.

2 4000 no. FFP students 3000 percentage 2000 1000 Bay of Plent 0 Hawkes Bay Zorthland Otago Waikatd Southland Wellingto Marlboroug⊧ West Coa≰ Taranaki Manawatu Wanganu Canterbury Aucklan Gisborn Nelsonregion ■ Number of Primary & Secondary FFP Students + - FFP Students as a % of All Students

Figure 2 the number of foreign fee-paying (FFP) students in different regions

Source: New Zealand International Division 2008

Due to the small market size of New Zealand, the professional and institutional development opportunities are limited. In addition, there is insufficient local research and data to help improving and shaping the policy on New Zealand's international student programmes (NZID, 2008).

However, some organizations believe New Zealand is a destination country for high quality education. International Education Media (2004) recognizes New Zealand has a reputation as a quality education provider. It comments that New Zealand has great education system and art facilities, and that foreign students are offered excellent study opportunities, supportive services and a safe learning and living environment. There are also a variety of education institute options for students to choose, including universities, secondary schools, colleges of education, polytechnics and institutes of technology, and private training establishments (International Education Media, 2004).

Facing a decreasing market and potential risks, great attention has been paid to the export education issue, and a number of actions and initiatives have been adopted with the aim of increasing export education. The government has invested NZ\$21 million to support the development of international education sector during 2001 to 2004. The funding was mainly spent on developing the government's educational diplomacy with source countries, attracting high quality students to study in New Zealand, and supporting the local education providers to improve their education products and services. The government is setting up seven offshore education counselling offices in different cities recognized for their educational excellence (Naidoo, 2005).

According to a speech delivered to the OECD forum, the government budgeted to spend \$40 million on innovative international education initiatives for the period between 2005 and 2008. The aims of those initiatives were to support a more strategic approach in international education, through enhancing the quality of international

education providers, boosting education links with source countries, and promoting diversification and innovation within the export education industry (Mallard, 2004).

The Ministry of Education has also planned several further strategies. The Government has announced a variety of initiatives for improving the development and quality of New Zealand's export education industry, paying attention to smaller schools and tertiary institutions. These have capacity, but need more support to participate successfully in the export education market (Ministry of Education, 2008). The Government also emphasises effective business planning and financial viability in all institutions. Other initiatives are planned and will be carried out in terms of better pastoral care and future recruitment for younger overseas students, including improving the current code and rules to have a better legal basis. In addition, some steps are being taken to promote the recognition of New Zealand's education system (International Division, 2008).

Recently, a welcome rebound has been recorded in enrolments of Chinese students in New Zealand. A rise appears in the figure of enrolments by Chinese students in 2008, which is the first rebound since 2002. The number of enrolments is expected to climb again this year, according to reports. Stuart Boag, the communications director of Education New Zealand (name of Organisation), has indicated that new enrolments by Chinese students would increase by 20% this year. They believe Chinese students have newly appraised New Zealand. Besides, Chinese students are still the largest source of long-term education fees payers, since Japanese and Korean students are more concentrated in short-term language courses (Gerritsen, 2008). Therefore, comprehensive care and an effective programme for improving the living conditions and satisfaction of Chinese students have emerged as an important issue. This is important for maintaining and attracting more Chinese students to the New Zealand export education market.

2.7 Expectation Gap Theory

In order to compare the actual and expected living and education services experience of Chinese international students in New Zealand, the following section will describe the expectation gap theory, relating to the research question: What aspects of service quality and living conditions are different from Chinese students' expectations?

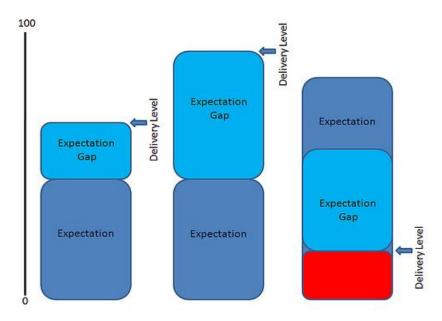
'Expectation gap' is a term used in a variety of disciplines. It generally means the difference between the expectation and (the perception of) the actual experiences. For example, in the financial and auditing fields, expectation gap stands for the difference between the claim made by the audit profession in conducting an audit, and the perception of the general public about an audit (Marianne, 2006).

More relevantly, expectation gap as a concept can also be applied in marketing. It is important to control the expectation gap when marketing and promoting a product or service. Optimising the expectation gap is the key to "conversational marketing" (word of mouth or social media). If the product under-delivers or over-delivers, this will generate an expectation gap for customers (Figure 3). Therefore,

"Expectation Gap = Expectation - Delivery Level".

If the product performs under expectation, bad reputation travels fast through conversational marketing. Thus, marketers should find the balance between building positive word-of-mouth around a product and the realistic levels of the product. They should also make sure not to over-hype a product to unrealistic levels (The Ad-Vocate, 2008). (See Figure 3)

Figure 3 Expectation Gap



Source: The Ad-Vocate, 2008.

In area of service quality, the main focus of this study, expectation gap can be used to describe the difference between customers' expectation on service quality, and their perception on the actual quality of service received (Mai, 2005).

Gracia and Jenkins (2002) explored student failure in an undergraduate accounting programme. The expectation gap of tutor's roles and teaching styles identified that the gap was related to how the students viewed their own roles in the teaching and learning process. For example, the students who viewed that they were playing an active role in their own education had less of an expectation gap, while the students with a passive role had more (Gracia & Jenkins, 2002).

Another study comparing student satisfaction between the US and the UK outlined some influential factors that contribute to satisfaction and the expectation gap, such as service quality and word-of-mouth communication (Knight & Calantone, 2000). Post-experience perceptions play an important role in the perception of good service quality and consumer satisfaction (Mai, 2005). Research results suggest that consumers' perceived service quality was the result of comparing earlier expectations

before they received the service to their actual experience after having received the service (Gronroos, 1982). The research results also identified the relationships between expectations and the satisfaction level towards the service received (Mai, 2005). Bitner (1990) pointed out that good service quality could be distinguished from satisfaction.

In the present case, the students' expectation gap is more related to their expectations before about New Zealand before arriving here, rather than their living conditions in New Zealand *per se*.

Although some believe that good service quality leads to a smaller expectation gap, quality should be separated from satisfaction, as quality is merely perception. This means students' satisfaction is actually based on their own perception about the quality and their original expectation about the quality. Hence,

$$Satisfaction(S) = Perception(P) - Expectation(E).$$

The lower the level of expectation and the higher the perception of quality at the same time, the greater positive satisfaction that the customers have. On the other hand, if customers have high expectations but experience low service quality, they have less satisfaction. Therefore, in order to promote export education effectively and improve the satisfaction of the students, it is important for the New Zealand government to optimize the expectation gap when they promote service quality. If student satisfaction is low, then the service quality should not be so highly promoted (e.g. through media in China) in order to lower the expectation gap.

2.8 Expectation Gap from Previous Studies

By giving a brief description about living conditions of overseas students in New Zealand from previous studies, this section links to the research question: What service quality aspects are Chinese students satisfied with?

Looking at the literature sources concerning the living conditions of overseas students in New Zealand, industrial journals and two National Surveys (2003 & 2007) have been perused. A few sets of expectations can be hypothesized based on this research.

First, overseas students generally expect the cost of living in New Zealand to be low. Second, they expect they can study and live in an English-speaking environment by coming to New Zealand. In addition, they expect the local people are friendly and they will be able to make many friends with local people after they come here. According to the National Survey 2003 and National Survey 2007, the expectation gaps for students generally applied to living arrangements, being accepted by New Zealanders, making friends with New Zealander, and education payment.

Export education providers and the government expect overseas students to choose New Zealand because of its English-speaking environment, education system, world-class courses, and safe and friendly social environment. Moreover, they also expect that proactive pastoral care is available to fill the expectation gaps for the students.

2.9 Summary

This chapter has provided the literature foundation for the whole study. The overall international education market has been dropping over the last several years, especially the main source of international students from China. Chinese traditional culture and family expectations can be seen as the motives to support more and more Chinese students studying abroad. However, to date, there are declining numbers of Chinese students coming to New Zealand for international study.

Many researchers and scholars recognize that studying abroad could bring many benefits to those international students, both in their life experience and their career development. McKinlay (2002) has pointed out that costs were important factors for international students choosing New Zealand as an overseas education destination. The costs in New Zealand were closer to the living standards of Asian countries, and it is an English-speaking country. Ease of getting a student visa is another reason that attracts Chinese students to come to New Zealand. IDP's research revealed that perceived quality of education and employment outcomes were less sensitive factors for New Zealand (IDP Education Australia, 2003).

SERVQUAL is a service quality framework which is used in the research. As a research tool in educational service quality, SERVQUAL identifies student expectations against their perceptions so as to identify service quality gaps (Barnes, 2007). Seven gaps of service quality are used in the measurements (Shahin 2005).

Life quality and living conditions can be related to many aspects of the students' experiences, and is particular strongly related to students' self-assessment of their study progress, friendship with the local people and level of support they receive (Deloitte, 2008). Living conditions, living costs, and discrimination are the main issues paid attention to by the media.

According to the industrial journals and two National Surveys (2003 & 2007), there tends to be several expectation gaps for Chinese international students living in New Zealand, including living costs, language environment, social network, education quality and system, and proactive pastoral care.

In the following chapter, the research methodology is discussed and the choice of empirical data gathering approach is also presented.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research project aims to measure and evaluate the expectation gaps about service quality and living conditions of Chinese international students in New Zealand. In the previous chapter, it provided the literature foundation for the study. This chapter starts by briefly explaining the research rationale and how to use the survey instruments and methods to collect the primary data. It also includes the method of data analysis. In the research, SERVQUAL was applied in the questionnaire design in order to gather the data in relation to the expectations and perceptions of service quality within Chinese students in New Zealand.

3.2 Rationale of data

According to Malhotra, et al., (2005), quantitative research intends to investigate some identified questions based on the data collection tool, and the result will be numbers that can be analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Furthermore, according to Delahaye (2005), qualitative research uses the interview and focus group to collect the data and qualitative research could discover new insights. Qualitative research addresses the research objectives through techniques that allow the researcher to provide an elaborate interpretation of the phenomena without depending on numerical testing (Zikmund & Babin, 2007, Hartel, et al., 2007).

The major strengths of qualitative research consist of its efficacy in explaining and describing complex social phenomena and revealing deep causes. A weakness of qualitative research is subjective results that might be affected by the researcher's personal opinions (Malhotra, et al., 2005). On the other hand, the major strengths of

quantitative research consist of the involvement of large numbers of people; using statistical software; and measuring existing theories (Malhotra, et al., 2005). Based on the research objectives, this research used quantitative research to collect the numerical data, and SPSS to implement the data analysis.

3.3 Sampling

The sample sought for this research has several features. First, they are all Chinese international students who are currently studying in New Zealand. The sample was recruited from 9 different education institutions. Three of them are language schools – ACG College (Central Auckland), Taylors College (Central Auckland) and Edenz College (Central Auckland). Three of them are private education institutions – AIS St Helens (St Helens), Victoria (Central Auckland) and Wollongong College Auckland (Central Auckland). Another three are the University of Auckland (Central Auckland), Auckland University of Technology (Central Auckland) and Massey University (North Shore).

Standard probability sampling methods would be prohibitively costly in the case of this study, because the subjects lack a sampling frame, have privacy concerns, and constitute a small part of the general population. In such cases, researchers employ non-probability methods, including location sampling methods such as targeted sampling, and chain-referral methods such as snowball and respondent-driven sampling.

