Cross-Cultural Adjustment of Chinese Students in Japan: School Adjustment and Educational Support

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Abstract
This study investigates Chinese immigrant students' cross-cultural and school adjustment issues in Japanese schools. Using a quantitative method, a survey which collected students' demographic information, cross-cultural adjustment, and school adjustment questions was administered to 143 Chinese junior high and high school students in Tokyo and Kanagawa Prefecture. The study found the following. First, three factors were identified to be significant in the students' cross-cultural adjustment: Language and Acculturation, Academic Achievement, and Adjustment Stress. At the same time, in the area of their school adjustment, Self-efficacy, Academic Disengagement, and Alienation were found to be significant factors. Second, parental support appeared to have a strong influence on their children's cross-cultural adjustment and school adjustment. Third, the age of arrival and the length of residence had significant correlations with Language and Acculturation but had no significant correlations with Academic Achievement and Adjustment Stress. Finally, a causal model analysis showed that the patterns of the factors' mutual influences are generally in accordance with the authors' expectations and the most significant factor was Self-efficacy. The implications of these findings are discussed in relation to supporting Chinese students.

Keywords: Chinese students in Japan, cross-cultural adjustment, school adjustment, self-efficacy, parental support, educational support

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Introduction

Due to the Japanese government's enactment of its "100,000 Foreign Students Enrollment Plan" in the 1980's and revised immigration laws passed in the 1990's, the number of foreign residents living in Japan has rapidly increased. According to the Ministry of Judicial Affairs (Immigration Bureau of Japan, 2009), in 2008, a total number of 2,217,426 foreign registrants were recorded, the highest number in Japan's history. Among them, the largest ethnic group was Chinese, which amounted to 655,377 or 29.6% of the entire foreign population. Along with this increase in foreign residents, the number of children accompanying their parents has risen as well. According to the Ministry of Education and Science survey conducted in 2008 (MEXT, 2009), the number of foreign students in Japanese primary and secondary schools amounted to 81,004, with over 28,000 students needing Japanese language support. The top three heritage languages among students of foreign origin were Portuguese, Chinese, and Spanish, which occupied 39.8%, 20.4%, and 12.7% respectively. As the number of non-Japanese children in Japanese schools continues to rise, the schools are faced with issues in such areas as Japanese language learning, adjustment to school and social norms, school attendance, the advancement rate into higher education, and an increasing dropout rate from high school (Kojima, 2007; Zhao, 2008). However, the current situation of non-Japanese students in Japan is not readily apparent due to a paucity of empirical studies investigating their cross-cultural adjustment issues.

Currently, the main goal of providing educational support for foreign students in Japan remains focused on how quickly they learn Japanese language (Saito, 2004). This educational support is called *shokishidou*, or initial guidance, and targets children who are recent arrivals in Japan. In Japan, the *shokishidou* varies widely, from 30 to 120 total hours depending on the local school districts (Shinjuku Education Center, 2011). This inconsistency results in many children receiving insufficient language support. Moreover, some children are actually excluded from getting support because they seem to speak fluent conversational Japanese (Saito, 2006). In many cases, those who provide language support deposit knowledge without being sensitive to and understanding these children's needs, which include accomplishing schoolwork, establishing peer relationships, and choosing their future school or career, as well as encountering cross-cultural differences (Kojima, 2007).

Although there are more than 5,000 Chinese students who speak Chinese as their mother tongue needing Japanese language education (MEXT, 2009), there is limited literature on Chinese students in Japan, including their backgrounds, linguistic, academic, social, and psychological needs, and other issues related to their cross-cultural adjustment (Shimizu & Shimizu, 2001; Kojima, 2007). This study attempts to illuminate multiple aspects of Chinese students' cross-cultural experience in Japan using quantitative methods, which has not been attempted previously.

Literature Review

The Context of Chinese Students in Japan

Chinese students in Japan come from various educational history and backgrounds, depending upon their place of origin and the economic status of their family prior to arriving in Japan (Zhang, 2008; He, 2008). There are two main groups of Chinese students in Japan: one that came from China with their parents and one that followed their parents afterwards. The second group has two characteristics: They were separated from parents for a substantial period of time and are children of parents with a variety of visa statuses, or step-children in an international marriage (Li & Sano, 2010).

