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**Сравнительный анализ процессов адаптации Китайских
студентов, обучающихся в России и Южной Корее**
**Chinese students in Russia and South Korea: comparative analysis of
adaptation processes**

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Abstract

With the development of globalization, borders among nations seem to be weakened, the corporation and communication between countries frequently happen, including the exchange of human talents. People who have the background of studying abroad seem to get more advantages in the labor market. Therefore, studying abroad becomes a fashion trend recently.

As the economic boom of China, an increasing number of Chinese students pursue educations in foreign countries. When we talk about the cross-cultural adaptation of students studying abroad, Chinese overseas students have already become a force to be reckoned with. As culture difference is an influential factor of the international students' cross-cultural adaptation, it is necessary to do a research to reveal the importance of culture distance in the process of adaptation, to remind host universities and institutions to help international students properly.

The present paper checks how culture distance affects adaptation of students studying abroad from the perspectives of socio-cultural adaptation and psychological adaptation, examines the hypothesis made by the author that the larger culture distance will result in greater cross-cultural adaptation difficulties. The research takes the Chinese students in South Korea and Russia as samples, uses both qualitative (interview) and quantitative (survey) methods to check the validity of the hypothesis and answer the research questions as following:

1. Is there any significant difference in cross-cultural adaptation between Chinese international students in Russia and South Korea?
2. What is the culture distance between China and Korea and between China and Russia?
3. To what extent can culture distance influence cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese international students in South Korea and Russia?

By data analysis and analysis of interviews, there are following findings:

1. The culture distance between China and Russia is larger than that between China and Korea.
2. The Chinese students in South Korea socio-culturally and psychologically adapt to the host culture better than the Chinese students in Russia.
3. The Chinese students both in South Korea and Russia maintain a healthy

psychological state.

4. In socio-cultural adaptation, a larger culture distance results in a more difficult adaptation for Chinese students. The correlation between culture distance and socio-cultural adaptation difficulty is positive.

5. There is no significant correlation between culture distance and psychological adaptation.

Key words: culture distance, cross-cultural adaptation, socio-cultural adaptation, psychological adaptation.

Introduction

Background of the research

According to the “Hurun Report: 2016’s report on the trends to study abroad”, there were 459 thousand Chinese students studying abroad in 2014, with a significant increase of 11 percents than the previous year. China has already become the biggest “students provider” for many overseas studying destinations, including the most popular ones such as America, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada.

There is a trend that more Chinese are seeking for the opportunities to send their children to study abroad. Such phenomenon can be explained in different ways. Firstly, Chinese parents send their children abroad to study to enjoy better educational resources, to benefit from the best professors, academia and first-class facility. Secondly, there is such a view in China that studying abroad is a “gold plating” process. It looks like an investment for the students’ future career. After several years of studying abroad, students have better opportunity to find satisfying jobs.

As demonstrated in the Hurun report, there are two trends in the group of nowadays Chinese overseas students: a tendency of young age and poor preparation for studying abroad. Such trends result in the consequences, such as adaptation difficulties for Chinese students studying abroad.

Among all the studying destinations for Chinese overseas students, Russia and South Korea are not among the top 10 list. According to the statistic of 2015, there is a total number of 25 thousand Chinese students in Russia and 55 thousand in South Korea. However, those two countries, as the most influential neighbors of China, tightly cooperate with China. As a result of economic corporation among those three countries, there is a demand for professionals, such as interpreters. This fact explains the dramatic increase of Chinese overseas students in Russia and South Korea recent years. Therefore, these two groups of international students require more attention from scholars and researchers. Living in an entirely different culture may face many difficulties. If students can not overcome those challenges, it may influence their physical fitness, psychological health and even academic success. Compare with Russian culture, Korean culture seems to be much more similar to Chinese culture. In other words, it means that the culture distance between Korean and Chinese culture is smaller than Russian and Chinese culture. As a result, we made the hypothesis that

“Chinese students in South Korea should be better adapted than those in Russia,” because they can better understand the norm and value of the receiving society.

This paper, as a comparative study on the Chinese students’ cross-cultural adaptation in Russia and South Korea, will explore the influence of culture distance and other factors, for instance, language proficiency, social support. We hope the findings of this paper can provide some guidance for the universities and international institutions, to help them to provide international students detailed and accurate social support for their successful adaptation.

Purpose of the study

With the increasing student mobility all over the world, academia has found the importance to consider the cross-cultural adaptation of overseas students. However, most researchers focus on the factors like individuals’ personalities, language proficiency, social support, previous overseas experiences. Culture distance was rarely mentioned in the earlier studies, and the gap should be filled.

This thesis examines the external and internal factors of cross-cultural adaptation and tries to explain how culture distance influences cross cultural adaptation of Chinese students in Russia and South Korea. In the paper, we use both quantitative method (survey) and qualitative method (in-depth interview). We aim to check the hypothesis which we made beforehand:

Chinese students in South Korea better adapt to the host culture than those in Russia, and Chinese international students with larger cultural distance tend to have a lower degree of cross-cultural adaptation.

Moreover, many scholars suggest that “bigger” culture distance will increase the adjustment difficulties (Adler, 2002; Hutchings, 2003; Mendenhall& Oddou, 1985; Selmer, 2007; Ward, 2001). We will also test whether this hypothesis is also right in the content of Chinese students in Russia and South Korea.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis is an empirical study with the purpose to find out the most significant factors of cross-cultural adaptation and to examine the impact of culture distance. The thesis consists of five chapters:

Chapter One offers us literature review of the previous relevant studies.

Chapter Two presents the general introduction of the methodology of this study. In

this study, we adopt quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative research is designed with questionnaires; the qualitative study consists of in-depth interviews with well-selected samples. The research procedures are also mentioned in this chapter.

In Chapter Three detailed data and interview analysis are carried out. The results of analysis are presented in this chapter.

Chapter Four answers the research questions and checks the validity of the hypothesis made by the author.

Chapter Five points out the main findings of the study, implication and draw general conclusion to the research. Meanwhile, the limitation and improvement for further study are suggested by the author.

Chapter One: Literature review

This chapter presents the relevant literature of cross-cultural adaptation and culture distance, introduces previous studies about the factors of cross-cultural adaptation, and also criticizes the existing research.

1.1. Development of Comparative Sociology

With the appearance of Sociology, a concept of comparison had already existed. From the theories of the founder fathers of Sociology like August Comte, H. Spenser, and K. Marx, we can see the application of the comparative concept. However, in the field of sociology, E. Durkheim and M. Weber firstly used comparative sociology to do research. E. Durkheim is considered as the founder of Comparative Sociology. He is the first man who used the term of “Comparative Sociology.” His “Suicide: A study in Sociology” can be seen as his representative work of comparative sociology (Durkheim, 1897). Another sociologist who employed comparative methods is Marx Weber. His application of comparative methods can be seen in his book “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism” (Marx Weber, 1905). Robert M. Marsh is the representative of the school of Comparative Sociology. He even wrote and published a book which used “Comparative Sociology” as the title. In this book, Robert M. Marsh claims that Comparative Sociology applies systematical comparison of data which are collected in more than two societies. Moreover, there is a huge difference between the data which are collected from more than two societies and the data collected in a single society. Therefore, Comparative Sociology should not be confused with General Sociology (Comparative Sociology, 1967). Comparative Sociology used to developed slowly, however, under the current circumstance of Globalization, Comparative Sociology has finally entered the researchers’ field of vision. The theories and methods of Comparative Sociology play a important role in the research of homogeneity and heterogeneity of culture under globalization. Numerous works of Comparative Sociology have published recently. Among those works, the book “Concise Encyclopedia of Comparative Sociology” is a great hit. In the Russian sociologist Andrey V Rezaev’s review of this book, he highly recommended this book. He appraised this book as “an impressive achievement” (Andrey Rezaev, 2016).