A variation of snowball sampling called respondent-driven sampling allows the researcher to make asymptotically unbiased estimates from snowball samples under certain conditions. Respondent-Driven Sampling (RDS) also allows researchers to make estimates about the social network connecting the hidden population. The method works like this. The researcher identifies three 'sample seeds' within each

institution. Once a seed has been identified, he or she is given three 'recruitment coupons', each containing a unique serial code. Each recruitment coupon is then forwarded to any member of the network with whom he or she has a relationship. These new recruits then complete the survey and are each given three new recruitment coupons and the process begins anew. A key assumption of RDS is that respondents only recruit individuals with whom they have a relationship.

In this research three 'recruitment seeds' would be employed. However, as 'seeds', they won't fill the questionnaire because of the confidential matters. Each of them 'forward' questionnaire to five members of the network with whom he or she has a relationship once only. After these 'members' filled the questionnaire, these 'members' 'spread' questionnaire to another nine new members of the network with whom he or she has a relationship. The 'snowball' will stop at this level, and then in total there will be one hundred thirty-five respondents theoretically.

Hence "Respondent-Driven Sampling" was adapted for this research. First, the researcher went to the school and recruited the candidates in front of the school or at the reception. Some brief explanation was given to the respondents. The researcher invited students randomly by asking passers-by to participate in the survey. Three filter questions were asked: were the candidates Chinese, were they studying, and were they international students. Suitable candidates were then invited to take part in the survey by briefly explaining the reasons for the research and how the data would be used.

The questionnaire materials were handed out once the candidates' permission was obtained. These candidates were asked whether they could pass the survey materials to any of their Chinese classmates or friends from the targeted schools. By using the stratification method, respondents were recruited until they filled their respective stratum cells, after which no new respondents were recruited for that cell.

Stratified sampling is a method of sampling from a population. Stratified Random Sample is referred to as dividing the population into strata - groups of individuals that are similar in some way that is important to the response - choosing a separate Stratified Random Sample from each stratum, and combining these Stratified Random Samples to form the full sample (Score Mathematics, 2008). Since China is a big country, people from different areas encompass great diversity in language and culture. For example, people from Northern China speak Mandarin as their common language, while people from Southern China speak Cantonese more generally. Besides this, the research sample students are from different types of education institutions. When the sample varies considerably, the stratified random sample is a suitable tool to produce more accurate assessment.

Snowball sampling, respondent driven sampling, and stratified sampling, all above sampling methods are used in this research. Researcher found that if use one of these three methods only, the outcome of this research may not accurate enough to support the research analyze. In order to produce more accurate assessment, and according to some external problems, such as lack of time and small sampling group, researcher has to combine all of these methods together. Research has to get more than 100 respondents to fulfil the survey in less than one month period, so that snowball sampling and respondent driven sampling seem are the best tools to gather enough respondents in such a short time. Since respondents from 9 different schools, stratified random sampling method is better tool to clarify respondents into variable groups, which will improve accurate and effective of data analyze.

The data was divided into subgroups when carrying out the analysis. The biggest subgroups were "Male" and "Female". The second-level subgroups were North China, Central China, and South China. The smallest subgroups were University students and other students except University students.

According to the numbers of the respondents in those subgroups, some error is

expected for the research results, since the numbers in Male and Female groups were not equal.

3.4 Questionnaire design

According to Delahaye (2005), well-designed questionnaires provide accurate and usable data to support the research objectives and answer the research questions. The Literature Review provided evidence to support SERVQUAL instrument being applied in the questionnaire design to gather data regarding expectations and perceptions of service quality within Chinese students in New Zealand.

The researcher designed a set of questions for the questionnaire, together with an information sheet to explain the objectives of the study and how the information the students gave would be used. There were fifteen questions in the questionnaires and some questions consisted of several aspects. For instance, question four is "How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your accommodation?" and this question also involved eight sub-questions, namely quality of accommodation (location, heating, size); rules and regulations; relationship with your landlord/homestay family/hostel management; value for money; quality of the food provided; cleanliness; safety & security, and quality of your study area (lighting, desk, space, peace and quiet). Likert-Scale is used in this questionnaire design. It's a psychometric scale commonly used in questionnaires. Likert-Scale consists of a series of declarative statements, which means respondents specify their level of agreement to a statement, typically with an odd number of response options varying from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." (Wuensch, 2005)

3.5 Data collection

Data collection is an important aspect of this research. Inaccurate data collection can lead to invalid results. According to questionnaire is being used for this research, the data collection method is going to be quantitative data collection method. Usually,

questionnaires method has drawbacks. Such as majority of the people who receive questionnaire don't return it and those who do might not be representative of the originally selected sample. According to the specific sampling methods applied, above shortcoming won't be a problem in this research. Researcher selects three 'seeds' from any member of the network with whom he has a relationship. According to the snowball theory, most of responders might be friends or classmates of questionnaire distributor, so that responders would like to help questionnaire distributor to complete the questionnaire.

A free envelope with stamp was provided with the questionnaire in order to encourage return rates, and also prevent students' personal information from being disclosed on the envelope. The questionnaire packs were handed out to students after they had answered three filter questions. Some of the surveys were carried out face to face if the students were free to take five to ten minutes with the researcher, otherwise, questionnaires were sent back by mail.

The recruitment in each school was finished when 15 questionnaire materials were handed out in that school. These schools are mentioned in Chapter 2. Combining all three sample recruiting methods, candidates were found easily and the survey was less time consuming. In total, 135 questionnaire materials were handed out. However, only 122 questionnaires were posted back to the researcher, a response rate of 90.37%. Most of responders might be friends or classmates of questionnaire distributor, so that responders might like to help questionnaire distributor to complete the questionnaire. And researcher provides free envelopes to those candidates. That's why the response rate is very good.

3.6 Data Analysis

The completed questionnaires will give various results from different schools, and it is

easy to analyse gaps in expectation and perception by analyzing different respondents' answers.

All the data collected from the students was analyzed by Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The data was entered into the SPSS system and summarized based on demographic factors and an analysis was carried out based on the different demographics. The data was then summarized and analyzed for each question by Mean Value Analysis and Frequency Analysis. Some of the questions were analyzed using correlations.

3.7 Research limitations

Some limitations have been identified in the current project due to design and situational restrictions. The key limitations are outlined below.

3.7.1 Language bias

Since the questionnaire was designed in English, the students thought about the answer in Chinese and translated it in English, which may have caused bias in the translation or understanding. Some of them may not have completely understood the questions due to language barriers, and the failure to completely understand the purpose and objectives of the study. This limited understanding of the students may have led to bias in their answers. Besides, even if they did understand the questions completely, their expression of opinions and feelings may have been limited or incomplete. The researcher has tried best to reduce the bias by drawing up the questions as clearly as possible and providing a carefully worded information sheet.

3.7.2 Sample bias

The sample was drawn by the researcher once at each school. The time and location that the researcher drew the sample would cause bias to the sample.

3.7.3 Distribution bias

The questionnaires and interviews were distributed in Auckland, and to Chinese students only. Thus, the geographic location is a big limitation for the research since the feelings and experiences of respondents from a particular city can neither cover the whole of New Zealand, nor speak for export education in New Zealand in general. The institutes chosen for this study also restrict the outcomes of the research, since the study could not possibly cover all industries and all sectors, and had to be confined.

3.7.4 Perception bias

As the research is based on the memory and perception of the students and some export education representatives, the respondents may have had difficulty recalling past experiences. Moreover, some respondents may have felt uncomfortable and fearful of disclosing the facts. Some students may have perceived threats to their living in New Zealand and were fearful of telling the truth. The researcher tried hard to explain clearly about how the data would be used, and reassured the students that their answers would be confidential.

3.8 Summary

This study adopted a quantitative approach to data collection. The Literature Review provided the evidence to support SERVQUAL being applied in the questionnaire design to gather the data regarding the expectations and perceptions of service quality within the Chinese student population in New Zealand. One hundred and thirty-five questionnaires were distributed evenly to nine different schools: three universities, three private education institutions and three language schools. A respondent-driven snow ball methodology was used as the sampling method. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used for data analysis. Over 30 elements were assessed and ranked in the research so as to conduct an effective and comprehensive

analysis on critical factors.

The next chapter will analyze the expectation gaps about service quality and living condition of Chinese international students in New Zealand based on the data collected from the quantitative questionnaires.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explained the design of the questionnaires and the sampling method. This chapter includes the results of measuring and evaluating the expectation gaps about service quality and living conditions of Chinese international students in New Zealand. It is based on the data collected from the quantitative questionnaires.

The researcher used the statistical software SPSS to conduct the data analysis from the collected primary data. The chapter adopts some appropriate data analysis tools, such as demographic data analysis, mean value analysis, reliability and validity measures, factor analysis and IPA matrix analysis. It mainly consists of nine sections, namely demographic data analysis, accommodation types analysis, study environment analysis, social Network analysis, discrimination analysis, satisfaction with life in New Zealand, quality of living elements in New Zealand, difficulties in different aspects, and chapter summary.

In this chapter, we present findings from the research that identify factors that will have significant impacts on Chinese international students on choosing New Zealand as an education destination, linking to 3 research questions: 1) What are some of the factors that make up how these expectations might influence Chinese students' perception of living conditions in New Zealand? 2) What service quality aspects are Chinese students satisfied with? 3) What service quality aspects do Chinese students wish to improve?

4.2 Demographic Data analysis

This section exposes important factors for Chinese students in choosing New Zealand as an international study destination, which links to the first research question: What are the important factors for Chinese students in choosing New Zealand as an international study destination?

Initially, the proposed number of the sample was 135 Chinese students. However, there were only 122 valid questionnaire sheets collected from the Chinese students by the end of the research. The rate of response is therefore 90.3%. Moreover, more female respondents than male respondents participated in this survey. By looking at the data based on gender, location, and types of educational institutes, the figures can be summarized as below (Table 2):

Table 2: Summarized Table Based On Demographic Factors

Male 55					Female 67						
North 21 Central 16		South 18		North 26		Centra	1 18	South	23		
Others	Uni	Others	Uni	Others	Uni	Others	Uni	Others	Uni	Others	Uni
15	6	11	5	12	6	17	9	11	7	14	9

The respondents included 67 females (54.9%) and 55 males (45.1%) (See Table 3). Therefore, there were more female students participating in this survey than males. The students are undertaking different courses in New Zealand, including university degrees, diplomas, language courses, etc.

Table 3: Frequency Analysis based on Gender

					Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	male	55	45.1	45.1	45.1
	female	67	54.9	54.9	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 indicates the results of the different school types containing Chinese students undertaking their courses. Forty-two (34.4%) of the respondents are studying at university. Half of the respondents are attending private tertiary institutes typically studying on NZDB, degree, and MBA programmes. Only 19 (15.6%) of respondents are language school students.

Table 4: Frequency Analysis based on School Types

					Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	university	42	34.4	34.4	34.4
	Private institutes	61	50.0	50.0	84.4
	Language school	19	15.6	15.6	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

Among the respondents, the Chinese students are from three different parts of China – North, Central and South. There are 47 students (38.5%) who are from North China, 34 students (27.9%) from Central China, and 41 students (33.6%) from South China (See Table 5).