Although Chinese parents come from various backgrounds, in general, they tend to

have high expectations for their children's education. However, the educational system in Japan differs from that of China in many aspects, including parental involvement. In Japanese schools, for example, the primary responsibility for students' academic performance falls on students and their families, not on the school. Those parents who both recognize that schools do not provide sufficient academic preparations and can afford to do so, send their children to *juku*, a cram school or exam preparatory school run privately to prepare students for high school and university entrance examinations (Fukuzawa & LeTendre, 2001). This is in stark contrast to Chinese schools, which consider that the responsibility for students' academic performance rests on the school and not on families (Jiang, 2001). Because of this, in order to succeed academically in Japan, parental coordination is necessary, especially for those foreign children who need extra support. Moreover, because Chinese families have less information and limited knowledge about the Japanese school system, coupled with language and financial difficulties, their children operate with few familial educational resources at the same time that they receive insufficient support at school. This often results in school maladjustment cases (Zhao, 2008).

Another difference in the two educational systems is the focus on academics. Due to severe competition to get into a university, the goal of schools in China has become solely academic, preparing their students to pass the entrance exams (Jiang, 2001). In many regions, schools have decreased the amount time spent on electives or those subjects that are not included in the entrance exam. They require students to study all day without providing any social learning experiences such as extra-curricular athletic and other club activities (Zhang & Shen, 2006). This often leaves no time of their own for students, since their ultimate goal is the university entrance exam. This is not the case in Japanese schools. As stated earlier, the responsibility of the students' academic achievement primarily rests with the family and students, allowing schools to focus on other aspects of school life such as guidance and extra-curricular activities. Japanese schools also have more flexibility in their grading criteria and students have more career choices besides advancing directly to a university. This all serves to allow students more personal time (Japan Youth Research Institute, 2002). Because of these differences, those Chinese students who were expected to focus only on academics in China, and who have never before experienced free time, are suddenly faced with unfamiliar choices. In addition, while academic achievement tends to influence relationship formation between students and teachers as well as among students in China, participation in group activities such as clubs and sports largely influences relationship formation in Japan (Hosaka & Okamura, 1986). These cross-cultural differences make it difficult for many Chinese children to adjust to Japanese schools.

Cross-cultural and School Adjustments

When people move from a familiar environment to a new linguistic or cultural environment, they often lose psychological stability and face challenges with cross-cultural adjustment (Kondo, 1981). Cross-cultural adjustment is generally defined as "the process of adaptation to living and working in a foreign culture. It is the perceived degree of psychological comfort and familiarity a person has with the new host culture" (Palthe, 2004, p.39). Ward and Searle (1991) argue that cross-cultural adjustment can be broadly divided into two categories: psychological and socio-cultural. The former is affected by personality factors, life changes, and social support, whereas the latter is affected by general cultural knowledge, length of residence in the host culture, and amount of contact with host nationals (Roysircar & Frey, 2003).

In order to have a successful cross-cultural adjustment experience, acculturation must take place. Berry (1980) explains acculturation as the process of learning about a culture and adjusting one's behavior to it. Schultz (1991) and Mouw and Xie (1999) consider language acquisition as an important indicator of acculturation and point out that it is difficult to

acquire language without active interaction with the host culture. Ebata et al. (1996) and Ceng (1996) describe language competency, knowledge of culture, and affinity to the host culture as subscales of acculturation. Children who are in new cultural environments tend to experience adjustment stress via feelings of anxiety and loneliness, as well as adopting learned helplessness due to language difficulties, weak academic performance, culture shock, and a sense of discomfort in interpersonal relationships (Cowen & Hightower, 1989).

Until recently, the primary focus of cross-cultural adjustment research in Japan has been on language learning. Not much research has focused on the formation and role of self-efficacy in a cross-cultural environment and the interest level of this topic is unfortunately low (Kojima, 2007). In considering cross-cultural adjustment issues, how children perceive and cope with their adjustment tasks may have great impact on how they solve any psychological problems arising upon encountering the new environment. Self-efficacy in this context is having the expectation or conviction that one is competent enough to act properly in certain situations, and includes the belief that one has the ability to achieve one's goals (Bandura, 1997). Through self-efficacy, people control their thoughts, emotions, and behavior. Those who have a high self-efficacy rate are able to cope more easily with difficult situations and accumulate many successful experiences. Harrison, Chadwick, & Scales (1996) consider self-efficacy an important factor supporting cross-cultural adjustment.