1.2. Research of Cross-Cultural, Cross-Societal or Cross-National

The author named this thesis as “Chinese students in Russia and South Korea: a comparative analysis of adaptation processes and phenomena in everyday life.” Through the title, it is easy to figure out that the thesis is a study using comparative strategy. However, the author believes it is necessary to explain whether this thesis is a “cross-national,” a “cross-societal” or a “cross-cultural” research. Many previous researchers have already explained the differences between these three terms. The American sociologist, Melvin L. Kohn, in his essay named “Cross-National research as an analytic strategy” explained cross-national research in details. He stated that in broad terms, cross-national research could be understood as “any research that transcends national boundaries.” However, he prefers to give his definition to the term as “studies that utilize systematically comparable data from two or more nations” (Melvin, 1987). Moreover, in Melvin’s essay, he also pointed out that there exist four types of cross-national research, which are “those in which nation is object of study; those in which nation is context of study; those in which nation is unit of analysis; and those that are transnational in character” (Melvin, 1987).

In the article “Cross-cultural, cross-societal and cross-national research” of a German sociologist Stein Rokkan, he compared these three terms. As Stein Rokkan claimed, “the term “cross-societal” means the comparison from both the perspectives of cultural and territory, but in social studies this term is rarely used(Stein Rokkan, 1993). In the book of the sociologist Robert Marsh, he used the term cross-societal to name the title “Comparative Sociology: A Codification of Cross-Societal Analysis” (Robert Marsh, 1967). The term “cross-national” used much more frequently. As Stein Rokkan claimed, the term “cross cultural” is used in the sphere of human relations, “cross national” is employed in the areas of economy and policy and “cross societal” combines the both two previous terms, it can be used for all the human activities(Stein Rokkan, 1993).

In the same essay of Melvin, he gave his explanation to this question. Melvin claims that “Cross-national” is unambiguous, it refers to the study among countries. However, “cross-cultural” may refer to subcultures within one nation, for instance, in Melvin’s essay, he cited an example of Mexico-American and Anglo-American subcultures within the United States (Melvin, 1987). If a researcher compares these two

subcultures, the comparison can also be called “cross-cultural.” After reading relevant literature, although this paper is a typical cross-national study which compares the Chinese students in two nations, the author still insists on using the term “cross-cultural” to name this study, because this study aims to make a comparison from the perspective of cultural distance. “Culture” is the core of this study.

1.3. The concept of acculturation, adjustment, and adaptation

When studying the process of a sojourner from home culture to host culture, scholars tend to use different terms. Those words include adaptation, acculturation, adjustment, transculturation, etc. During the process of relevant literature reading, the author found that adaptation, acculturation, and adjustment are much more frequently used by scholars.

1.3.1. Adaptation

Originally, adaptation is a term used in biology, which means the change of a species or individual in habits or structure, due to the change of environment, to cope with the environmental stresses. “Living systems act instinctively to meet the challenge or threat and to restore balance and harmony” (Ruben, 1983, p. 137). “Adaptation manifests the natural human instinct to struggle for an internal equilibrium in the face of adversarial environmental conditions” (Kim, 2005, p. 378). All species on the earth have to adapt to the external environment. Cultural adaptation can be seen as the extension of biological adaptation.

1.3.2. Acculturation

According to Berry, acculturation refers to both cultural and psychological changes which happened because of interaction between two or more cultural groups and individuals. From the perspective of group, it means changes in social structures, institutions, and cultural practices. From the perspective of individuals, it denotes changes in a person’s behavior (Berry, 2005, pp. 698-699). Kim(2001) gave his explanation to the term “acculturation” as the process when individuals gain knowledge of host culture to adapt into it. According to these definitions, the author summarizes that the term “acculturation” means sojourners’ change in the host culture and the change of host culture to sojourners as respond. The key word in the study of “acculturation” is “change.”

1.3.3. Adjustment

The term “Adjustment” is used in the famous U-Curve Model of Lysgaard (1955), he used “adjustment” in the third stage of intercultural adaptation (The other three stages are the honeymoon, crisis, and biculturalism). It denotes the period when Sojourners begin to accept and try to cope with the host culture. Therefore, according to Lysgaard, adjustment means how a person should act to cope with the host culture. The focus of the term “adjustment” is the reaction to challenges such as culture shock.

1.4. Theoretical frameworks

While studying cross-cultural adaptation, researchers designed different models to explain the mechanism, for instance, the frameworks of Colleen Ward, John Berry, and Young Yun Kim. In this section, the author will briefly introduce the frameworks of cross-cultural adaptation.

1.4.1. Classification of cross-cultural adaptation

Different researchers classified cross-cultural adaptation differently. Most scholars agreed with the classification of Ward. Ward and his colleagues claim that cross-cultural adaptation has two dimensions, which is psychological adaptation and socio-cultural adaptation (Ward, 1996). Psychological adaptation refers to mental health and satisfaction. During the process of cross-cultural adaptation, if we seldom have the negative emotions, such as anxious, loneliness, disappointment, we will adapt psychologically. Socio-cultural adaptation means the ability to adapt to the host society, the ability to communicate with locals. It has been proved by much empirical research that psychological and socio-cultural adaptations are related. Psychological adaptation is influenced by personality, life changes, social support, coping styles and pre-departure expectancy. By contrast, socio-cultural adaptation is influenced by the length of residence in the host culture, culture distance, interaction with locals, culture knowledge, language ability and acculturation strategies (Ward & Kennedy, 1993).

By the classification of Ward, Black developed cross-cultural adaptation into three dimensions: general, work and interact adaptation (Black, 1991). General adaptation contains the adjustment of all aspects which were related to living, such as food, housing, living expenditure, health care. Work adaptation is related to the acculturation in working environment, it contains the change of working role, operating responsibility, and working condition. Interact adaptation means the proficiency and comfort when communicating with people in the host culture, because of cultural differences, interact adaptation is regarded as the most difficult for Sojourners.

1.4.2. Research perspectives of cross-cultural adaptation

Cross-cultural adaptation can be studied from the perspectives of collective and individuals. The original studies of cross-cultural adaptation studied culture changes from the perspective of the collective, and then discriminate the differences among various cultures. Differently, the studies of cross-cultural adaptation from the perspective of individuals focus on Sojourners, focus on their social integration, psychological adaptation, the changes of values and behaviors in a new cultural environment (Yang, 2005). The objects of study contain not only immigrants and refugees, but also students studying abroad, skilled workers, business people, missionaries, military people, diplomatic agents, and tourists.

1.4.3. Dimensions of cross-cultural adaptation

When studying cross-cultural adaptation, some researchers prefer using the term “cultural shock” instead of cross-cultural adaptation. Oberg in 1960 divided cultural shock into six dimensions: feelings of stress, loss, being rejected or rejecting, confusion, anxiety and importance. Moreover, cultural shock can also be studied from six dimensions, include language shock, role shock, transition shock, culture fatigue, education shock, adjustment stress and culture distance. Besides, Furnham and Bochner summarized the study of cross-cultural adaptation into eight dimensions: loss, fatalism, selective migration, appropriate expectations, negative life events, social support, a clash of values and social skills deficit.