Table 5: Frequency Analysis Based on China Regions

					Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	north	47	38.5	38.5	38.5
	central	34	27.9	27.9	66.4
	south	41	33.6	33.6	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

4.2.1 Important Factors for Choosing Destination (Mean Value Analysis)

The mean value method can easily calculate the average of the numbers. However, the mean value has the limitation of offering a rough measurement of the research findings (Malhotra, et al., 2005). The sample students were asked to rank the importance of 17 factors in choosing New Zealand as a destination. Table 6 shows the

mean values for those 17 factors, which stand for their overall importance. The importance range of the factors is: 1 (not important at all), 2 (slightly important), 3 (moderately important), 4 (very important), 5 (extremely important), and also 6 (not applicable). No participant chose "6" for their answers. The mean values of the 7 factors are above 4 (very important).

The mean value of "English speaking country" is the highest value, with 4.67, so that the sample students think it is very important to choose an English speaking country to go to for their overseas study. Among all 17 different factors, being in an English speaking country is the most important factor for students in choosing an overseas study destination. Having a good opportunity to live in New Zealand permanently (4.42) and freedom of lifestyle (4.34) have similar mean values, implying that both factors are of similar importance in the expectations of Chinese international students in choosing foreign countries. Table 6 indicates the mean values of the other four factors, which are also above 4: quality of education (4.32), safety (4.24), ease of getting a student visa (4.16), and recommendation by others (4.03).

Nonetheless, the family's preference and financial support from the government or employer have mean values near 4. These two factors are moderately to considerably important factors for the students. The mean values of beautiful scenery, New Zealand culture and life style, internet information, information from New Zealand government agencies are all above 3, which mean they are moderately important to the students. A scholarship from New Zealand, direct contact from a New Zealand institution, and travel and adventure have mean values under 3, which means they are less important factors considered by the students when choosing a destination.

Table 6: Element Importance for Choosing New Zealand

Factors	Mean Importance Value
English speaking country	4.67
Opportunity to live in New Zealand permanently	4.42
Freedom of lifestyle	4.34
The quality of New Zealand education	4.32
Safety	4.24
Easy to get a student visa	4.16
Recommendation by others	4.03
Family's preference	3.91
Financial support from your government or employer	3.79
Beautiful scenery	3.57
New Zealand culture and life style	3.37
Internet information	3.33
Information from New Zealand Government Agencies	3.11
(i.e., Education NZ, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade,	
New Zealand Trade & Enterprise)	
A scholarship from New Zealand	2.84
Direct contact from a New Zealand institution	2.44
Travel and adventure	2.40

The findings of the research displayed five major factors that profoundly influence Chinese international students in choosing foreign countries to study in, namely an English speaking country; having a good opportunity to live in New Zealand permanently; being free to have an independent lifestyle; the quality of education, safety in the foreign country; and ease of getting a student visa.

4.3 Accommodation Types analysis

This section presents the living conditions of Chinese international students, which

include the current living conditions and what they expect for future improvement. They relate to the research question: What aspects of service quality and living conditions are different from Chinese students' expectations?

The accommodation types for the Chinese students are divided into six types – hostel, flatting, living in their own home, homestay, living in a relative's place, and others. From the data collected, almost half of the Chinese students are flatting with their friends or others. As indicated in table 7, 38.5% of them are living in a homestay situation. Living in a hostel and living in a relative's house, are both 4.9%. Only five out of the 122 students surveyed live in their own home in New Zealand, making up a mere 4.1% of the total. No one chose "others" as their accommodation type. Therefore, flatting and homestay can be seen as the two major accommodation types for Chinese students living in Auckland. It's easy to find from Figure 4, students live in flat and Homestay occupy the largest part of pie chart.

Table 7: Current Accommodation Types

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Hostel	6	4.9	4.9	4.9
	Flat	58	47.5	47.5	52.5
	Own Home	5	4.1	4.1	56.6
	Homestay	47	38.5	38.5	95.1
	Relatives	6	4.9	4.9	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

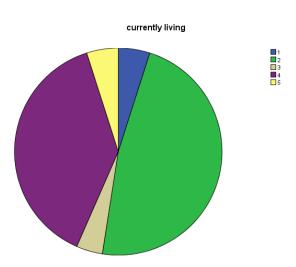


Figure 4: Accommodation Types

(1 – Hostel, 2 – Flat, 3 – Own Home, 4 – Homestay, 5 – Relative's home)

4.3.1 Satisfaction Aspects

In evaluating the satisfaction of the Chinese students towards different aspects of their accommodation environment, the students were able to rank their satisfaction aspects as 1 (not at all), 2 (slightly), 3 (moderately), 4 (very satisfied), and 5 (extremely satisfied).

Interestingly, none of these aspects has a mean value higher than 4. For the current living conditions, Chinese students are most satisfied with safety and security, but with a mean value of only 3.86 which shows a moderate to considerable satisfaction level. Cleanliness has nearly the same mean value as safety & security. Therefore, the students are relatively more satisfied with cleanliness of their accommodation.

There are similar mean values for quality of accommodation in terms of location, heating, and size, and quality of study area, which are 3.50 and 3.48 respectively. The mean value of satisfaction with rules and regulations is 3.08 and the mean value of satisfaction with the relationship with their landlord or homestay is 3.02. However, average satisfaction about the food provided is only 2.80, a little satisfied. The value

of money has the lowest average satisfaction among all aspects for the sample, which are only 2.45 for the average mean value.

Table 8: Satisfaction to Aspects of Your Accommodation

Aspect	Mean Satisfaction Values
Safety & security	3.86
Cleanliness	3.83
Quality of accommodation (location, heating, size)	3.50
Quality of your study area (lighting, desk, space, peace and o	quiet) 3.48
Rules and regulations	3.08
Relationship with your landlord/ homestay family/ hostel ma	anagement 3.02
Quality of the food provided	2.80
Value for money	2.45

The research findings displayed two aspects of satisfaction of the Chinese students towards their accommodation environment, safety and security and cleanliness. In the other hand, the two negative aspects were quality of the food provided, and value for money.

4.4 Study environment analysis

This section describes the education services Chinese international students are currently undertaking. It links to two research questions: What aspects of service quality and living conditions are different from Chinese students' expectations? And what service quality aspects are Chinese students satisfied with?

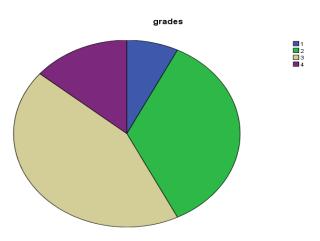
The students were asked to rank what grades they have been getting for their study in New Zealand. Option 1 equals Poor, option 2 Average, option 3 Good, and option 4 Excellent. 43.3 per cent of the students achieved "Good" in their study in New

Zealand. Slightly more than one third of the sample customers are doing "Average" in their study. Only 7.4 per cent of Chinese student are getting "Poor" for their grades. 13.9 % of the sample students recorded excellent grades (Table 9 and Pie Figure 5). Therefore, slightly over 50% of the Chinese students in this research agreed that they have achieved good and excellent grades in their study in New Zealand

Table 9: Study Grades for the Chinese students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	9	7.4	7.4	7.4
	2	43	35.2	35.2	42.6
	3	53	43.4	43.4	86.1
	4	17	13.9	13.9	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

Figure 5: Study Grades



1 – Poor, 2 – Average, 3 – Good, 4 – Excellent

By comparing the study of the different gender groups, we see that the female student group has an average study grade of 2.75, which is higher than the average study grade of 2.51 in the male group. However, there is no significant difference in the study grade between the female group and the male group. For data collection in different school type groups, so in Table 11, 1 stands for University students, 2 means

private tertiary and 3 means English schools, greater or equal to 2 falls into other students group and less than 2 falls into University students. Table 11 shows that the university group has a mean value of 2.67 while the other student groups have a mean value of 2.62. Therefore, the University group has a slightly higher average study grade than the other groups. As indicated in table 11, the T-Test between University students and other students, show that there is not much of a difference in the two groups' study grades.

According to Table 10 and 11, we can see that female students are generally doing better than male students. Nevertheless, the study grades of both groups are both between average and good. Besides, University students have a slightly higher average study grade than students from other types of education institutions. Thus, University students are doing slightly better.

Table 10: Independent T-Test on Study Grade Between Female

Group and Male Group

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
grades	male	55	2.51	.858	.116
	female	67	2.75	.766	.094

Table 11: Independent T-Test Between University Students and Other Students

-	School				
	type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
grades	>= 2	80	2.62	.832	.093
	< 2	42	2.67	.786	.121

According to table 12, for the contents of the courses, half of the students moderately agree that the course content is useful for their future study or employment. More than a quarter of students kept a neutral attitude about the statement, neither agreeing nor

disagreeing. However, almost 15% of the students said the content of their course is not useful for their future study or employment. Almost none of the students strongly disagreed with the statement, which means almost none of them think the course is not useful at all. Yet, only around 5% of students strongly agreed with the usefulness of the course (See Table 12 & Figure 6 below). Overall, 55.7% of respondents agreed that the content of their courses is useful for future study or employment.

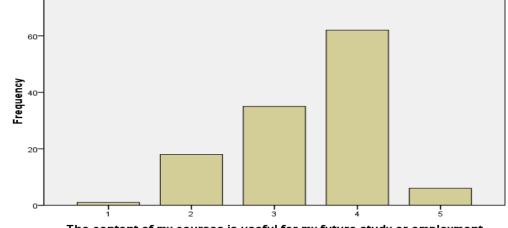
Table 12: Frequency analysis - the content of my course is useful for my future study or employment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	.8	.8	.8
	2	18	14.8	14.8	15.6
	3	35	28.7	28.7	44.3
	4	62	50.8	50.8	95.1
	5	6	4.9	4.9	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

 $1-Strongly\ disagree,\ 2-Mildly\ disagree,\ 3-Neutral,\ 4-Mildly\ agree,\ 5-Strongly\ agree$

Figure 6: The Content of my courses is useful for my future study or employment

The content of my courses is useful for my future study or employment



The content of my courses is useful for my future study or employment

According to table 13, most of the students (over 40 per cent) neither disagree nor agree that their teachers/lecturers make a special effort to help international students. On the one hand, nearly one third of the sample students express mild agreement with the statement. On the other hand, one fifth of the students mildly disagreed with the statement. There are small percentages of students who strongly disagree or strongly agree that the teachers or lecturers are making a special effort (See Table 13 & Figure 7). Overall, there are just one third of respondents agreeing that their teachers/lecturers make a special effort to help international students. However, 43.4% respondents adopted a neutral position.

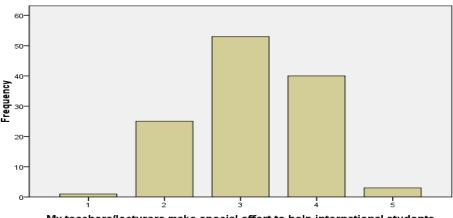
Table 13: Frequency analysis - My teachers/lecturers make a special effort to help international students

	_	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	.8	.8	.8
	2	25	20.5	20.5	21.3
	3	53	43.4	43.4	64.8
	4	40	32.8	32.8	97.5
	5	3	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Mildly disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Mildly agree, 5 – Strongly agree

Figure 7: Special efforts to help international students

My teachers/lecturers make special effort to help international students



My teachers/lecturers make special effort to help international students

In Table 14, the students commented on whether the teachers/lecturers understood cultural differences in learning styles. More than 40% of the students were neutral about the statement. About 30% of the students mildly agreed that their teachers or lecturers knew how to apply cultural differences in learning styles. On the other hand, around one fourth of the students moderately disagreed with the statement. Only 3 out of the 122 sample students either strongly agree or strongly disagree with the statement (See Table 14 & Figure 8). By In comparison with Table 13, the figures in Table 14 revealed somewhat similar results with the 43.4% respondents who chose a neutral statement. These results imply that Chinese students' lack effective communication with their teachers/lecturers in their studying environment, and therefore couldn't express an opinion one way or the other.