Because school is the central socialization ground for students, school adjustment has a significant impact on the larger cross-cultural social adjustment (Kosaka, Minoguchi & Saito, 1996). Liebkind et al. (2004) stated that while academic achievement has often been used as a general indicator of school adjustment among immigrant children, sociocultural and psychological adaptations are also important dimensions of school adjustment for these children. Palaiologou (2007) similarly discussed three dimensions of school adjustment among immigrant children in Greece: learning, social, and psychological domains. In Japan, among the limited number of studies on foreign students' adjustment issues, several studies have found that school life was influenced by factors such as language competency, progress in learning, familiarity with the host country, human relationships, and mental health (Yamamoto, 1986; Xu & Kageyama, 1994). Based on studies of foreign students' adjustment, we hypothesize that the issues surrounding cross-cultural adjustment, school adjustment, and its relative factors are multi-dimensional and intricately related.

Method

Participants

Fourteen institutions in Tokyo and Kanagawa prefectures cooperated for this study: three public junior high schools, five public high schools, five non-profit organization groups that support foreign students, and one Chinese social club. The Chinese students who participated in the survey had a variety of backgrounds: those that came to Japan with their parents, third-generation war orphans, children of Chinese who had remarried to Japanese citizens, and children of interracial marriages. The legal status of these students' parents and their reasons for coming to Japan varied. In this study, all students are referred to as Chinese students, as they all received education in China prior to arriving in Japan.

There were 143 Chinese students (72 males, 71 females) in total: from public junior high schools (7th-9th grades n=85), high schools (10th-12th grades n=46) and private educational support (n=12). The mean age was 16.60 (SD=2.01) with an age range of 12.6－22.1 years old. The participants had been living in Japan for an average of 22.65 months (SD=22.13), ranging from 1 month to 103 months.

Procedure

Survey questions. Ninety-two percent of the respondents chose the Chinese version of the survey. The survey included the following components.

Demographic information. Participants were asked to indicate their age, birth month and year, gender, birthplace, grade level, length of residence in Japan, reasons for coming to Japan, parents' status (visa and citizenship), and perceived parental support.

Cross-cultural adjustment scale (C-CAS). In this study, cross-cultural adjustment scales *(C-CAS)* were used from the following sources: Yamamoto's (1986) "Ryugaku Seikatsuniokeru Tekioudono Shakudo" (Adjustment Scale for Foreign Students), and Uematsu's (2004) "Ibunka Tekioukan" (Cross-cultural Adjustment Scale for Japanese Students Studying Abroad). Because these scales were originally designed for college students, slight changes (a few dropped items) were made for junior and senior high school students. For this study, a 28 item scale was used with four-point rating from "1 = Completely Disagree" to "4 = Completely Agree."

School adjustment scale (SAS). This study used a 20-item scale pertaining to the school life of Chinese students based on Takase's (1986) "Gakkou Seikatsu Tekiou Shakudo" (School Life Adjustment Scale), Matsui and Suzuki's (2002) "Gakkou Tekiou" (School Adjustment), and Ninomiya's (1990) "Gakkou Seikatsunitaisuru Ishikino Shakudo" (School life Awareness Scale). Following Takase's model, this study used a five-point rating from "1 = Completely Disagree" to "5 = Completely Agree."

Results

Demographic Information

After examining the demographic information, the following two areas were found to be important for the purposes of the data analysis.

Reasons for coming to Japan. Out of 143 students, 25 (17.4%) came with their parents, 115 (79.9%) followed afterwards, and four (2.8%) did not respond. For those that followed their parents to Japan later, the average separation period was 2.3 years (SD =2.44), from a range of one to 16 years. Of these, 73 (63.5%) lived with grandparents, 24 (20.9%) lived with other relatives, and the rest lived in dormitories.