The current research demonstrates that cross-cultural adaptation is a process of different stages and dimensions. For instance, Mansell claims that Sojourners may experience four developing dimensions in cross-cultural adaptation, which are alienation, marginality, acculturation, and duality. In 1994, Taylor’s transformative learning model divided the process of cross-cultural adaptation into three dimensions: precondition, process, and result of transformation.

1.4.4. Models of cross-cultural adaptation

Cross-cultural adaptation is a complicated process, various scholars studied it and created different models and theories, among those models four models are widely accepted, which are “U- Curve model,” “The stress-adaptation-growth dynamic of Kim,” “model of Davis” and “model of Berry.”

(a) U-Curve model

Since the anthropologist Oberg first introduced the concept of “culture shock” in 1960, this concept has been widely used in the studies of cross-cultural adaptation. Oberg claims that the people who are experiencing cross-cultural adaptation face four stages in the process: honeymoon, crisis, recovery and adjustment (Oberg, 1960). The opinions of Oberg can be demonstrated by an “U- Curve.”

1.Honeymoon: the excitement and happiness caused by the beginning of a journey. The freshness and excitement to get into a new environment exceed the anxiety. Sojourners are surprised by any differences. This stage may last one to two months.

2.Crisis: After the disappearing of the excitement, Sojourners face the challenges to survive in a strange and new environment, sojourners may face culture shock. Different negative emotions may occur the individuals. However, some researchers claim that culture shock may not only bring negative emotions. Adeler points out that strong culture shock is an active signal, it shows that the sojourners begin to interact with the host culture, but not only interact with their natives. Culture shock provides sojourners an opportunity to cognize themselves, offers them a chance to be a person of multi-culture. This stage may last three to four months.

3.Recovery: In this stage, the individuals have a new cognition to their surrounding, they start to admit the differences in two cultures. Meanwhile, people begin to change their expectancy to suit the new environment.

4.Adjustment: In this stage, the individuals begin to adjust to the host culture, start developing themselves, to remold their thinking ways and behaviors in the new environment, they act more like an “insider.”

The U Curve of Cultural Adaptation

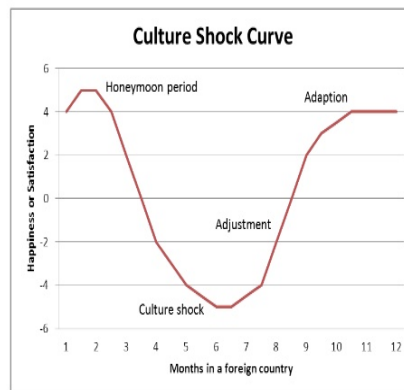


Figure 1. U curve

The research result of Drew Nesdale is similar to the “U- Curve.” Coincidentally, Drew Nesdale also divides cross-cultural adaptation into four stages: euphoria stage, cultural shock stage, anomie stage, and assimilation or adaptation stage (Drew, 2000).

In fact, not everyone may have the feeling of excitement when entering a new environment, some people have not experienced all stages, and some people may experience all stages repeatedly. Moreover, although most people are keeping adapting into the new environment, they remain many values, traditions and communication styles of their origin culture. Although many elements of culture change frequently, the structure and the core of a culture refuse fundamental changes. To find the stability and consistency of life, Sojourners should find a balance between their home culture and host culture (Chen, 1998, pp 294).

(b) The stress-adaptation-growth dynamic of Kim

Korean psychologist Yong Yun Kim studied cross-cultural adaptation and got his adaptation theory. This theory analyzes the behaviors of individuals in the different culture from the dynamic perspective; the method emphasizes the importance of interaction. She supposes that during the cross-cultural interaction, there is a model of stress-adaptation-growth (Kim, 1997). This process looks like a spiral spring, two steps forward and one step backward, go further under pressure. The speed to adapt to the

host culture is determined by communicative ability, social support, age and personality of Sojourners and so on.

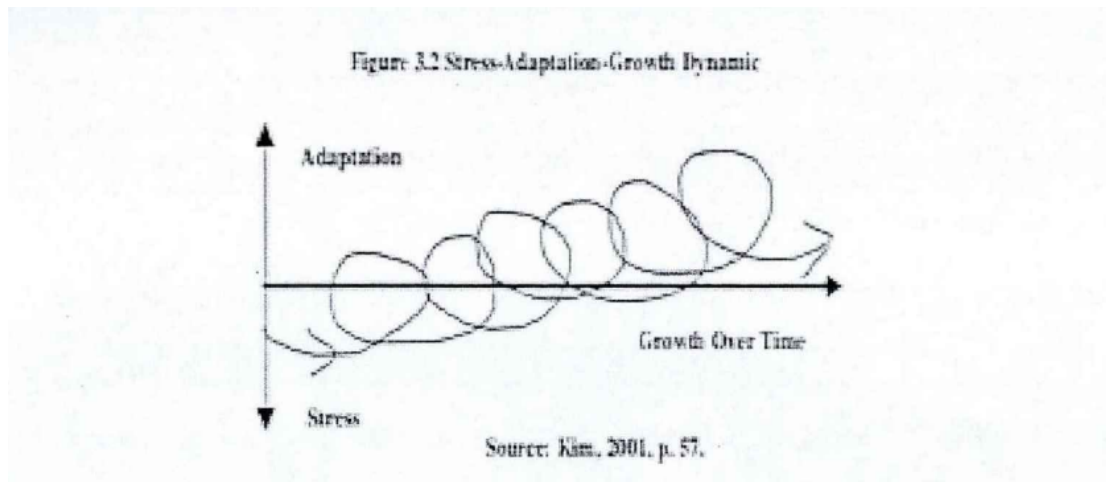


Figure 2. Stress-Adaptation-Growth Dynamic

In this model, pressure is considered as a normal emotion, but not a signal of failure. Kim claims that cross-cultural adaptation inevitable causes deculturation in some degrees or we can say the loss of some behaviors and values.

(c) Model of Davis

Linell Davis splits cross-cultural adaptation into five stages: excitement, confusion, frustration, effectiveness and appreciation. Similar to the “U-Curve model,” in this model, the first impression or emotion of people when entering a new environment is excitement and happiness, and then sojourners begin to be confused about the differences and changes. Without any solutions and explanations, the feeling of confusion decreases sojourners’ working efficiency and communication ability. They start to feel frustrated. However, after a period, sojourners begin to recognize the new environment objectively and manage their new life rationally, and they step into the stage of effectiveness. In the last stage, sojourners begin to enjoy the differences in the host culture and hope to live in the new environment for a long period.

(d) Model of Berry

Cultural maintenance and contact participation are two significant issues of cross-

cultural adaptation. Based on these two dimensions, Berry carried out different strategies of adaptation. On the one hand, the preference to maintain your native culture in host culture; On the other hand, the inclination to integrate into the host culture. As Berry claims: when a person does not want to keep contacting with their home culture and positively seek interaction with host culture, they employ the strategy of assimilation. On the contrary, if a person maintain their home culture and meanwhile positively interact with host culture, the strategy of integration is used. When a person avoids to interact with host culture and prefers maintaining the home culture, the strategy is separation. And when a person shows no interests in both home culture and host culture, the strategy is marginalization (Berry, 2005,pp 698-706).