Table 14: Frequency analysis - My teachers/lecturers understand cultural differences in learning styles

	_	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	3	2.5	2.5	2.5
	2	27	22.1	22.1	24.6
	3	53	43.4	43.4	68.0
	4	36	29.5	29.5	97.5
	5	3	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Mildly disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Mildly agree, 5 – Strongly agree

Figure 8: My teachers/lecturers understand cultural differences in learning styles



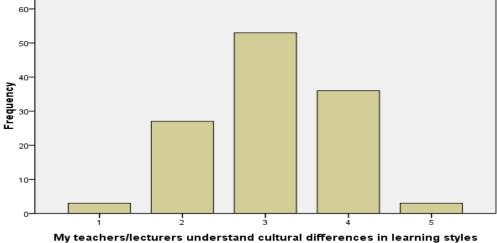


Table 15 shows the results of students who were asked whether they will recommend their friends or family members to study overseas in New Zealand. Almost half of the students said they would recommend their friends and family to go New Zealand for international study. However, nearly one fifth of the students said they would not recommend friends or family members to choose New Zealand. The rest of the

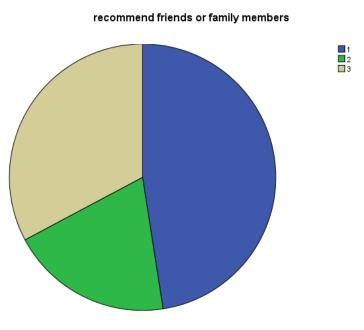
students, one third of the sample, said they were not sure (See Table 15 & Figure 9).

This question is a good one to reveal the overall satisfaction of Chinese students studying in New Zealand. Put simply, Chinese students will recommend New Zealand to their friends or family members if they are satisfied with the quality of the study, and the living conditions in New Zealand. Therefore, the figures of Table 15 imply that 47.5% of Chinese students show that the service quality and living conditions of Chinese international students in New Zealand satisfied their expectations.

Table 15: Recommend friends or family members

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	58	47.5	47.5	47.5
	2	24	19.7	19.7	67.2
	3	40	32.8	32.8	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

Figure 9: Recommend friends or family members



4.5 Social Network analysis

The questionnaires contained some statements designed to investigate the social life of Chinese students in New Zealand. This section relates to the research question: What service quality aspects are Chinese students satisfied with?

From the mean value analysis, the scale was divided as follows:

Table 16: Mean value analysis on social network statements

		1. I would like to have more New Zealand friends	2. New Zealanders should take the first steps to make friends with international	3. I find it difficult to make friends with New Zealanders	4. New Zealander s do not seem interested in having internation	5. My English ability stops me from making New	6. I try my best to make New Zealand friends
			students		al friends	Zealand friends	
N	Valid	122	122	122	122	122	122
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	4.63	4.06	3.50	2.93	3.48	3.29

^{1 –} Strongly disagree, 2 – Mildly disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Mildly agree, 5 – Strongly agree.

According to Table 16, depicting the mean value analysis on the social network statement, the average answers of the Chinese students for statement one is 4.63. With 4 standing for mildly agree, and 5 for strongly agree. Thus, the students are strongly agreed that they would like to have more New Zealand friends. The mean value of statement two is 4.06, which means the students generally agree that New Zealanders should take the first step to make friends with international students.

The average ranking for statement three is 3.50. Therefore, Chinese students are neutral to mildly agreeing with statement three. For statement four, the mean value is 2.93, which means the students neither agree nor disagree that New Zealanders have

no interest in making friends with international students. For statement five, with a mean value of 3.48, students are mildly agreed that English skill is a factor that prevents them from making friends with New Zealanders. However, the mean value of statement six is merely 3.29; when the students were asked whether they have tried their best to make New Zealand friends, they were not so sure.

Table 17 indicates the numbers of New Zealand friends, and almost half of the sample said they had a few New Zealand friends. However, 27% of the students said they only had one New Zealand friend. One fifth of the students said they had some New Zealand friends (See Table 17). The figures in Table 17 imply a negative result in terms of 78.7% of Chinese students in New Zealand encountered difficulty making local students as friends, and fewer than 30% of the students agreed they have more New Zealand friends. As we can see, the numbers of New Zealand friends can be viewed as a social life expectation gap of Chinese international students in New Zealand.

Table 17: Frequency analysis – numbers of New Zealand friends

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	6	4.9	4.9	4.9
	2	33	27.0	27.0	32.0
	3	57	46.7	46.7	78.7
	4	25	20.5	20.5	99.2
	5	1	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

1-None, 2-One, 3-A few, 4-Some, 5-Many

In Table 18, over 41% of the sample students said they had many Chinese friends in New Zealand. There is only one student who said he had one Chinese friend in New Zealand. Over a quarter of the students had a few Chinese friends, while around 37% of the Chinese international students had some Chinese friends in New Zealand.

Many Chinese students in New Zealand would like to have Chinese friends. However, Chinese friends could reduce communication opportunity with local students, leading to less chance to learn and understand the local culture and different lifestyles of local students.

Table 18: Frequency analysis – numbers of Chinese friends

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	.8	.8	.8
	3	26	21.3	21.3	22.1
	4	45	36.9	36.9	59.0
	5	50	41.0	41.0	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

1-None, 2-One, 3-A few, 4-Some, 5-Many

40 percent of the Chinese students disagreed that New Zealanders would like to know international students better. Almost 30 percent of the students believe New Zealanders would like to know Chinese international students better. About a quarter of students neither agrees nor disagrees.

As mentioned above, the majority research findings show that the social life of Chinese students in New Zealand is still in a Chinese cultural environment, as fewer than 30% of the sample students agreed they had some, or more, New Zealand friends. Chinese students in New Zealand preferred to keep in touch with other Chinese students suggesting less time communicating within the New Zealand culture. As a consequence, the numbers of New Zealand friends can be viewed as an expectation gap in the social life of Chinese international students in New Zealand.

4.6 Discrimination analysis

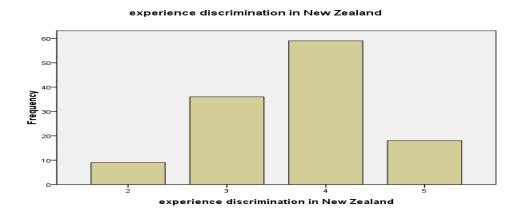
This section links to the research question: What service quality aspects are Chinese students satisfied with? Discrimination can be seen as one of the issues influencing people's life and experience, and discrimination has a negative impact on their satisfaction level. From the data collected, 63.2% of the Chinese students agreed that international students often experience discrimination in New Zealand. Only 7.4 percent of the students mildly disagree with the statement. Slightly less than 30 percent of the sample kept a neutral view (See Table 19 & Figure 10). The research findings displayed 63.2% of the Chinese students experiencing discrimination in New Zealand in various aspects, and discrimination is likely to bring about some negative impacts within the life of Chinese students in New Zealand.

Table 19: Frequency analysis – discrimination experience of International students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	9	7.4	7.4	7.4
	3	36	29.5	29.5	36.9
	4	59	48.4	48.4	85.2
	5	18	14.8	14.8	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Mildly disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Mildly agree, 5 – Strongly agree.

Figure 10: Experience Discrimination in New Zealand



The Chinese students were asked to comment whether New Zealanders have a generally positive attitude towards international students. Over 70% of the students agreed with this. Among them, 27% of them strongly agree, while 43% agree. Only about 13% of the students expressed disagreement to this view. The rest of the sample neither agrees nor disagrees.

In addition, the students were asked whether they feel New Zealanders would prefer fewer international students in New Zealand. About 30% of the sample students do not have an opinion, and 36% of the sample mildly disagreed with that assumption. Yet the rest of the sample students, more than a quarter, mildly agreed with it.

In the questionnaires, the Chinese students were asked to indicate how often they are treated unfairly or negatively because of their nationality or race by different groups. In the answer, 1 is Never, 2 is Seldom, 3 means sometimes, 4 is often, and 5 stands for very often (See at Figure 11).

According to the data, the teacher is mentioned most frequently as treating international students unfairly or negatively, based on their race and nationality. The average value is 3.7. Therefore, the students quite often experience unfair or negative treatment by teachers. The administrative and support staff in the educational institution and people in the community both have a mean value above 3, which means the international students feel they are treated unfairly sometimes by the administrative and support staff in the educational institution, and people in the community. The average ranking for New Zealand students is 2.73. Hence, the international students sometimes feel discriminated by New Zealand students. Nonetheless, they seldom feel discriminated by other international students, as the average ranking for international students group is just around 2.

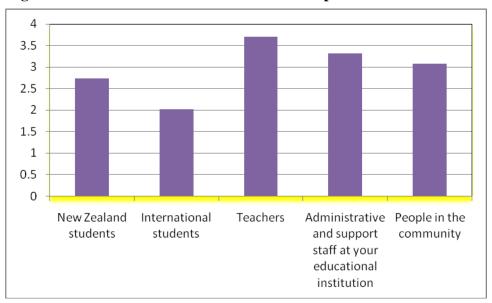
Therefore, the research findings show that the teachers and the administrative and

support staff in the educational institutions often treated the Chinese students negatively or unfairly. Indeed, this is a very surprising finding in the research, as we know that New Zealanders are very kind people and generally very friendly to foreigners. However, both Table 13 and Table 14 reveal that the Chinese students lacked effective communication with their teachers/lecturers in their studying environment so that can be seen as one of the reasons to explain the above surprising result.

Table 20: Mean value analysis – How often international students experience discrimination

-	New Zealand students	International students	Teachers	Administrative and support staff at your educational institution	People in the community
N Valid	122	122	122	122	122
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	2.73	2.01	3.70	3.31	3.08

Figure 11: How often international students experience discrimination



1-Never, 2-Seldom, 3-Sometimes, 4-Often, 5-Very Often

4.7 Satisfaction with Life in New Zealand

As indicated in table 21, the Chinese students were asked to comment on five statements related to their satisfaction with their life in New Zealand. In general, the satisfaction with life in New Zealand refers to the Chinese students' perceptions about service quality and living conditions in New Zealand. The ranking is from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Since the mean value of statement one and statement two are 2.72 and 2.71 respectively, the Chinese students generally disagree that their life is close to their ideal, and they do not agree their life in New Zealand is excellent. The mean value of statement three is 3.01, which means the overseas students do not agree or disagree that they are satisfied with their life in New Zealand. Similarly, the mean value of statement four is 3.06, which indicates the Chinese students neither agree nor disagree that they have the important things they want from their life in New Zealand. However, they generally disagree that they would change almost nothing about their life in New Zealand if they had a second chance (See at Table 21). The findings show most Chinese international students are dissatisfied with their current life in New Zealand.