Parental support. In response to the question "My parents encourage me when I am feeling depressed about school performance or interpersonal relationship," 16 (11.1%) answered "very frequently," 21 (14.6%) answered "sometimes," 44 (30.6%) answered "neither/nor," 26 (18.1%) answered "infrequently," 31 (21.5%) answered "never," and 6 (4.2 %) did not answer.

Factor Analyses on Scales

Factor analyses on cross-cultural adjustment scales (C-CAS). In order to examine Chinese students' cross-cultural factors, the data on C-CAS was analyzed by via the Principal Factor Analysis. Prior to performing factor analysis, we used the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of sphericity to assess the suitability of the dataset for factor analysis. The test results in Table 1 revealed a KMO value of 0.8, suggesting close correlations among variables. The *chi*-square value for Barlett's test of sphericity was 1113.0, which was significant and indicative of common factors that rendered the data appropriate for follow-up factor analysis. Promax rotation was used because some correlations among factors

were indicated. After Promax rotation, items which had factor loadings less than 0.35 and high loadings on two factors at the same time were deleted. The reliability of the scale was examined through Cronbach's α, which was 0.75 in total. The scale had acceptable internal consistency. As a result, three factors were extracted based on the Kaiser–Guttman rule. These were termed "Language and Acculturation" and "Academic Achievement" and "Adjustment Stress." Factor loadings and factor correlations, and alpha coefficients are shown in Table 2.

Table 1. *KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST for C-CAS*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.8010
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1113.067
	Df	253.000
	Sig.	0.000

Table 2. *"Cross-cultural Adjustment" Factor Loadings, Correlations and Alpha Coefficients*

Factor	*M*	*SD*	Extracted Factor			Commonality
			I	II	III	
Factor I (LA) **Language and Acculturation (α = .86)**						
10. I can comprehend most of what is said in Japanese	2.92	0.88	**0.72**	0.13	0.09	0.59
11. I understand rules and manners in Japan	2.83	0.82	**0.66**	-0.01	-0.06	0.45
21. I can manage the Japanese language in most situations	2.67	0.89	**0.66**	-0.04	-0.15	0.46
22. I have a Japanese person who can be trusted	2.52	1.08	**0.64**	0.00	0.11	0.40
6. I understand Japanese culture	2.63	0.79	**0.61**	-0.07	-0.16	0.39
4. I have Japanese friends	2.82	1.04	**0.60**	-0.05	0.08	0.33
1. I am satisfied with relationships with Japanese	2.83	0.75	**0.60**	0.14	0.05	0.44
25. I am familiar with Japanese culture	2.63	0.90	**0.57**	-0.18	-0.13	0.30
15. I understand Japanese social systems	2.52	0.75	**0.56**	-0.02	-0.14	0.36
14. I am able to converse in Japanese	2.85	0.84	**0.48**	0.16	-0.09	0.36
16. I have a person I can consult with when needed	2.99	0.97	**0.36**	0.15	-0.11	0.24
Factor II (AA) **Academic Achievement (α =.75)**						
3. My school life is fulfilling	2.93	0.86	0.16	**0.67**	0.25	0.49
9. I am satisfied with school life	2.82	0.89	0.1	**0.63**	0.16	0.44
13. My school life is advancing well	2.65	0.88	0.07	**0.56**	-0.03	0.36
24. I am not able to learn as expected	2.26	0.96	-0.13	**0.55**	-0.19	0.36
27. I am able to learn as expected	2.58	0.85	0.02	**0.50**	0.00	0.26
20. Recently, I become easily depressed	2.71	0.95	-0.13	**0.49**	-0.36	0.44
28. I have not been able to concentrate on studies	2.50	0.91	-0.17	**0.36**	-0.20	0.19
Factor III (AS) Adjustment Stress （**α＝.66**）						
19. I have to make an effort whenever meeting Japanese	2.35	0.94	-0.09	0.08	**0.64**	0.40
12. I often get anxious living in Japan	2.45	0.90	-0.08	-0.08	**0.59**	0.42
17. I feel irritated and not calm	2.31	0.95	0.11	-0.29	**0.47**	0.37
7. I can't behave naturally among Japanese	2.68	0.98	-0.14	0.11	**0.40**	0.17
18. I am dissatisfied with Japanese customs	2.01	0.83	-0.10	0.02	**0.38**	0.16

and culture			
Cumulative contribution (%)	26.08	37.05	44.40
		Factor II	Factor III
Factor correlation	Factor I	0.44	-0.19
	Factor II		-0.38