Moreover, Berry also claims that although there are four assimilation strategies to choose, people themselves do not have free choices. Their choices of different strategies are determined by the dominant group in the host culture. The strategies are influenced by the attitudes of dominant groups and the settlement policies in the host culture(Berry, 2005). In this case, Berry also clarifies four strategies for host culture: When host culture imposed immigrants to use the strategy of assimilation, the strategy for host culture is termed “Melting pot”; Separation corresponds with the strategy of “segregation”; When marginalization is forced by the host culture, it is called “exclusion”; Finally, integration is corresponded with “multiculturalism”.

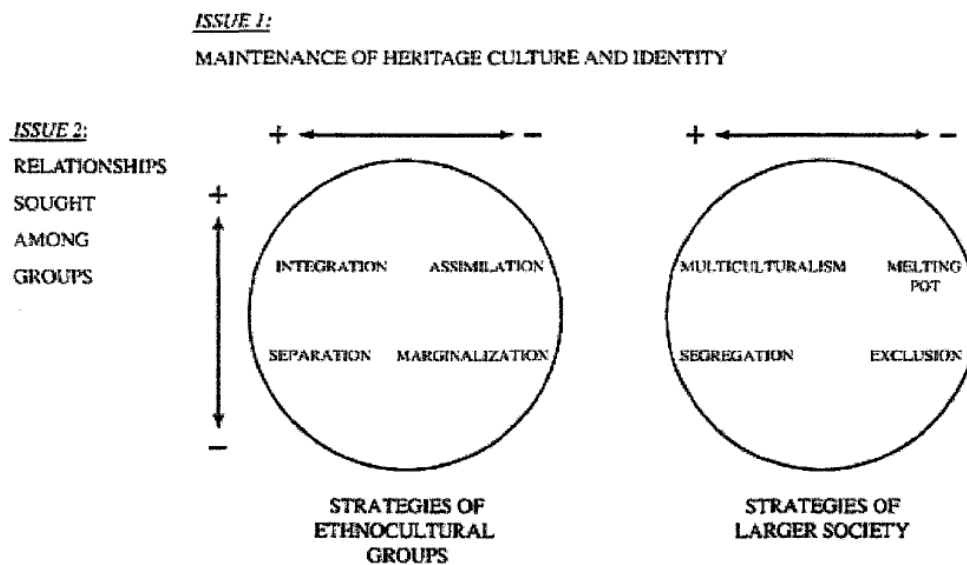


Figure 3. Model of Berry

Based on the research on the immigrants in Canada, Berry claims that integration is the best strategy, which means to maintain home culture but meanwhile to study the

strengths of the host culture.

1.4.5. Factors which may influence adaptation

Cross-cultural adaptation is a complicated process. It may be influenced by various factors. Researchers with different academic backgrounds study adaptation from different perspectives. However, till today there is still no clear classification of the factors. Generally, the factors can be classified into external factors and internal factors. External factors contain values, culture distance, social support, circumstance, etc. Discrimination and prejudice, ethnocentrism, appraisal and coping styles and demographic factors can be generalized as internal factors.

1. Main external factors of adaptation

(a) The factor of values

Stephens Bochner carried out his hypothesis of Core Value. He claims that the differences of values are the main reason to cause culture distance, the differences between values are also the core reason to cause culture conflict and culture shock. The interaction between people with total opposite values may turn into hostility and conflict (Babiker, 1980, pp 109-116). Some researchers claim that the conflict of values is the main reason to cause culture shock of Sojourners.

(b) Culture distance

Cultural distance refers to the feeling of unfamiliar because of long geographical and spatial distance and lack of cultural commons. Research indicated that the less the culture distance is, the easier to understand the other culture; The bigger the culture distance is, the harder to create and maintain cross-cultural interaction (Bochner, 1972, pp 65-81). If we compare Chinese culture with Russian culture and Korean culture, the culture distance between Chinese and Russian culture is bigger than the culture distance between Chinese and Korean culture. So for the Chinese students studying in Russian, they experience more culture shock. Culture distance can be measured by the model of Hofstede. According to Hofstede, the differences of cultures can be identified by six dimensions: Power Distance (PDI), Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV), Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS), Uncertainty avoidance (UAI), Long-term versus Short-term orientation (LTO) and Indulgence versus Restraint (IVR).

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Individualistic / Collectivistic	How personal needs and goals are prioritized vs. the needs and goals of the group/clan/organization.
Masculine / Feminine	Masculine societies have different rules for men and women, less so in feminine cultures.
Uncertainty Avoidance	How comfortable are people with changing the way they work or live (low UA) or prefer the known systems (high UA).
Power Distance	The degree people are comfortable with influencing upwards. Accept of inequality in distribution on power in society.
Time Perspective	Long-term perspective, planning for future, perseverance values vs. short time past and present oriented.
Indulgence / Restraint	Allowing gratification of basic drives related to enjoying life and having fun vs. regulating it through strict social norms.

The first dimension (PDI) refers to the acceptance of hierarchy in the society. In the second dimension (IDV), individualism means that the people care about themselves and their relatives. On the contrary, collectivism means that the people have the willing to look after the group and communities. In the third dimension (MAS), Masculinity refers to the society which value money, success and competition. On the contrary, femininity means the society of cooperation. The fourth dimension (UAI) denotes the acceptance of uncertainty in a culture (Hofstede, 1984). The fifth dimension (LTO) denotes the different attitude of people in cultures about life, whether they are living in the current or planning for the future (Hofstede, 2013).

(c) Social support network

Social support network means an individual's stable social relationship; it is one major factor which may influence the adaptation of a Sojourner. The social support network of a person includes all sorts of resources which one Sojourner may get, such as money, friendship, help, and love. With the help of the social support network, Sojourners may get mental stability, decrease the feeling of pressure, anxious, helpless and loneliness. However, social support network is a "double-edged sword," it may also stunt Sojourners studying host culture and interact with people in host culture.

(d) Circumstance change

There is a series of shifts in the process of cross-cultural adaptation, such as the change of eating habits, the pace of life, and climate. Those changes may bring big pressure to Sojourners. In the research of Fumham and Bochner in 1986, they found

that there is a correlation of 0.35 between circumstance change and mental health, which means the circumstance change of cross-cultural adaptation may influence psychological adaptation of a Sojourner (Bochner, Fumhan, 1986, pp 109-112).

2.Primary internal factors of adaptation

(a) Ethnocentrism

Anthropologists believe that ethnocentrism exists in every culture. Sumner is the first researcher to introduce this concept into the study of culture. Under the influence of ethnocentrism, people use the values of their culture to judge the behaviors of people who belong to other culture, they frequently subconsciously disparage other culture. In the cross-cultural adaptation, ethnocentrism may stunt the interactions and understandings between home and host culture.

(b) Discrimination and prejudice

Discrimination may influence psychological and social adaptation of a sojourner. A series of research has found that there is a strong negative correlation between discrimination and mental satisfaction of Sojourners.

If we see adaptation from the perspective of culture distance, Chinese should be quite easy to adapt to Japanese culture, However, as indicated in research, the adaptation degree of Chinese is much lower than the Westerners in Japan, one primary explanation is that Chinese are discriminated in Japan because of some historical reasons. In this case, we can say discrimination and prejudice are primary factors of cross-cultural adaptation (Chen, 2003).

(c) Appraisal and coping style

Different appraisal and coping styles may also influence the degree of cross-cultural adaptation. The researchers pay much attention to the expectancy of Sojourners. The expectancy of Sojourners refers to the imagination of the host culture before departure. Practically, if the expectancy can match the reality, Sojourners may well adapt to the host culture. Much research indicates that when the expectancy of a Sojourner is lower, his or her real life satisfaction will be higher.