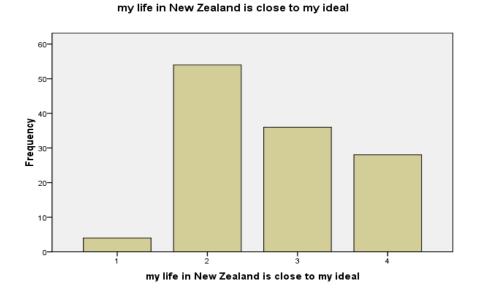
Table 21: Mean value analysis – satisfaction with their life in New Zealand

	_	1.My life in New	2.My life in	3.I am satisfied	4.I have got the	5.I would
		Zealand is close	New Zealand is	with my life in	important things I want	change almost
		to my ideal	excellent	New Zealand	from my life in New	nothing about
L					Zealand	my life
	N Valid	122	122	122	122	122
l	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
L	Mean	2.72	2.71	3.01	3.06	1.97

About 44% of the students mildly disagree that their life in New Zealand is close to their ideal. This means almost half of the students feel their New Zealand life is under

par. About a quarter of the sample students mildly agree that their life in New Zealand is close to their ideal. Thus, the number below expectation is almost twice the number of meeting expectation. Around 30% of the students have neutral attitudes towards the statement (See Figure 12). The research finds that there is no one who strongly agrees that their New Zealand life meets their expectation.

Figure 12: My Life in New Zealand is close to my Ideal



1 – Strongly disagree, 2 – Mildly disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Mildly agree, 5 – Strongly agree

In sum, the assessment of satisfaction of Chinese students in New Zealand displayed very poor results with findings revealing that most Chinese international students are dissatisfied with their current life in New Zealand, and no one strongly agreeing their New Zealand life meets their expectation.

4.8 Quality of Living elements in New Zealand

Students also ranked the service quality of a range of elements in their daily life in New Zealand. According to the mean value, the highest service quality element is sports and recreation, which has an average ranking of 3.48. Supermarkets/Food

markets is the second highest service quality element, the average ranking of which is 3.46. These two elements are ranked as good to excellent. Restaurant/ Food outlets have a good service quality in New Zealand since its average ranking is 3.07. However, public transportation has the lowest service quality in New Zealand with an average ranking of 1.57. All other elements such as Entertainment, Shopping, Banking, and Medical care/Services are around average level of quality (See Table 22).

Table 22: Mean value analysis – quality on living elements in New Zealand

	Public transportation		Shopping	Restaurant/Food outlets	Banking	Sports and recreation		Medical care/services
N Valid	122	122	122	119	122	122	122	122
Missing	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Mean	1.57	2.89	2.57	3.07	2.72	3.48	3.46	2.91

1 – Poor, 2 – Average, 3 – Good, 4 – Excellent

The research findings show that Chinese students are satisfied with the service quality of their daily life in New Zealand concerning Supermarkets/Food markets, Sports and recreation, and Restaurant/Food outlets. On the other hand, Public transportation is an element of dissatisfaction.

4.8 Difficulties in Different Aspects

Figure 13, shows the sample students' rankings in a range of aspects involving their New Zealand life. It can be seen that overseas students have most difficulty with Public Transportation. Finding full time or part time work is the second hardest aspect. Language and communication, Cost of living, Cultural differences, and Making New Zealand friends have similar average rankings, all slightly over 3. Thus, overseas students experience moderate difficulties in all of those aspects. The students have

slight to moderate difficulty in living arrangements, and less difficult are Shopping, Racism and discrimination and Access to entertainment.

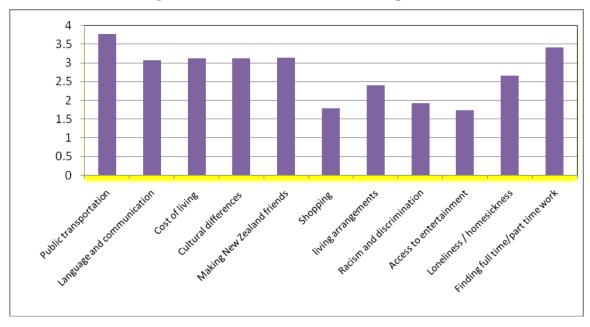


Figure 13: Difficulties in Different Aspects

1 – Not at all, 2 – Slightly, 3 – Moderately, 4 – Very, 5 – Extremely

The research findings indicate that Chinese students in New Zealand might encounter six difficulties in their life, which are in order of degree: public transportation, finding full time / part time jobs, cost of living, cultural differences, making New Zealand friends and language and communication.

4.9 Summary

This chapter analyzed the data collected from the questionnaires and summarized a number of important findings of the research. The research received 122 valid questionnaires from Chinese students and the response rate was 90.3%. The chapter mainly involved nine sections, namely demographic data analysis, accommodation types analysis, study environment analysis, social network analysis, discrimination analysis, satisfaction with life in New Zealand, quality of living elements in New Zealand, difficulties in different aspects, and chapter summary. Furthermore, based on the demographic data of the sample, this study covers both female and male Chinese overseas students who come from different parts of China and are currently studying

in different types of educational institutions.

The key findings of the research could be concluded as follows.

- Firstly, the five major factors influencing Chinese international students in choosing foreign countries to study in are: being in an English speaking country; having a good opportunity to live in New Zealand permanently; an independent lifestyle; the quality of education, safety in the foreign country; and ease of getting a student visa.
- Secondly, the satisfactions of the Chinese students towards their accommodation
 are safety and security and cleanliness, while they are dissatisfied with the quality
 of the food provided and value for money.
- Thirdly, Chinese students possibly lack effective communication with their teachers/ lecturers in their studying environment.
- Fourth, the numbers of New Zealand friends can be viewed as an expectation gaps about the social life of Chinese international students in New Zealand.
- Fifth, the teachers and the administrative and support staff in the educational institutions often treated Chinese students unfairly or negatively.
- Sixth, most Chinese international students are dissatisfied with their current life in New Zealand and there is no one who strongly agrees that their New Zealand life meets their expectation.
- Seventh, Chinese students are satisfied with the service quality of their daily life
 in New Zealand concerned with Supermarkets/Foodmarkets, Sports and
 recreation, Restaurant/Food outlets, and are dissatisfied with Public
 transportation.
- Finally, Chinese students in New Zealand encounter six difficulties in their life, which are in order of difficulty: public transportation, finding a full time / part time job, cost of living, cultural differences, making New Zealand friends, and language and communication.

In the next chapter, a detailed discussion will be presented based on the data described in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The findings from the collected and analysed data results are presented in chapter 4. This chapter is mainly an analysis of the data collected from the survey, including demographic data analysis, mean value analysis, important factor analysis, and the performance of the institutes. Along with a discussion, the chapter provides further ideas and deep analysis in relation to the overall picture painted of the service quality, and expectation gap in export education, in New Zealand.

According to the research methodology and findings mentioned in previous chapters, there follows a deep analysis in relation to the overall situation regarding the service quality of New Zealand education and the expectation gap in export education in New Zealand. The following research questions are discussed:

- 1. What are the important factors considered by Chinese students when they choose New Zealand as a destination?
- 2. What are the current living conditions of Chinese students who study overseas in New Zealand?
- 3. What are social lives like for Chinese students in New Zealand?
- 4. How are their lives in New Zealand different from their expectation?
- 5. How can New Zealand institutes improve their service quality to meet the needs of overseas students?

5.2 Critical Factors

This section links to research question: What are the important factors considered by Chinese students when they choose New Zealand as a destination?

According to the mean value analysis of the important factors for choosing New Zealand as an overseas study destination, there are several significant important factors suggested by the students – being in an English speaking country, opportunity to live in New Zealand permanently, ease of getting a student visa, the student's preferences, and the quality of New Zealand education. There are also other important factors, including recommendation by others, family's preference, and safety. Financial support from the government or employer, internet information, having family members or friends in New Zealand, beautiful scenery, culture and lifestyle of New Zealand, and the information from New Zealand Government Agencies are moderately important factors for Chinese students in selecting New Zealand. A scholarship from New Zealand, direct contact from a New Zealand institution, and travel and adventure, are relatively less critical factors taken into account by Chinese students.

This study has revealed five critical factors or elements that affect the quality of Chinese students' life in New Zealand. These factors or elements are accommodation, study, social network, discrimination, and service quality of aspects of daily living. The literature review shows that scholars have studied many reasons to support international students' selections of foreign countries, such as the price of studying overseas; job expectation in foreign countries; ease of obtaining students visa etc. As noted above, the prospect of getting a job is associated with having a good opportunity to live in New Zealand permanently, so that work policy can be seen as the most attractive factor influencing the decisions of international students. It is surprising that the price of studying overseas has not been a serious concern of Chinese international students in New Zealand. This is a different finding to previous research.

5.3 Current Types of Accommodation

The most common types of accommodation for Chinese overseas students are flatting with friends or other students and staying in a homestay situation. This section links to research question: What are the current living conditions of Chinese students who study overseas in New Zealand?

Currently, out of 122 sample students, 52 students are flatting with someone else, which is slightly more than 40 per cent. 38 students are living in a homestay, which is almost one third of the sample. Therefore renting a house with other flatmates and living in a homestay are the two most common accommodation arrangements for Chinese students. Apart from that, slightly more than 10 per cent of students are living in their own home in New Zealand, 8 per cent and 1.3 per cent of Chinese students are living in a relative's home and a student hostel respectively. According to the results, relationships with friends, landlord, homestay mother and father, are significantly important for the students, since they are most likely living in a homestay or flatting with friends.

Owing to the different culture in food and eating habits between China and New Zealand, Chinese students might dislike the food served by the homestay, and the quality of food also gives rise to a relatively lower evaluation in the value for money aspect of their accommodation. As noted above, 38.5% of the respondents are homestay students, and the quality of food provided influenced the Chinese students' evaluation of their accommodation environment as a whole. As this research project measures and evaluates the expectation gaps about service quality and living conditions of Chinese international students in New Zealand, the quality of the food provided by the homestay and value for money can be viewed as expectation gaps about the living conditions of Chinese international students in New Zealand.

5.4 Overall Satisfaction and Expectation Gaps

On the one hand, above 40 percent of the Chinese students said they were not satisfied with their life in New Zealand. On the other hand, a similar percentage of students expressed that they were satisfied with their life in New Zealand. There is about 15 percent of students who feel neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with their life in New Zealand. This section links to research question: How are their lives in New Zealand different from their expectations?

Table 23: Satisfied with my life in New Zealand

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly dissatisfied	5	4.1	4.1	4.1
	Mildly dissatisfied	45	36.9	36.9	41.0
	Neutral	18	14.8	14.8	55.7
	Mildly satisfied	52	42.6	42.6	98.4
	Strongly Satisfied	2	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	100.0	

A sizeable percentage of the Chinese students think their life in New Zealand falls below their expectations. Forty-four percent of the sample either strongly disagree or moderately disagree that their life in New Zealand is close to their ideal. Only a quarter of students think their life in New Zealand is moderately close to their ideal. Therefore, the number of students whose New Zealand life is under expectation is nearly twice the number of students whose New Zealand life reaches expectation. About 30 percent of the students have a neutral opinion. They generally think the conditions of their life in New Zealand are acceptable yet not excellent. Overall, the level of their satisfaction with their life in New Zealand is around neutral and moderate. 80 per cent of the sample students would like to change something about their life in New Zealand if they could live their lives over.

All in all, the measurement of satisfaction with Chinese students in New Zealand displayed very poor results, and the findings of the research show that most Chinese international students are dissatisfied with their current life in New Zealand. Based on the theory of expectation gaps, there are two reasons to explain the above results. One of these is that Chinese students might have higher expectations for their overseas study so that their perceptions could not match their expectations. The other is that Chinese students are usually young people and may well have vague and nebulous expectations for their overseas study due to lack of knowledge, and relative information in respect of the studying and living conditions in New Zealand. So, their perceptions in life of New Zealand may be difficult for them to define and quantify.