Factor analyses on school adjustment scales (SAS). Next, in order to examine Chinese students' school adjustment factors, the data on SAS was analyzed using the Principal Factor Method. To examine the correlations among variables and determine their suitability for factor analysis, we performed the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The test results shown in Table 3 reveal a KMO value of 0.8, suggesting close correlations among variables. The *chi*-square value for Barlett's test of sphericity was 882.538, which was significant and indicative of common factors that rendered the data appropriate for follow-up factor analysis. Promax rotation was used because some correlations among factors were indicated. After Promax Rotation, items which had factor loadings less than 0.35 and high loadings on two factors at the same time were deleted. The reliability of the scale was examined through Cronbach's α, which marked 0.86 in total and exhibited sufficient internal consistency. As a result, three factors were extracted on the Kaiser–Guttman rule. These were labeled "Academic Disengagement," "Self-efficacy," and "Alienation." Factor loadings, correlations and alpha coefficients are shown in Table 4.

Table 3. *KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST for SAS*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.782
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	882.538
	Df	120.000
	Sig.	0.000

Table 4. *"School Adjustment" Factor's Loadings, Correlations and Alpha Coefficients*

	M	*SD*	Extracted Factor			Commonality
			I	II	III	
Factor I (AD) **Academic Disengagement (α=.82)**						
6. I feel resistant toward school	3.67	1.10	**0.86**	0.01	-0.07	0.68
14. I feel uncomfortable at school	3.60	1.17	**0.82**	0.07	0.18	0.80
13. I feel unhappy when attending classes	3.46	1.21	**0.72**	-0.18	-0.16	0.52
5. Sometimes I do not wish to go to school	3.30	1.25	**0.42**	-0.12	0.06	0.27
Factor II (SE) **Self-efficacy (α= .77)**						
8. I have a teacher with whom I can talk about anything	3.20	1.20	-0.08	**0.69**	0.02	0.51
11. I have a teacher who understands me	3.38	1.08	-0.06	**0.65**	0.14	0.37
1. My friends recognize me for study, sports or special skills	3.04	1.15	0.33	**0.61**	-0.24	0.47
7. I actively participate in class activities	3.17	1.24	-0.13	**0.56**	0.07	0.33
4. I understand class sessions well	3.20	1.14	-0.20	**0.46**	0.05	0.28
3. I have felt fulfillment in school life	3.52	1.13	-0.29	**0.39**	-0.23	0.54
Factor III (A) **Alienation (α= .75)**						
16. I am often alone during break times	3.52	1.36	-0.10	0.03	**0.81**	0.56
17. I have felt anxious and tense worrying about how classmates look at me	3.31	1.28	0.14	0.18	**0.55**	0.31

10. I felt ignored by classmates	3.24	1.27	0.32	0.22	**0.55**	0.44
2. I felt invisible in class	3.38	1.18	0.08	-0.33	**0.51**	0.62
15. I don't talk about important things to friends	3.09	1.34	-0.11	-0.10	**0.49**	0.25
9. I have no friends to talk about true feelings and worries	3.34	1.33	-0.02	-0.15	**0.40**	0.24
Cumulative contribution (%)			33.66	45.22	54.51	
				Factor II	Factor III	
Factor correlation			Factor I	-0.37	0.50	
			Factor II		-0.54	

Analyses by Attributes

Differences in scores due to factors such as sex, current age, age of arrival in Japan, length of residence, and grade level were statistically examined. The results showed that significant grade level differences were found on "Language and Acculturation" and "Alienation." No other significant differences were found on other factors; thus, in this study, instead of analyzing difference in attributes, the relationship between cross-cultural adjustment and its related factors were examined.

Correlations among Cross-cultural Adjustment Factor, School Adjustment Factor, and Related Factors

The correlations for Cross-cultural adjustment and School adjustment, in terms of age of arrival in Japan, length of residence, and parental support are shown in Table 5. The relationship between cross-cultural adjustment and school adjustment was intricately entwined.