(d) Coping resources: knowledge and skills

Knowledge and skills of the new environment may improve psychological adaptation. On one hand, knowledge and skills may gain from previous abroad experiences, many research has discovered that the students who has the experiences of being abroad may adapt better. On another hand, another way to gain knowledge and

skills is to train and study. For instance, the knowledge of language can be gained through training.

(e) Personality

Personality is another internal factor which may influence cross cultural adaptation. Some research found that there is a positive correlation between “Outgoing personality” and cross cultural adaptation, some insisted on a negative correlation and the others claimed that there is no correlation. Thus, the influence of personality in cross cultural adaptation is controversial. Ward and Chang suggested the theory of “cultural fitting” in 1997. They claimed that in most situations it is not personality which may determine cross cultural adaptation. On the contrary, the question is that whether the personality of a sojourner is correspond to the host culture (Ward, Chang, 1997).

Besides, foreign language proficiency, previous abroad experience, reasons and motivation for transition, knowledge of the host culture and also the demographic factors (gender, age, income, education level) may also influence cross-cultural adaptation.

1.4.6. Research on cultural distance and cross-cultural adaptation

Previous research has proved that cultural distance had a great impact on the cross-cultural adaptation. Redmond and Bunyi (1993) examined the correlation between cultural distance and the social integration among International students in America. They claimed that the correlation is positive, which means that the larger the cultural distance is, the more difficult the social integration is. Furukawa (1997) conducted empirical research in Japan and claimed that cultural distance was associated with psychological distress. In addition, Russian scholars, Irina Galchenkoa, Fons J. R. Van de Vijver (2007) conducted research in exchange students from Russia and found that the larger cultural distance caused less psychological and socio-cultural adaptation; Moreover, they found out that larger cultural distance is connected with more stress and homesickness, fewer interactions with locals.

1.5. Overview of the Literature Review

The author reviewed literature by searching the databases of CNKI and Academic Search Premier (EBSCO), the author also used the search engines such as Google Scholar and Baidu.

Cross-cultural adaptation refers to an individual’s physical and psychological responses to cross-cultural environment. When it comes to the classification of cross-

cultural adaptation, Ward and his colleagues classified cross-cultural adaptation into two dimensions: psychological and socio-cultural adaptation. Later, Black developed the classification of Ward into three dimensions: general, work and interact adaptation. Moreover, the author found different models of cross-cultural adaptation provided by various scholars, for instance, the “Curve model,” “The stress-adaptation-growth dynamic of Kim,” “model of Davis,” and “model of Berry.” Besides, the author also summarized the factors which may influence cross-cultural adaptation conducted by previous researchers, the factors can generally be divided into external (values, cultural distance, social support, circumstance change) and internal factors (ethnocentrism, discrimination, appraisal and coping style, foreign language proficiency, previous abroad experience, knowledge of host culture and demographic factors). Moreover, as this thesis aimed to explore the influence of culture distance on the cross-cultural adaptation, the author also introduced a lot of previous empirical studies, which claim that cultural distance plays significant role in Sojourners’ cross-cultural adaptation (e.g., Redmond and Bonyi, 1993; Furukawa, 1997). However, there is not enough research which may prove the positive correlation between cultural distance and cross-cultural adaptation. Some scholars claim that there is a negative correlation between these two concepts. Therefore the relationship between these two concepts is still controversial.

Thus, this thesis tried to explore the relationship between cultural distance and cross-cultural adaptation by a comparative study between the Chinese international students in Russia and South Korea. In this thesis, the author decided to employ Albert Bandura’s (1977) “Social learning” theory as the theoretical framework. In his book, Bandura claims that a newcomer in a new environment may behave by observing other people’s behavior or imitating role models behavior. The theory suggests that when a foreigner comes to a new environment, he tends to see the similarities between his home culture and the host culture. The new comers are willing to act in the host culture using their past experiences which has been proved successful. However, in a new environment, past experiences may be useless. In turn, the inappropriate behaviors may cause bad consequences. If the culture distance between host and home cultures is large, the newcomers have more probabilities to behave wrongly in the receiving society (Torbiorn, 1982).

Chapter Two: Methodology

The research aims to test the hypothesis which has been suggested earlier: There is a positive correlation between culture distance and cross-cultural adaptation. The primary materials for research were gathered through the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies such as in-depth interviews and a survey. To gather enough participants, the author employed the snowball method to recruit participants.

2.1. Research questions and hypotheses

Questions:

1. Is there any significant difference in cross-cultural adaptation between Chinese international students in Russia and South Korea?
2. What is the culture distance between China and Korea and between China and Russia?
3. To what extent can culture distance influence cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese international students in South Korea and Russia?

Hypothesis:

1. Chinese students in South Korea better adapt into host culture than those in Russia.
2. The culture distance between China and Korea is smaller than the culture distance between China and Russia.
3. Chinese international students with larger culture distance tend to have a low level of cross-cultural adaptation. Therefore, there is a positive correlation between culture distance and cross-cultural adaptation.

2.2. Interview

2.2.1. Selection of interviewees

To study the relationship between culture distance and cross-cultural adaptation, a qualitative research approach is used by the author. Fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Chinese students in Saint- Petersburg State University and Seoul National University- seven in each university. The seven interviewees in Saint- Petersburg are friends of the author. They are doing their master degree. The interviewees in Seoul were found with the help of the author's friend living in Seoul. All interviewees have studied abroad more than two years.

2.2.2. Interview plan

All the interviews were conducted in a designed framework. During the interviews, the author firstly expressed his gratitude to the interviewees and got their permissions to record the interviews. Besides, the author promised to protect the privacy of the interviewees. So the interviews are anonymous. Then the author briefly introduced the purpose of the research. After all of these preparations, the author began to ask the prepared questions with the help of an interview guide. 11 prepared questions were asked during the interviews (Appendix 2).

The informants were asked to talk about their experience of studying abroad, about their adaptation processes. All of the informants shared with us their aim to study abroad, their expectations about the new environment before departure, and the difficulties they met in the adaptation process. The questions would be sound like: Why do you choose to study in Russia/ Korea? What are the biggest differences between Chinese culture and Russian/ Korean culture for you? Have you already adapted to the differences? Do you have any Russian/ Korean friends? How often do you interact with Russian/ Korean? The interview will end with some questions relevant to the previous literature, like “U-curve model.”

2.3. Survey

2.3.1. Participants of survey

In the second part of the research, the author also used the quantitative approach to study the relationship between culture distance and cross-cultural adaptation. To fulfill the demands of our research, there are several standards for the participants: Firstly, the participants should be Chinese and should be born and grew up in mainland of China. Secondly, the participants should be studying or have the experiences of studying in Saint Petersburg State University or Seoul State University. Thirdly, the participants should have lived in Russia or South Korea for more than two years.

The author used the snowball method to recruit enough participants. As the author has no so many familiars both in Russia and South Korea, the author sought help from all his friends who are now living or used to study in Russia and South Korea. The friends who fulfilled the demands are enrolled into the survey. Besides, the author asked his friends to recruit qualified participants. In the end, 100 participants were recruited in total to do a survey, 50 in Russia and 50 in South Korea. All participants completed the same questionnaire. After eliminating invalid questionnaires, the final

sample contained 91 in total, 48 in Saint- Petersburg State University and 43 in Seoul National University.