5.5 Satisfaction with Accommodation

This section links to research question: How are their lives in New Zealand different from their expectation?

According to the data collected from the survey, the participants suggest that they are very satisfied with the safety and security of their living conditions. Among all the elements surveyed, safety and security is the most satisfactory element for the Chinese students with a mean satisfaction value of 3.86. Cleanliness in their accommodation is the second most satisfactory element with a mean satisfaction value of 3.83. Students are quite satisfied with the quality of their study area, involving elements such as lighting, desk, space, peace and quiet and the quality of accommodation (location, heating, and size). However, the students were just averagely satisfied with Rules and Regulations, and Relationship with the landlord/ homestay family/hostel management, the mean value of which are 3.08 and 3.02 respectively. However, they think their accommodation is low value for money and the food provided of low quality, and they are only slightly satisfied with them. The mean satisfaction values of these are both lower than 3.

5.6 Study

This section also relates to research question: How are the lives in New Zealand different from their expectations? The mean value of students' satisfaction towards their progress in studies is only 3.15. In the ranking scale, "3" stands for "Moderately Satisfied" and "4" stands for "Very Satisfied". Hence, the sample students are just moderately satisfied with their progress in their studies. There are 76 students who said they were moderately satisfied with their study progress, which is around 60 per cent. A quarter of participants said they were very satisfied with their study progress. On the one hand, only 2 sample students said they were extremely satisfied with their progress in study. On the other hand, only 3 students said they were not satisfied at all. Less than one tenth of students are a little satisfied with their study progress.

By synthesising the study grade with the demographic data, we can see that female students are generally doing better than male students. Nevertheless, the study grades of both groups are both between average and good. Besides, University students have a slightly higher average study grade than students from other types of education institutions. Thus, University students are doing slightly better.

Table 24: Independent T-Test on Study Grade Between Female
Group and Male Group

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
grades	ades male 55		2.51	.858	.116
	female	67	2.75	.766	.094

Table 25: Independent T-Test on Study Grade Between
University students and Other students

T	School type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
grades	Others	80	2.62	.832	.093
	University		2.67	.786	.121

In general, the Chinese students feel that there is no significant encouragement for contact between international and local students by the teachers or lecturers. It is interesting that there tends to be less encouragement by lecturers for contact between international and local students in universities, than in other institutes such as diploma and language schools. Over half of the students mildly agree that the content of their course is useful for their future study or employment. However, they feel that their teachers or lecturers neither understand the problems of international students nor have made special efforts to help them. Overall, students feel that cultural differences are respected in their institution. The students also think there is not much opportunity for other students to learn about their culture in the class. Nonetheless, the sample students feel that they are included in the class. As far as learning style is concerned, students either agree or disagree that the teachers/lecturers understand cultural differences in learning styles when they teach. They agree that their classmates accept culture differences between themselves and international students.

5.7 Social Network

This section relates to research question: What are the social lives for Chinese students in New Zealand? According to several questions included in the questionnaires, some important findings were revealed about Chinese students making friends in New Zealand. In general, the Chinese students quite strongly agree that they would like to have more New Zealand friends. Yet, they found certain difficulties making friends with New Zealanders. They also moderately agree that New Zealanders do not seem interested in having international friends. They also think that their English ability creates considerable barriers for them in making New Zealand friends. Almost half agree that they have tried their best to make New Zealand friends, while almost half think they have not tried hard to make New Zealand friends. Yet, they agree that New Zealanders should take the first step to make friends with international students.

At present, only a few friends are New Zealanders. However, they said many friends they made are from their own country. Only a few people from other countries are close friends. So, the numbers of New Zealand friends can be viewed as an expectation gap in the social life of Chinese international students in New Zealand.

The students' perception about how New Zealanders interact with international students is interesting. The Chinese students are not sure whether most New Zealanders would like to know international students better. They do not agree that international students often experience discrimination or unfair treatment in New Zealand. They mildly agree that New Zealanders have generally positive attitudes towards international students. However, about one quarter of the sample students think New Zealanders would prefer fewer international students in the country on the whole.

Furthermore, over 40 percent of the Chinese students have many friends from their own country in New Zealand. Only one participant has only one Chinese friend. The rest of the sample has at least a few Chinese friends. Only one fifth of participants have some New Zealand friends, and half of the participants have a few New Zealand friends. More than a quarter of participants have only one New Zealand friend. Therefore, Chinese international students have many more Chinese friends than New Zealand friends.

5.8 Discrimination

This section also links to research question: What are the social lives for Chinese students in New Zealand? Based on the data analysis in last chapter, almost half of the participants often experience unfair treatment in New Zealand, and about one third of the participants have no comment about this view. However, the majority of students believe New Zealanders generally have positive attitudes towards

international students. Only 13 percent students do not think so. Therefore, in the students' perception, New Zealanders are overall friendly and have positive attitudes, while they still sometimes have negative experiences.

The Chinese students revealed that they feel New Zealand students sometimes treat them unfairly or negatively due to their national and cultural differences. They think teachers relatively more often treat them differently because they are international students. In addition, they think administrative and support staff at their educational institutions, such as the receptionist, seldom treats them negatively because they are international students. However, they often receive unfair or negative treatment by the people in the community such as neighbours, shop assistants and landlords.

Furthermore, the findings of this research strongly indicate that Chinese students will encounter discrimination from teachers and administrative and support staff in the educational institution. Indeed, the discrimination can be seen as an expectation gap about the study life of Chinese international students in New Zealand. In general, Chinese students and their parents believe that New Zealand could offer quality education, an attractive incentive to study here. It is therefore surprising that the Chinese students considered that the teachers and the administrative and support staff in the educational institution sometimes treated them negatively. Indeed, discrimination in the study environment largely influences the quality of education and education reputation of New Zealand. Furthermore, discrimination towards Chinese students will negatively influence the education export industry in the long term. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate the root causes that led to the Chinese students often encountering discrimination in their studying environment in New Zealand.

5.9 Service Quality in elements of daily life

This section relates to research question: How can the New Zealand institutes improve their service quality to meet the needs of the overseas students? There are various elements involved with the daily life of Chinese international students, which affect how they perceive the quality of life in New Zealand. The most disappointing and problematic is public transportation in New Zealand. It is the least satisfied and most difficult element for the international students. Apart from that, finding a part-time or full-time job is difficult for Chinese international students. On the other hand, other leisure aspects such as entertainment, and dining and sports, are the best satisfied elements.

Importantly, Chinese students in New Zealand might encounter six difficulties in their life here which are in order of difficulty: public transportation, finding a full time / part time job, cost of living, cultural differences, making New Zealand friends and language and communication. As a result, the educational service providers in New Zealand should pay close attention to those difficulties, and the effective improvement and solutions for those six difficulties would strategically enhance the quality of service to attract more students, and improve New Zealand's reputation in the international educational market.

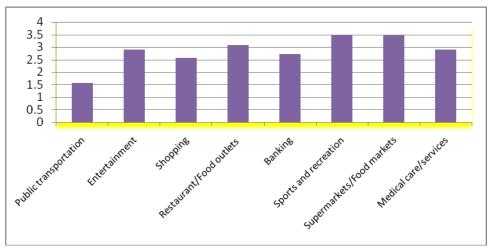


Figure 14: Satisfaction towards Daily Living Elements

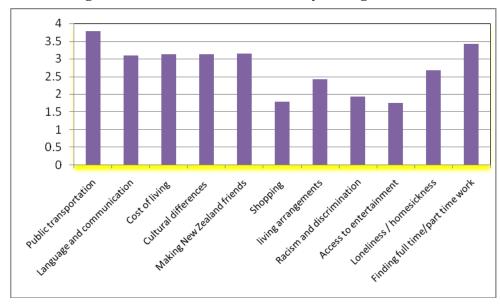


Figure 15: Difficulties towards Daily Living Elements

5.10 Summary

This study has identified five critical factors for Chinese international students when they choose New Zealand for their overseas study. They are: being in an English speaking country, opportunity to live in New Zealand permanently, ease of getting a student visa, being able to live an independent lifestyle, and quality of education. These factors should be particularly considered by the government and education in order to attract and satisfy international students.

The chapter also focused on five key aspects that are the main influences on the life experience and living condition of Chinese international students: They are: (1) Accommodation; (2) Study; (3) Social Network; (4) Discrimination; and (5) Service quality of elements in their day-to-day life (such as transport). More particularly, the study reveals that the factors that need to be worked on by the government and education providers to meet international students' needs are: better relationship with the landlord or homestay parents, better homestay food quality, a better correlation between rent and living condition, usefulness of courses, pastoral care from the teachers, consideration about cultural differences in learning styles, contact between international students and local students, having more New Zealand friends, being

treated fairly by teachers and other staff, improvement of public transportation, and better career opportunities and pathways.

The government should above all work to improve public transportation and provide help to international students to find jobs.

In the next chapter, the conclusion and recommendations will be presented.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

Based on the data analysis and discussion in the previous chapter, the conclusions, as well as recommendations and suggestions for further research, are presented in this chapter.

According to the previous analysis, five critical factors are listed. Recommendations and suggestions are presented separately for each factor.

6.2 Research conclusion

This paper has given information about how Chinese international students are living in New Zealand and their satisfaction towards their lives here. Basically, Chinese international students are neither very satisfied nor dissatisfied with their lives in New Zealand. Nonetheless, there are some expectation gaps in living conditions, study progress, and care and help provided by the education institution and locals. There is not significant discrimination towards international students. The life experience of Chinese international students can be improved by providing more pastoral care and help with their study, improving their living condition, encouraging social networking between international students and New Zealanders, and treating international students fairly.

Chinese international students have different perceptions about needs and wants, costs and benefits, and their levels of satisfaction vary. Students who are satisfied with their life in New Zealand perceive that New Zealand offers them a safe learning environment with sufficient care and support. The reasons for students to choose New Zealand is because of the education system, English-speaking environment,

world-class institutions and courses, warm hospitality and a safe environment.

According to the research findings, we can see that most of the students made New Zealand their first choice of study destination, and would recommend it to their friends as well. This result is positive for the New Zealand education market. However, the New Zealand education sector as a whole still needs to work hard to attract more international students. They need to do more to make New Zealand internationally competitive. Moreover, the students who selected New Zealand as their first choice as a place of study viewed the quality of the services and facilities at their institutions positively, and overall these students were more satisfied with the progress they were making in their studies and more satisfied with their life in New Zealand.

6.2.1 Accommodation

International students in New Zealand most frequently reside in rental accommodation (47.5%) and homestays (38.5%), with smaller numbers in hostels (4.9%), relatives' house (4.9%) and their own home (4.1%). The majority of international students were moderately satisfied with all aspects of their accommodation. The aspects students appeared least satisfied with were value for money, access to the internet and support / assistance provided. Due to the different culture in food and eating habits between China and New Zealand, most Chinese students dislike the food served by the homestay, and the quality of food also gave rise to the relatively lower evaluation in the value for money for their accommodation. Therefore, the quality of the food provided by the homestay and the value for money can be viewed as an expectation gap in the living conditions of Chinese international students in New Zealand.

6.2.2 Study

In general, Chinese students feel that there is no significant encouragement by teachers or lecturers for contact between international and local students. It is interesting that there tends to be less encouragement by lecturers for contact between international and local students in universities than in other institutes such as diploma and language schools. However, they felt that their teachers or lecturers neither understand the problems of international students, nor made special efforts to help them. The majority of students described their academic progress as excellent (35.2%) good (43.4%) or average (35.2%). Only 7.4% indicated that their progress was poor. Most of the students indicated that doing well academically was very important to their future and their families. On the other hand, they felt that cultural differences were respected in their institution. The students also thought there is not much opportunity for other students to learn about their culture in the class.