Table 5. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Variables (N =143)*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	*M*	*SD*
1. Age of Arrival	1.00								14.69	2.09
2. Length of Residence	-0.14	1.00							22.64	22.12
3. Parental Support	0.05	-0.05	1.00						2.75	1.28
4. Language and Acculturation	-.325**	.220**	.286**	1.00					2.74	0.56
5. Academic Achievement	-0.02	-0.10	.305**	.497**	1.00				2.49	0.52
6. Adjustment Stress	0.15	-0.15	-0.09	-.246**	-.272**	1.00			2.21	0.48
7. Academic Disengagement	-0.03	-0.07	-0.02	-.269**	-.433**	.283**	1.00		2.49	0.95
8. Self-efficacy	0.00	0.00	.332**	.542**	.576**	-.276**	-.430**	1.00	3.25	0.79
9. Alienation	-0.05	-.220**	-.180*	-.412**	-.370**	.399**	.474**	-.518**	2.72	0.86

Note. **p＜.01

Path Analysis

In order to find a causal relationship between factors, a path analysis was conducted by Amos (5), using the item scores of cross-cultural adjustment, school adjustment, age, length of residence, and parental support. Taking previous studies (Minoura, 1984; Ibanez et

al, 2004) and the above correlational analysis into account, we considered "Age of Arrival in Japan," "Length of Residence," and "Parental Support" to be the primary effective factors on cross-cultural adjustment and school adjustment. "Self-efficacy" and "Language and Acculturation" were considered as secondary factors, as these factors influence the third factor "Alienation." This, in turn, impacts "Adjustment Stress" and "Academic Disengagement," finally resulting in "Academic Achievement." Based on these predictions, a path analysis was conducted on the direction of the interactions among cross-cultural adjustment, school adjustment, and other factors. The direction of influences and overall results found were as expected (see Figure 1).

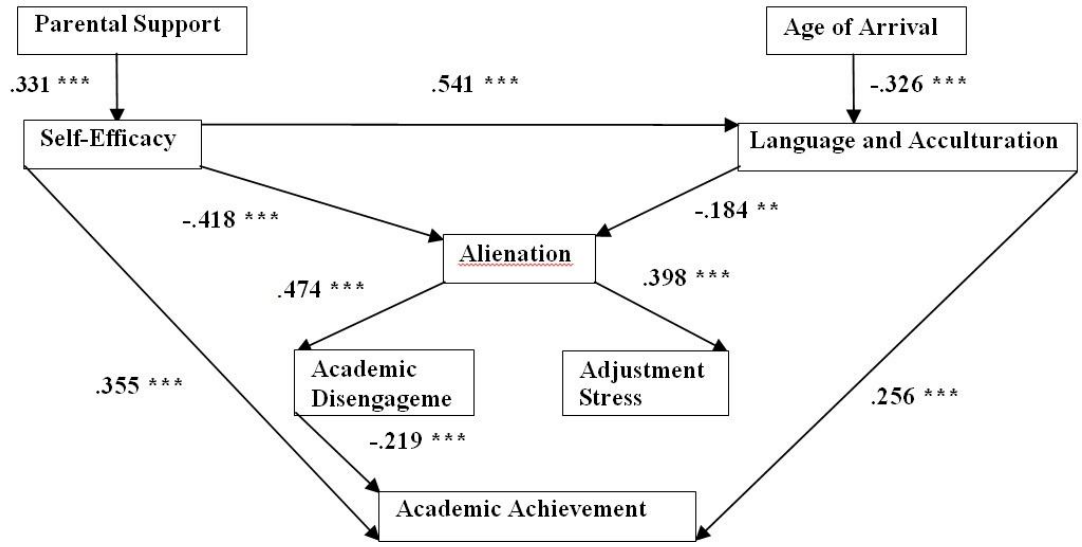

Figure 1. Results of Path Analysis Note **p＜.01, ***p＜.001

In general, the results confirmed our prediction ($\chi 2(18)=32.99$, P=.000, NFI=.89,IFI=.95, TLI=.89, CFI=.94, RMSEA=.07) and all path coefficients in Figure 1 were significant at the level of 0.1%. In Figure 1, only significant paths were shown. While most expectations were confirmed, some results did not support our predictions. For example, "Length of Residence" had no positive path to other factors; thus it was not shown in Figure 1.