2.3.2. Instrument

The design of the questionnaire begins with demographic information. The informants were asked to answer questions about their gender, age, years abroad and educational status. The questionnaire includes two sections: In the first section, the author adopted Black and Stephen's (1989) cultural Novelty scale to calculate cultural distance. The scale consists of eight items such as climate, living condition, customs. The informants were asked to answer questions about the similarity of these eight conditions. The score serves as a measurement of the culture distance. The second section was designed to measure the informants' degree of adaptation. As we mentioned in the theoretical framework, it consists of two dimensions, socio-cultural adaptation, and psychological adaptation.

(a) Socio-cultural adaptation

To measure the informants' degree of socio-cultural adaptation, the author adopted Socio-cultural Adjustment Scale (SCAS). The scale was introduced by Ward and Kennedy in their sojourner adjustment framework (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The original scale is an instrument consists of 41 items, in the research the author selects and adopts 18 items. SCAS is a scale of five points, from not difficult to extremely difficult. The subjects rate the difficulties they experienced in the host culture. The higher score represents higher difficulty to adapt to the host culture.

(b) Psychological adaptation

To measure the degree of the informants' psychological adaptation, the author selected to adopt the short version of General Health Questionnaire. It consists of 12 items, so it is called "GHQ-12" (David Goldberg and Paul Williams, 1970). Although the items are limited in this version, it is reliable and efficient for research. It is a four-point scale, half of the items are reverse coded. The lower score reflects better psychological adaptation.

2.3.3. Validity and Reliability

The questionnaires used in the research are borrowed from previous studies. As the author slightly changed the questionnaires, it is necessary to check validity and reliability of all three questionnaires. Validity test means that a test should be corresponded to what it aims to measure. The check of reliability refers to the

consistency of result. After collecting the questionnaires, it is important to do the check of validity and reliability beforehand. Otherwise, the findings or conclusions we draw from the research are invalid.

Table 2.3.3a Validity check of the scale of cultural distance

Check of KMO and Bartlett		
<u>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin</u>	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.809
<u>Bartlett's</u>	Test of Approx. Chi- Square	300.120
<u>Sphericity</u>	df	28
	Sig.	.000

Table 2.3.3b Validity check of the scale of socio-cultural adaptation

Check of KMO and Bartlett		
<u>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin</u>	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.793
<u>Bartlett's</u>	Test of Approx. Chi- Square	615.865
<u>Sphericity</u>	df	153
	Sig.	.000

Table 2.3.3c Validity check of the scale of psychological adaptation

Check of KMO and Bartlett		
<u>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin</u>	Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.715
<u>Bartlett's</u>	Test of Approx. Chi-Square	213.974
<u>Sphericity</u>	df	66
	Sig.	.000

The author used SPSS to analyze the data of questionnaires. To check validity, the author used “Factor Analysis-Principal Component Analysis.” As demonstrated in the tables above (Table 2.3.3a, 2.3.3b and 2.3.3c), the KMO value of cultural distance, socio-cultural adaptation, and psychological adaptation are 0.809, 0.793 and 0.715 respectively. For reference, Kaiser put the following values on the results of KMO test: when the value is 0.70 to 0.79, the result is middling; The result is meritorious with the value of 0.80 to 0.89 (Kaiser, 1974, pp. 31-36). Therefore the items of all three questionnaires well measured what they are supposed to measure. The designs of the questionnaires are acceptable.

Table 2.3.3d Reliability check of the scale of cultural distance

Reliability of CD	
<u>Cronbach's Alpha</u>	N of items
.873	8

Table 2.3.3e Reliability check of the scale of socio-cultural adaptation

Reliability of SA	
<u>Cronbach's Alpha</u>	N of items
.896	18

Table 2.3.3f Reliability check of the scale of psychological adaptation

Reliability of PA	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
.755	12

As presented in the tables of 2.3.3d, 2.3.3e, and 2.3.3f, the Cronbach's Alpha for the scale of culture distance is 0.873; The Cronbach's Alpha for the scale of socio-cultural adaptation is 0.896; The Cronbach's Alpha for the scale of psychological adaptation is 0.755. All three values are higher than 0.70. Therefore, the results of all three questionnaires are reliable.

With the check of validity and reliability, the author proved the good design of questionnaires and the reliability of the results. Meanwhile, it also guaranteed the validity of the author's conclusions of the research.

2.3.4. Questionnaires analysis

All questionnaires were distributed to the informants in the electronic version. After filling the questionnaires, the questionnaires were also reclaimed in the electronic version. After removing the invalid questionnaires, the valid ones were calculated into scores. The results which we got from the questionnaires were analyzed with the help of SPSS 18.0. We calculated the correlation between the independent variable (culture distance) and the dependent variables (socio-cultural adaptation and psychological adaptation).

Chapter Three: Results of the research

In this chapter, the author presented the results of the survey and interviews. All the data which the author collected from questionnaires were analyzed by SPSS 18. Meanwhile, the interview transcripts were analyzed.

3.1. Demographic information

In total, the number of subjects is 91. 43 informants are Chinese students in Seoul State University, while 48 are Chinese students in Saint Petersburg State University. In Table 3.1, the demographic information shows the specific information of the informants.

Table 3.1. Demographic information of the informants

Male	Korea	18
	Russia	25
Female	Korea	25
	Russia	23
Average age	Korea	25.33
	Russia	23.42
Years abroad(average)	Korea	3.06
	Russia	3.71
BA	Korea	17
	Russia	22
MA	Korea	24
	Russia	25
PHD	Korea	2
	Russia	1

3.2. Results of Cultural distance survey

To measure the Chinese students' cultural distance level in both Russia and Korea, the author employed Black and Stephen's (1989) cultural Novelty scale. The scale consists of eight items. The eight items cover all aspects of our life. According to their realities, the informants were asked to choose from point 1 to 5 for each item. The higher score you got, the larger cultural distance you have with the host culture. After reclaiming the questionnaires, the author analyzed the data with SPSS. In Table 3.2.a, the means, standard deviation and standard error for each item and total score were presented. Rely on these values, we may discover if the Chinese students in Russia enjoy a larger cultural distance than the Chinese students in South Korea or not. Meanwhile, in Table 3.2.a, the author also calculated the significance to test whether the differences in cultural distance between Russia and Korea is significant.

Table 3.2.a. Means, standard deviation, standard Error and significance for cultural distance

	Country you studied in:	N of items	Mean	SD	S.E. Mean
Every day customs	Korea	43	2.55	1.252	.218
	Russia	48	3.97	.545	.088
General living conditions	Korea	43	2.79	1.193	.208
	Russia	48	3.68	.662	.107
Health care facilities	Korea	43	2.85	1.228	.214
	Russia	48	3.39	.595	.096
Transportation systems	Korea	43	2.70	1.262	.220
	Russia	48	2.87	.906	.147
General living costs	Korea	43	3.21	.960	.167
	Russia	48	3.68	.662	.107
Quality and	Korea	43	2.70	1.334	.232

Table 3.2.a. Means, standard deviation, standard Error and significance for cultural distance

	Country you studied in:	N of items	Mean	SD	S.E. Mean
Everyday customs	Korea	43	2.55	1.252	.218
	Russia	48	3.97	.545	.088
General living conditions types of food	Korea	43	2.79	1.193	.208
	Russia	48	4.47	.725	.118
Climate	Korea	43	2.42	1.200	.209
	Russia	48	4.68	.471	.076
General housing conditions	Korea	43	2.79	1.269	.221
	Russia	48	3.79	.664	.108
Total score of cultural distance	Korea	43	22.00	7.185	1.251
	Russia	48	30.55	2.101	.341