6.2.3 Social Network

A negative result was that 78.7% of Chinese students in New Zealand encountered difficulties in making New Zealand friends. Over 41% of the sample students said they had many Chinese friends in New Zealand, while less than 30% Chinese students agreed they have some and more New Zealand friends. The numbers of New Zealand friends can therefore be viewed as an expectation gap about the social life of Chinese international students in New Zealand. International students have found certain difficulties making friends with New Zealanders They also moderately agree that New Zealanders do not seem interested in having international friends. They think that their English ability puts up a considerable barrier against making New Zealand friends. Almost half agree that they have tried their best to make New Zealand friends, while almost half think they have not put forth their best efforts to make New Zealand friends. However, they agree that New Zealanders should take the first step to make

friends with international students.

6.2.4 Discrimination

Discrimination, when experienced, negatively influences the satisfaction of Chinese students. From the data collected, 63.2% of Chinese students agreed that international students often experience discrimination in New Zealand. Only 7.4 percent of the students mildly disagreed with the statement. Slightly less than 30 percent of the sample expressed a neutral attitude. The Chinese students were asked to indicate how often they were treated unfairly or negatively because of their nationality or race by different groups. The findings of the research were that teachers and administrative and support staff in the educational institutions often provided some unfair or negative treatment to Chinese students. Indeed, this is a very surprising finding in the research as we know that the New Zealander are very kind people, usually very friendly to foreigners.

6.2.5 Service quality in aspects of day-to-day life

There are various elements involved with the daily life of Chinese international students which affect how they perceive their quality of life in New Zealand. The highest service quality element is sports and recreation which has an average ranking of 3.48. Supermarkets/ Food markets is the second highest service quality element, the average ranking of which is 3.46. These two elements are ranked as good to excellent. Restaurant/ Food outlets have a good service quality in New Zealand with an average ranking is 3.07. However, public transportation has the lowest service quality in New Zealand, with an average ranking of 1.57. All other elements such as Entertainment, Shopping, Banking, and Medical care/ Services are around average level of quality. As a result, educational service providers in New Zealand should pay close attention to those low-rank elements, as effective solutions for those elements would strategically enhance the reputation of New Zealand in the international educational market.

The government should therefore work to improve the serviceability of public transportation in New Zealand. The government and education institutions should provide help to international students in finding jobs. These two aspects, in particular, need to be worked on.

6.3 Limitations of the research

There are a few limitations of this research due to its design and structure.

First, there are distribution limitations. The questionnaires were distributed to Chinese international students in Auckland only. Thus, the geographic location is a big limitation for the research, since the feelings and experiences of respondents from a particular city can neither cover the whole of New Zealand nor speak for export education in general. Apart from that, this study only covers 122 Chinese students in nine education institutions in New Zealand, which must limit its reliability and availability.

Second, the truthfulness of the respondents' answers is a potential risk to the study. The questionnaires and interviews were distributed to Chinese students and NZ export education representatives. First, the research is based on the memory and perception of the students, and the respondents may have had difficulty in recalling past experiences. Some of the students may not have completely understood the questions owing to language barriers, and the failure to wholly understand the purpose and objectives of the study. Such limitations could lead to bias in their answers. Besides, even if they did understand the questions completely, their expression of opinions and feelings might have been limited or incomplete, owing to their limited level of English. In this case, the answers, also, would be impacted. Moreover, some respondents may have felt uncomfortable and fearful of disclosing the facts. Owing to their culture, Chinese students may feel uncomfortable disclosing the real experiences

of their own or their friends' lives in New Zealand. For example, they might not be willing to say that they are doing poorly in their studies.

The fluctuating economy and real estate market can also potentially affect the analysis of the research outcomes. The fluctuating economy and real estate market is related to various perspectives of students' daily lives, such as foreign currency rates, rental accommodation, food prices, costs of transportation, and costs of other social activities. All of these influence the living conditions of overseas students. For example, when the NZ Dollar remains strong, increased rents (higher interests for home loans) and food prices are higher, the living standards tend to be lower for Chinese students with same amount of money. A considerable proportion of overseas students come to New Zealand based on their parents' financial sacrifice. If the same amount of money is exchanged for fewer NZ dollars, the living standards and conditions tend to impact negatively. Thus, failure to take the economy and market issues into account can lead to inaccurate results and the misrepresentation of students' actual living conditions.

6.4 Recommendations for How to Meet the Needs of Overseas Students

There are five important factors that influence the quality of life of Chinese Students in New Zealand:

- Accommodation
- Study
- Social Network
- Discrimination
- Service quality of elements in their day-to-day lives

There are also various attributes involved in each factor that determine the quality, and influence the expectation gap for the Chinese international students. According to

the data analysis, it is believed that the government should improve service quality in a number of areas:

6.4.1 Accommodation

Accommodation is one of the important factors influencing Chinese students' living conditions in New Zealand. Safety & security, Cleanliness, Quality of accommodation (location, heating, size), Quality of study area (lighting, desk, space, peace and quiet), Rules and regulations, Relationship with landlord/ homestay family/ hostel management, Quality of the food provided, and Value for money are attributes that are involved overall. To improve the current performance, the government or relevant organizations should work on the rules and regulations of living in New Zealand, and promote better relationships between landlords and overseas students. In addition, schools should pay more attention to the living arrangement for overseas students in terms of the food provided by the homestay, the living environment, rent, and the relationship between overseas students and the homestay parents.

6.4.2 Study

Study is a central factor for the international students, since they have all come from overseas to study. The quality of education institution services and courses directly affects the students' perception about the service quality of New Zealand export education. Study involves a range of attributes, such as course design, quality of teachers or lecturers, teachers' or lecturers' teaching skills and styles, relationship with the teachers, other students and other staff in the education institution, and learning progress and grades.

Based on the findings from the data, there are several aspects which need to be worked on. First, education institutions should improve the usefulness of the courses to the students' future study and career. Second, teachers and lecturers should take cultural differences into account when they design and teach the courses. They should

also pay more attention to the study needs of the international students and make an extra effort to help them. Moreover, the teachers should encourage more contact between international students and local students, and provide more opportunities for students to learn each others' cultures.

6.4.3 Social Network

The social network is another significant factor influencing the satisfaction of overseas students with their life here. At present, Chinese international students generally have many Chinese friends while not many New Zealand friends. Yet, most of them would like to have more New Zealand friends. The government and the education providers should advocate and encourage contact between overseas students and local students, such as holding functions for both overseas students and local students to participate in, or encouraging New Zealanders to get to know people from different cultures.

6.4.4 Discrimination

Discrimination is an important issue for the life experience of international students in New Zealand. In general, Chinese international students think New Zealanders have a positive attitude towards overseas students. However, they also reveal that they experience occasional discrimination. Chinese students feel that they are most often treated unfairly and negatively by their teachers or lecturers compared to other groups. They are sometimes treated unfairly and negatively by the administrative staff in the school and people in the community. They are almost seldom treated unfairly or negatively by New Zealand students. Thus, the education providers should provide better training and education to teachers/ lecturers and other school staff so as to reduce overseas students' negative experience in the classroom.

6.4.5 Service quality in aspects of their daily life

There are a range of attributes that affect the daily life of international students.

Among these, Sports and Recreation is the most satisfactory attribute. Supermarkets/
Food markets is the second most satisfactory factor, followed by Restaurant/ Food outlets. Elements such as Entertainment, Shopping, Banking, and Medical care/
Services are around average level of quality according to this study.

Public Transportation in New Zealand is the most disappointing to the international students. Finding full- time or part time work is also a tough task for them. Students experienced moderate difficulties in Language and communication, Cost of living, Cultural differences, and Making New Zealand friends. They had slight to moderate difficulty in their living arrangements. They reported that they have comparatively less difficulty in Shopping, Racism and discrimination, and Access to entertainment.

6.4 Future Research

Overall this study has found out particular aspects which need to be worked on by the government and education providers in order to meet the needs, and bridge the expectation gap, of international students. This would require cooperation from education institutions and the New Zealand government to do further research to monitor the satisfaction and changing experiences of international students in New Zealand.

The New Zealand education sector as a whole still needs to work hard to attract more international students. It needs to do more to make the New Zealand education industry internationally competitive. There are a few possible areas of future research the New Zealand government may wish to pay attention to. As we discussed in previous chapters, both the living and study environments of international students are deeply impacted by culture differences. The New Zealand government may therefore wish to establish a special purpose fund for education institutions to help them to develop cultural awareness programmes, to foster increased interaction between

international and local students. Living conditions is another important element which may significantly impact the competiveness of the New Zealand export education industry. In many aspects, New Zealand is a strange environment for Chinese international students. Prior to coming here, they formed their expectations based on what they imagined life would be like, but typically, have a limited awareness of the world as most have never travelled outside of China before. In this sense, expectation gaps are inevitable. However, minimising the expectation gaps would go a significant way to improve New Zealand's chances on a competitive export education market. Therefore, meeting the needs of overseas students must be an important target for education providers and the New Zealand government.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Table 1: International enrolments by provider groups										
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007			
Schools.	10,555	15,259	17,448	14,477	11,984	13,933	15,207			
Public Tertiary Education Institutions.	20,405	30,714	39,009	43,047	40,706	35,261	31,143			
Private Training Establishments.	6,345	9,443	10,475	9,876	5,807	44,662	44,584			
English Language Providers.	41,725	71,503	50,689	43,417	35,749					
Totals	79,030	126,919	117,621	110,817	94,246	93,856	90,934			
Sources:										

(Source: International Division & Ministry of Education, 2008)

Appendix 2

Та	Table 2: International enrolments by origin											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007					
China	25,182	53,340	53,175	46,800	35,482	33,054*	24,776*					
South Korea	12,802	19,881	17,300	15,814	13,275	15,719	17,503					
Japan	13,947	17,844	15,532	14,917	12,847	13,932	12,236					
Europe	5,171	6,546	6,988	7,973	7,923	7,365	9,472					
North America	1,259	1,652	2,247	2,833	3,113	2,733	2,730					
Latin America	1,842	1,769	1,535	1,794	2,087	3,204	3,526					
All other economies	18,827	25,887	20,844	20,686	19,519	17,849	20,691					
Totals	79,030	126,919	117,621	110,817	94,246	93,856	90,934					
* including the Hong	Kong S	oecial Adı	ministrativ	e Region	1							

(Source: International Division & Ministry of Education, 2008)

Appendix 3

Table 1. Expectations and experiences of Asian students in New Zealand

Expectation	% Expected	% Experienced
Understand New Zealand English	80	57
Express myself effectively in English	77	40
Get good grades	87	28
Form friendships with New Zealanders	91	41
Enjoy socialising with New Zealanders	82	52
Understand NZ social customs	82	34
Be accepted by New Zealanders	72	37
Maintain a positive outlook	88	69
Feel stressed	31	49
Have enough money	62	51
Have no problems with my living arrangements	59	70

(Source: Butcher, A. & McGrath, T., 2004).