In the first tier, "Age of Arrival" had a negatively significant path to "Language and Acculturation." "Parental Support" showed a positive path to "Self-efficacy." In the second tier, "Self-efficacy" had positive paths to "Language and Acculturation" and "Academic Achievement" and a negative path to "Alienation." "Alienation" had positive paths to "Academic Disengagement" and "Adjustment Stress." Lastly, "Academic Disengagement" had a negative path to "Academic Achievement." "Parental Support" indirectly influenced "Academic Achievement" via "Self-efficacy," and also via "Alienation" and "Academic Disengagement." "Age of Arrival" had indirect paths to "Academic Achievement" via "Language and Acculturation" and via "Alienation" and "Academic Disengagement." It also had an effect on "Adjustment Stress" via "Alienation." Thus, this path analysis supported our theoretical expectations to a relatively high degree.

Discussion

The Influence of Age of Arrival and Length of Residence on Cross-cultural Adjustment

The findings from the correlation analysis indicated a relationship among Age of Arrival, Length of Residence, and Cross-cultural Adjustment: The younger the age of arrival

and the longer the length of stay, the higher the level of conversational skills in Japanese and familiarity with Japanese culture. However, it had no significant correlations with the students' academic achievement or adjustment stress. Sato (1996) pointed out that some students cannot keep up with subject learning even if they have no problems with Japanese conversational skills. Currently in Japan, educational support for foreign children is limited to initial Japanese language learning support. This support system seems to be based on the assumption that conversational proficiency is sufficient for cultural adjustment.

Cummins (1980, 2000) defined proficiency in using academic language within the school context as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). He differentiated CALP from Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), which refers to everyday conversational language. Lack of language proficiency is a major disadvantage for immigrant children in the areas of interpersonal and social relationships as well as academic performance (James, 1997; Lee & Zhan, 1998). Referring to Cummins (1980, 2000), Ota (1996) classified language into two groups: Social-life Language and Learning-thinking Language. The former is generally acquired in one to two years, while the latter can take as many as five years to evolve**.** This suggests that academic achievement and adjustment skills, including developmental aspects, may differ from conversational skills and even develop along different paths than the latter skills. Our work suggests that the level of mastery in conversational skills does not necessarily lead to cultural adjustment and high academic achievement.

The findings from this study illustrate that, in order to help children from another culture and language achieve at higher levels in school, their current level of academic performance must be assessed correctly. As Cummins (1980, 2000) states, educators must have a clear understanding of their students' communicative and academic proficiencies in order to provide effective support. Assessing students' true needs must come first before providing the types of support schools should provide, including psychological support. Moreover, as Ceng (1996) argues, the cross-cultural adjustment process does not progress in a linear fashion; rather, it changes course depending on individual efforts and the availability of the support system. We propose that the length of time provided for support should not be based solely on a preset number of hours as is the case in Japanese schools, but rather on a child's individual needs, their level of language proficiency, and ongoing academic progress.

The Influence of Parental Support on Cross-cultural Adjustment

For children, the family provides a safe base of emotional support for a variety of challenging tasks. However, in this study, 39.6% of the children perceived that they had little or no support or understanding from parents, and 30.6% of children were not sure if they received any. This might be due to many of the children's long separation (2.3 years on the average) from their parents. These results indicated the lack of a trusting relationship and mutual understanding between the participating parents and children. We also found that parental support appeared to have a strong influence on "Language and Acculturation," "Academic Achievement," and "Self-efficacy." This result supported many previous research findings (Fuligni, 1997; Lau, 2010). Ibanez et al (2004) investigated Latin American youth's motivation for academic achievement and found that besides cross-cultural adjustment and academic competence, parental involvement also proved to be an important factor. Ma and Yeh (2010) reported that support from parents largely influenced the selection of future goals and motivation for academic achievement among Chinese immigrant high school students in the U.S.A. Parental understanding and mental support are the basis of cultural adjustment and a motivating force encouraging hard work. Therefore, parental involvement is an important key factor for their children's cross-cultural adjustment and school achievement. As such, guiding parents through the Japanese educational system and helping them to form trusting relationships with their children should be included as part of the educational support

for students from another culture or language.