Table 3.2.b. Independent samples test of cultural distance

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Everyday customs	Equal variances assumed	31.131	.000	-6.376	69	.000	-1.428	.224	-1.875	-.981
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.072	42.386	.000	-1.428	.235	-1.903	-.954
General living conditions	Equal variances assumed	10.034	.002	-3.983	69	.000	-.896	.225	-1.345	-.447
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.835	48.414	.000	-.896	.234	-1.366	-.426

Table 3.2.b. Independent samples test of cultural distance

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Everyday customs	Equal variances assumed	31.131	.000	-6.376	69	.000	-1.428	.224	-1.875	-.981
Health care facilities	Equal variances assumed	16.712	.000	-2.435	69	.017	-.546	.224	-.994	-.099
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.330	44.754	.024	-.546	.234	-1.019	-.074
Transportation systems	Equal variances assumed	6.352	.014	-.664	69	.509	-.171	.258	-.687	.344

Table 3.2.b. Independent samples test of cultural distance

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Everyday customs	Equal variances assumed	31.131	.000	-6.376	69	.000	-1.428	.224	-1.875	-.981
	Equal variances not assumed			-.649	57.134	.519	-.171	.264	-.701	.358
General living costs	Equal variances assumed	1.573	.214	-2.437	69	.017	-.472	.194	-.859	-.086
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.376	55.655	.021	-.472	.199	-.870	-.074

Table 3.2.b. Independent samples test of cultural distance

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Everyday customs	Equality of variances assumed	31.131	.000	-6.376	69	.000	-1.428	.224	-1.875	-.981
Quality and types of food	Equality of variances assumed	12.391	.001	-7.094	69	.000	-1.777	.250	-2.276	-1.277
	Equality of variances not assumed			-6.823	47.814	.000	-1.777	.260	-2.300	-1.253
Climate	Equality of variances assumed	27.517	.000	-10.709	69	.000	-2.260	.211	-2.681	-1.839

Table 3.2.b. Independent samples test of cultural distance

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Everyday customs	Equal variances assumed	31.131	.000	-6.376	69	.000	-1.428	.224	-1.875	-.981
	Equal variances not assumed			-10.162	40.514	.000	-2.260	.222	-2.709	-1.811
General housing conditions	Equal variances assumed	16.043	.000	-4.245	69	.000	-1.002	.236	-1.472	-.531
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.076	46.747	.000	-1.002	.246	-1.496	-.507

Table 3.2.b. Independent samples test of cultural distance

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		1-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Everyday customs	Equality of variances assumed	31.131	.000	-6.376	69	.000	-1.428	.224	-1.875	-.981
Total score of cultural distance	Equality of variances assumed	34.069	.000	-7.007	69	.000	-8.553	1.221	-10.987	-6.118
	Equality of variances not assumed			-6.597	36.755	.000	-8.553	1.296	-11.180	-5.925

As showed in Table 3.2.a, the mean score for the Chinese students in South Korea is 22.00, it is lower than the mean score of the Chinese students in Russia (30.55), so the author concluded that Chinese students in Russia enjoy larger culture distance than the Chinese students in South Korea. In Table 3.2.b, the author calculated independent sample test for cultural distance with the help of SPSS. The author's aim to make this table is to show whether the differences of cultural distance between these two groups

are significant. Based on this table, except the item of “General living costs,” the Sig. Values of the rest items are smaller than 0.05. In this case, the assumption of equal variances has been violated. Thus, the data in “Equal variances not assumed” should be used for all items except the item of “General living conditions.” On the contrary, for the item of “General living conditions,” the data in “Equal variances assumed” should be used. To clarify if there is a significant difference between the two groups of students, the values in the column of “Sig (2-tailed)” should be used. If the value in this column is smaller than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), there is a significant difference between the two groups of students. In the table, the Sig (2-tailed) value in total is 0.00 (< 0.05), which means there is a highly significant difference about their degrees of culture distance between the Chinese students in South Korea and Russia. To be more specific, the Chinese students in South Korea and Russia enjoy significant differences in all aspects of customs, living condition and costs, health care, food, climate, housing condition except public transportation. The Sig (2-tailed) value for transportation is 0.519 (> 0.05). So the difference between the two groups for the aspect of public transportation is not significant.

Such significant differences among the students in those two nations can also be seen in the interview. The author found that the Chinese students in South Korea believed that Korean culture is quite similar to Chinese culture, during the interviews, all of them had used the term “similar” to compare Korean and Chinese cultures. When the author asked the interviewees to conclude the similarities and differences between Korean and Chinese cultures, one interview conducted with a female student in South Korea as following:

I did not see so many differences between their culture and ours. As we all know, Korean culture drew on the experiences of our culture during Yuan Dynasty. So the cultures are quite similar. The only difference for me is that they value seniority and hierarchy more than us. In Korea, there are so many customs and rules that everybody should follow, including the young. For example, when you are drinking with an elder. You should turn over your body because drinking in front of an elder is impolite. As I know, Chinese young do not value the traditional custom any more. So I suppose Korean people do better in this aspect.

One interview conducted with a male student in South Korea for three years answered the question like this:

Well, I can list a lot of similarities between our culture and the Korean culture. For example, although the Korean language is not pictogram, the pronunciations of many words are similar to Chinese ones. So our Chinese students can quickly know well thousands of Korean vocabulary in the first months. Besides, the architecture type in Korean is also quite similar to ours, as well as the dietary structure. So I can easily adapt the life here. When I walked on the street, I even forget that I am living abroad. There are too many similarities, if I do not speak to one person, I even can hardly distinguish whether he is a Chinese or a Korean.

Another interviewee in South Korea answered the question like this:

I come from the north of China, Liao Ning Province. It is boarded with North Korea. So for me there is no difference to be in Korea. I can list a lot of similarities between Chinese and Korean culture. The same appearance made me not look like a foreigner in South Korea. The pace of life and the circumstance is quite similar to Chinese one. I do not need to adapt the Korean food, because it is what I eat everyday in my hometown, such as Kimchi, cold noodles and Bibimbap. Besides, both Chinese and Korean culture belong to Oriental culture, our values are quite similar, that is why I seldom face conflict in Korea. What is more, nowadays in China E-commerce is very developed, very! I can do everything at home, such as shopping, food delivery. We can enjoy such a convenience in South Korea, too. From my point of view, China and South Korea are the only two countries which has such a developed E-commerce circumstance.

Through these three fragments of interviews, the results of our qualitative research match the findings in the quantitative research, the Chinese students in South Korea see many similarities between Chinese culture and Korean culture. However, the same question got opposite answers when the interview was conducted with the Chinese students in Russia. A male student who has already stayed in Russia for seven years responded to the question in this way:

If you mean the difference between cultures, well, the Russians always comply with the rules. You very seldom see anyone cross the road when the traffic light is red, they don't talk loud in public, like restaurants. And they have faith, they believe in the Orthodox church. Um.....More differences... Like Russian food. No matter how many years I live in Russia, I will never adapt into Russian cuisine. It is too different from Chinese one, and it is drab. And the climate, there are only two seasons in Russia: Summer and Winter. The Summer time here is good, very cozy, not so hot. But I can not

accept the long winter here. It is frozen in Winter. And it lasts more than four months. Walk in the heavy snow, besides, in Saint Petersburg the wind is so strong, it is a huge torture. So I prefer staying in the room in Winter.