Appendix 4

Questionnaires

Thanks you for taking the time to complete our questionnaire. All you need to do is to answer the questions below, and post this questionnaire with the enclosed pre-paid envelope back within one week:

Northern 1 Middle 2 Southern 1	3					
2. How important were the following factors in	choosing	2 New Zea	land as a pla	ce to stu	dv?	
	Not at	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely	Not
	all	(a little)				Applicable
Recommendation by others	1	2	3	4	5	<u>6</u>
Financial support from your government or employer	<u></u> 1	2	З	4	5	<u>6</u>
A scholarship from New Zealand	1	2	З	4	5	<u>6</u>
Direct contact from a New Zealand institution	1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Internet information	1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Family's preference	<u></u> 1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Your own preference	1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
English speaking country	1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Family members or friends in New Zealand	<u></u> 1	2	3	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
The quality of New Zealand education	<u></u> 1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Beautiful scenery	1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Safety	<u></u> 1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
New Zealand culture and life style	1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Travel and adventure	1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Easy to get a student visa	1	2	Пз	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Opportunity to live in New Zealand permanently	1	2	Пз	<u></u> 4	5	<u>6</u>
Information from New Zealand Government Agencies	1	2	3	4	5	<u>6</u>
(i.e., Education NZ, Ministry of Foreign Affairs &Trade,						
New Zealand Trade & Enterprise)						
3. Where are you currently living?				-		
In a student hostel / hall of residence			_	_		
In rental accommodation (e.g., flat)				_		
In your own home						
In a homestay (living with a family i		,]4		
In a relative's home				5		
Other (please specify)				6		

	Quality of accommodation (location, heating, size)			1	2		3		4 📙	5 6
	Rules and regulatior	าร		1	2		З		4 🗆	5 6
	Relationship with yo	ur landlord/ homestay	/ family/	1	2		<u></u> 3		4 🗆	5 6
	hostel management									
	Value for money			1	2		З		4 🗆	5 6
	Quality of the food	provided		1	2		<u></u> 3		1 🗆	5 6
	Cleanliness			1	2		3		4 🗆	5 6
	Safety & security			1	2		3		4 🗆	5 6
	Quality of your study area (lighting, desk, space,		1	2		3		4 🗆	5 6	
	peace and quiet)									
ı	5. What grades ha	ave you been getting	g?							
	Poor	Averag	ge		Good			Excelle	ent	
	□1 □2				Пз			□ 4		
1	6. How satisfied a	re you with your pr	ogress ir	ı your stu	dies?					
	Not at all	Slightly (a little)		lerately	Ve	ery			emely	
	satisfied	satisfied	sat	isfied	satis	sfied		satisfied		
	□1	\square_2		<u></u> 3]4			5	
	7. How much do	you agree or disag	gree with							T
	7. How much do	you agree or disag	gree with	Strongly	Mildly	ement Neuti	al I	Mildly	Strongly	Not
							al I	Mildly agree	Strongly agree	Not Applicable
	teachers/lecturers	s encourage contac	rt .	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neuti	ral I	agree	agree	Applicable
Му	teachers/lecturers	s encourage contac	rt .	Strongly	Mildly		ral I	•		
My	teachers/lecturers between internation	s encourage contactonal and local stude	rt .	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neuti	ral I	agree	agree	Applicable
My	teachers/lecturers between internation content of my co my future study or	s encourage contactonal and local stude ourses is useful for remployment	ents	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neuti	ral I	agree	agree	Applicable
My The	teachers/lecturers between internation content of my co my future study or teachers/lecturers	s encourage contact onal and local stude ourses is useful for r employment s make special effor	ents	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neuti	3 3	4 4	agree 5	Applicable
My The My	teachers/lecturers between internation content of my content of my content study of teachers/lecturers to help internation	s encourage contact onal and local stude ourses is useful for r employment s make special effor nal students	ents rts	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neuti	3 3	agree	agree	Applicable
My The My	teachers/lecturers between internation content of my content of my content study or teachers/lecturers to help internation	s encourage contact onal and local stude ourses is useful for r employment s make special effor	ents rts	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neuti	3 3 3	444	agree 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	Applicable 6 6
Myy The Myy Cu	teachers/lecturers between internation content of my content of my content study or teachers/lecturers to help internation ltural differences a	s encourage contactonal and local stude ourses is useful for remployment is make special efformal students are respected in my	ents rts	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree 2 2 2 2	Neutri	al I		agree 5 5 5 5 5	Applicable 6 6 6
Myy The Myy Cu i Myy	teachers/lecturers between internation content of my content of my content study of teachers/lecturers to help internation ltural differences a nstitution	s encourage contactonal and local stude ourses is useful for remployment is make special efformal students are respected in my	ents rts	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neuti	al I	444	agree 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	Applicable 6 6
Myy The Myy Cu i Myy pr	teachers/lecturers between internation content of my content of my content of my content of my content of teachers/lecturers to help internation litural differences anotitution teachers/lecturers oblems of internat	s encourage contactonal and local stude ourses is useful for remployment is make special efformal students are respected in my is understand the tional students	ents rts	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2	Neutri	3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3	44444	agree 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	Applicable 6 6 6 6 6 6
Myy The My Cu i My pr	teachers/lecturers between internation e content of my co my future study or teachers/lecturers to help internation ltural differences a nstitution teachers/lecturers oblems of internat	s encourage contactonal and local stude ourses is useful for remployment is make special efformal students are respected in my is understand the ional students is the opportunity for	ents rts	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree 2 2 2 2	Neutri	3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3		agree 5 5 5 5 5	Applicable 6 6 6
Myy The Myy Cu i Myy pr In I st	teachers/lecturers between internation content of my content of my content of my content of my content of the c	s encourage contactonal and local stude ourses is useful for remployment is make special efformal students are respected in my is understand the ional students is the opportunity for out my culture	ents rts	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neutri	al I		agree 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	Applicable G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G
Myy The My Cu i My pr In r st	teachers/lecturers between internation e content of my co my future study or teachers/lecturers to help internation ltural differences a nstitution teachers/lecturers oblems of internat my classes there is udents to learn ab- el included in my o	s encourage contactonal and local stude ourses is useful for remployment s make special efformal students are respected in my s understand the ional students s the opportunity for out my culture class	rts rother	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2	Neutri	al I	44444	agree 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	Applicable 6 6 6 6 6 6
Myy Tho Myy Cu i Myy pr In I st I fee	teachers/lecturers between internation e content of my co my future study or teachers/lecturers to help internation litural differences a nstitution teachers/lecturers oblems of internat my classes there is udents to learn ab- el included in my of	s encourage contactonal and local stude ourses is useful for remployment is make special efformal students are respected in my is understand the sional students is the opportunity for out my culture class is understand cultural	rts rother	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neutri	ral !		agree 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 6 7 7 7 7	Applicable
Myy Cu i Myy pr In r str I fee	teachers/lecturers between internation e content of my co my future study or teachers/lecturers to help internation ltural differences a nstitution teachers/lecturers oblems of internat my classes there is udents to learn ab- el included in my of teachers/lecturers erences in learning	s encourage contactonal and local stude ourses is useful for remployment is make special efformal students are respected in my is understand the sional students is the opportunity for out my culture class is understand cultural	rts rts	Strongly disagree	Mildly disagree	Neutri	ral !		agree 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5	Applicable G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G G

4. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your accommodation?

Not at all

Slightly

Moderately

Very

Extremely

N/A

8. Would you recommend friends or family	y me	mbers to	study in	New Ze	aland?		
Yes					<u> </u>		
No					_		
Not sure					3		
9. Here are some questions about making	ı frior	nde with	Now 702	landore	Plassa	indica	to
your level of agreement or disagreement				iaiiucis.	i icase	muica	i.e
		Strongly	Mildly		Mildly	Stron	gly
		disagree	disagree	Neutral	agree	agre	e
I would like to have more New Zealand friends		□ 1	\square_2	Пз	□ 4	5	5
New Zealanders should take the first steps to ma	ake	□ 1		Пз	□ 4		;
friends with international students							
I find it difficult to make friends with New Zealand	ders	□ 1	\square_2	Пз	□4		5
New Zealanders do not seem interested in havin international friends	ng	<u></u> 1	<u></u>	Пз	□ 4		5
My English ability stops me from making New Zealand friends		□ 1	\square_2	Пз	□ 4		5
I try my best to make New Zealand friends		1		Пз	4	\vdash_{\neg}	
Tity my best to make New Zealand menus		□ 1	∟ 2	□ 3	LJ4		
10. How many close friends do you have f	from	the follo	wina aro	ups of p	eople?		
,	Nor		Ť		Some	Many	,
New Zealanders		1 🗆	2]3	<u>4</u>	5	
People from your home country		1 🗌	2]3	<u>4</u>	5	
People from other countries		1 🗌	2]3	<u>4</u>	5	
					<u>.</u>		<u>-</u>
11. How do you think New Zealanders view	w inte	ernationa	ıl studen	ts? Plea	se indic	ate yo	ur
level of agreement/disagreement with each	h sta	tement.					
		Strongly	Mildly		N	lildly	Strongly
		disagree	disagre	e Neut	ral a	gree	agree
Most New Zealanders would like to know		1	2		3	<u></u> 4	5
international students better							
International students often experience		□1	2		3	<u></u> 4	5
discrimination (unfair treatment) in New Zeala	and						
New Zealanders have generally positive		1	2		3	<u>4</u>	5
attitudes towards international students							
On the whole, New Zealanders would prefer		1	2		3	<u></u> 4	5
fewer international students in the country							

12. How often do the following people treat you unfairly or negatively because of your national, cultural or racial background? Please indicate the answer that best applies to you.

					Very
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	often
New Zealand students	1	2	3	<u></u> 4	5
International students	1	2	3	<u></u> 4	5
Teachers	1	2	3	<u></u> 4	5
Administrative and support staff at your					
educational institution	1	2	З	<u></u> 4	5
People in the community (e.g., neighbours, shop	<u></u> 1	2	3	<u></u> 4	5
assistants, landlords)					

13. How much do you agree or disagree with the following?

	Strongly	Mildly		Mildly	Strongly
	disagree	disagree	Neutral	agree	agree
In most ways my life in New Zealand is close	1	_2	3	<u></u> 4	5
to my ideal (exactly as I would like it)					
The conditions of my life in New Zealand are	<u></u> 1	<u></u>	З	<u></u> 4	5
excellent					
I am satisfied with my life in New Zealand	<u></u> 1	<u></u>	З	<u></u> 4	5
So far I have got the important things I want	<u></u> 1	<u></u>	З	<u></u> 4	5
from my life in New Zealand					
If I could live my life over, I would change	<u></u> 1	2	З	<u></u> 4	<u></u> 5
almost nothing about my life in New Zealand					

14. Please rate the quality of the following in the town/city where you are currently living in New Zealand.

	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	N/A
Public transportation	1	2	3	4	5
Entertainment (e.g., movies, clubs, pubs)	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping	1	2	3	4	<u></u> 5
Restaurant/Food outlets (e.g., takeaways)	1	2	3	4	<u></u> 5
Banking	1	2	3	4	5
Sports and recreation	1	2	3	<u></u> 4	5
Supermarkets/Food markets	1	2	3	<u></u> 4	5
Medical care/services	1	2	3	<u></u> 4	<u></u> 5

15. Please rate the level of difficulty you have with the following:

	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely	N/A
Public transportation	1	2	3	4	5	1
Language and communication	1	_2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Cost of living	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Cultural differences	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Making New Zealand friends	1	_2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Shopping	1	_2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Living arrangements	1	_2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Racism and discrimination	1	_2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Access to entertainment	1	_2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Loneliness / homesickness	1	_2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Finding full time/part time work	1	2	З	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>
Immigration / Visas	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<u>6</u>

Thank you for your time and help!