Factors Related to Cross-cultural Adjustment and School Adjustment

According to the results from the path analysis, the factors relating to cross-cultural adjustment and school adjustment were intricately related. While Language and Acculturation was the most important factor for cross-cultural adjustment, Self-efficacy was the most important factor for school achievement. Self-efficacy was affected by Parental Support alone and not by Age of Arrival or Length of Residence. Cross-cultural adjustment factors, such as Language and Acculturation and Academic Achievement, were in turn directly influenced by Self-efficacy, while the Adjustment Stress factor was indirectly influenced by Self-efficacy via Alienation.

These results supported previous research regarding the influence of parental support on the formation of children's self-efficacy. For example, Bandura (1997) found that parents who encourage their children to pursue different activities and support their efforts help develop the children's sense of self-efficacy by elevating their confidence to meet various challenges. Similarly, Schunk and Pajares (2002) reported the important role parents play as key providers of their children's self-efficacy.

In this study, the following chain of effects can be identified: Self-efficacy is related to Academic Achievement whereas Alienation heightens Adjustment stress. Furthermore, Alienation causes emotional instability, which leads to Academic Disengagement. Academic Disengagement causes behavioral and psychological problems, which can lead to low Academic Achievement. These responses lower the individual's Self-efficacy and create a vicious circle. Yeh (2003) argues that language barriers in conjunction with culture shock and an inability to assimilate to the peer culture, leading to mental health symptoms such as anxiety and depression, are ongoing cultural adjustment problems that immigrant and minority children struggle to overcome. A cross-cultural counseling approach is called for in order to solve these complex adjustment problems. In particular, Shea, Ma, and Yeh (2007) suggest providing a social forum for students to discuss their alienated feelings and other concerns in a safe and trusting environment. The ability to form relationships, recognition of others who understand and accept, and active participation in group activities promote cross-cultural adjustment. Therefore, when supporting foreign children, a sense of belonging, building human relationships, and psychological care should be considered.

The results of this study suggest that self-efficacy in particular is an important intermediating factor in cross-cultural adjustment, while academic achievement is an important indicator of cross-cultural and school adjustment for non-Japanese students. Since this study found no significant correlation between self-efficacy and age of arrival or length of residence, we can surmise that self-efficacy formation is related either to the students' experiences prior to coming to Japan or to their own personality characteristics. This dynamic factor warrants further research. This study also revealed that the higher a students' sense of self-efficacy, the higher their language, acculturation, and academic achievement levels become. Similar results were found in the 2003 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which suggested that self-efficacy is one of the most important predictors for children's school achievement. The OECD report further asserted that improving the self-efficacy of immigrant children and those from especially challenging backgrounds was paramount for schools and educators in order to provide successful learning environments.

In conclusion, this study illuminated the importance of providing a meaningful educational experience for Chinese immigrant children in Japan, who have complex social, cultural, linguistic, and psychological needs. Without understanding these dimensions, it

would be easy to overly simplify their cross-cultural and school adjustment experiences to the conversational linguistic ability, which is easiest to observe. Equally important, this study is applicable beyond Japan and brings to light the challenges of today's increasingly global society where we, as educators, have a clear mandate to provide equal educational access to all children, including marginalized students.

Limitations and Future Research

There are a number of limitations to this particular study. First, participants were drawn from only Tokyo and Kanagawa prefecture. While this study's findings are compelling, the small sample size may be insufficient to explain all cross-cultural adjustment cases of Chinese children in Japan. Second, this study employed only 28 and 20 items for cross-cultural adjustment and school adjustment surveys respectively. In order to understand the relationships among multiple factors more fully, especially parental support, an expanded survey with more items pertaining to these factors is needed in future research. Finally, since the primary foci of this study were age of arrival, length of residence, parental support, and school adjustment, the issues of identity formation and supporting resources were not discussed. It is imperative that these elements be explored in future research, as well as the dynamic relationship between factors such as school achievement, school adjustment, self-efficacy, and parental support across different grade levels and groups

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