Another female student answered the same question like this:

It is hard to identify any similarity. Because Russian culture and our culture belong to different genres. Our culture is influenced by Confucianism, but Russian culture is affected by the Orthodox church. Besides, Russian language and our language belong to different language families. And because of the cold Winter in Russia, they have different food structure and daily life habits from us. So it is very tough to find some similarities. The only one which comes to my mind is that both of us used to belong to Socialism. Our previous generation may still have some similar memories about that period.

From these two different answers to the same question “Do you see any similarities or differences between host culture and your home culture?”, the author found that the results of qualitative research highly coincided with the finding of the quantitative research, which means that the Chinese students in South Korea enjoy smaller culture distance, compared with the Chinese students in Russia.

3.3. Results of cross-cultural adaptation survey

In this section, the author presented the results of cross-cultural adaptation survey. As demonstrated in the chapter of “Method,” cross-cultural adaptation is divided into two dimensions: socio-cultural adaptation and psychological adaptation. The author used both the data analysis and interview to test the adaptation level of Chinese students in both countries.

3.3.1. Results of socio-cultural adaptation survey

To calculate the socio-cultural adaptation level of students, the author employed Socio-cultural Adjustment Scale (SCAS) which was introduced by Ward and Kennedy in their sojourner adjustment framework (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). SCAS is a five-point scale consists of 18 items. The task for informants is to choose the most appropriate option for their reality. The higher score they got, the more difficulties they face in the host culture. Their scores were analyzed in SPSS, Table 3.3.1.a, and Table 3.3.1.b below were drew by the author to demonstrate the results of this survey.

Table 3.3.1.a Mean, standard deviation and S.E. Mean of socio-cultural adaptation

	Country you studies in	N of items	Mean	SD	S.E. mean
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Korea	43	1.94	.899	.157
	Russia	48	2.45	.978	.159
Whether it is difficult for me to use public transportation:	Korea	43	1.36	.549	.096
	Russia	48	1.24	.431	.070
Whether it is difficult for me to adapt to local food:	Korea	43	1.45	.905	.157
	Russia	48	2.08	.818	.133
Whether it is difficult for me to adapt to living condition:	Korea	43	1.48	.834	.145
	Russia	48	2.13	.906	.147
Whether it is difficult for me to deal with climate:	Korea	43	1.48	.906	.158
	Russia	48	3.61	1.386	.225
Whether it is difficult for me to understand locals' humor:	Korea	43	2.52	1.202	.209
	Russia	48	2.58	1.030	.167
Whether it is difficult for me to participate social events	Korea	43	2.30	1.015	.177
	Russia	48	2.74	1.083	.176
Whether it is difficult for me to learn local language	Korea	43	2.12	.960	.167
	Russia	48	2.74	1.057	.172

Table 3.3.1.a Mean, standard deviation and S.E. Mean of socio-cultural adaptation

	Country you studies in	N of items	Mean	SD	S.E. mean
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Korea	43	1.94	.899	.157
	Russia	48	2.45	.978	.159
Whether it is difficult for me to use public transportation:	Korea	43	1.36	.549	.096
Whether it is difficult for me to communicate with locals	Korea	43	1.94	.933	.162
	Russia	48	2.58	.919	.149
Whether it is difficult for me to adapt to traditional custom	Korea	43	2.03	.810	.141
	Russia	48	2.21	.905	.147
Whether it is difficult for me to adapt to the pace of life	Korea	43	1.67	.890	.155
	Russia	48	1.71	.835	.136
Whether it is difficult for me to go shopping	Korea	43	1.39	.747	.130
	Russia	48	1.29	.460	.075
Whether it is difficult for me to deal the conflicts with locals	Korea	43	2.21	1.083	.188
	Russia	48	2.97	1.026	.166
Whether it is difficult for me to handle study	Korea	43	1.97	.810	.141
	Russia	48	2.50	1.133	.184
Whether it is difficult for me to express my opinions in class	Korea	43	2.15	1.228	.214
	Russia	48	3.00	1.162	.189
Whether it is difficult for me to interact with teachers	Korea	43	1.79	.893	.155
	Russia	48	2.13	.704	.114

Table 3.3.1.a Mean, standard deviation and S.E. Mean of socio-cultural adaptation

	Country you studies in	N of items	Mean	SD	S.E. mean
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Korea	43	1.94	.899	.157
	Russia	48	2.45	.978	.159
Whether it is difficult for me to use public transportation:	Korea	43	1.36	.549	.096
Whether it is difficult for me to understand the locals' values	Korea	43	2.21	1.083	.188
	Russia	48	2.82	.926	.150
Whether it is difficult for me to complain dissatisfied service	Korea	43	2.39	1.029	.179
	Russia	48	4.05	.957	.155
Total	Korea	43	34.42	10.903	1.898
	Russia	48	44.82	8.825	1.432

Table 3.3.1.b. Independent samples test of socio-cultural adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		1-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Equal variances assumed	.328	.568	-2.265	69	.027	-.508	.224	-.955	-.061
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.279	68.759	.026	-.508	.223	-.953	-.063
Whether it is difficult for me to use public transportation:	Equal variances assumed	4.904	.030	1.090	69	.280	.127	.116	-.105	.359
	Equal variances not assumed			1.071	60.449	.288	.127	.118	-.110	.364
Whether it is difficult for me to adapt to local food:	Equal variances assumed	.095	.759	-3.054	69	.003	-.624	.204	-1.032	-.217

Table 3.3.1.b. Independent samples test of socio-cultural adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		1-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Equal variances assumed	.328	.568	-2.265	69	.027	-.508	.224	-0.955	-.061
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.032	65.170	.003	-.624	.206	-1.036	-.213
Whether it is difficult for me to adapt to living condition:	Equal variances assumed	1.057	.308	-3.113	69	.003	-.647	.208	-1.061	-.232
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.132	68.748	.003	-.647	.207	-1.059	-.235
Whether it is difficult for me to deal with climate:	Equal variances assumed	9.346	.003	-7.503	69	.000	-2.120	.283	-2.684	-1.557

Table 3.3.1.b. Independent samples test of socio-cultural adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Equal variances assumed	.328	.568	-2.265	69	.027	-.508	.224	-.955	-.061
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.722	64.340	.000	-2.120	.275	-2.669	-1.572
Whether it is difficult for me to understand locals' humor:	Equal variances assumed	.724	.398	-.241	69	.810	-.064	.265	-.592	.465
	Equal variances not assumed			-.238	63.495	.812	-.064	.268	-.599	.471
Whether it is difficult for me to participate social events	Equal variances assumed	.185	.669	-1.733	69	.088	-.434	.250	-.933	.065

Table 3.3.1.b. Independent samples test of socio-cultural adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Equal variances assumed	.328	.568	-2.265	69	.027	-.508	.224	-.955	-.061
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.741	68.575	.086	-.434	.249	-.931	.063
Whether it is difficult for me to learn local language	Equal variances assumed	1.432	.235	-2.553	69	.013	-.616	.241	-1.097	-.135
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.570	68.848	.012	-.616	.240	-1.093	-.138
Whether it is difficult for me to communicate with locals	Equal variances assumed	.404	.527	-2.903	69	.005	-.640	.220	-1.079	-.200
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.900	67.309	.005	-.640	.221	-1.080	-.199

Table 3.3.1.b. Independent samples test of socio-cultural adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Equal variances assumed	.328	.568	-2.265	69	.027	-.508	.224	-.955	-.061
Whether it is difficult for me to adapt to traditional custom	Equal variances assumed	1.198	.277	-.879	69	.383	-.180	.205	-.589	.229
	Equal variances not assumed			-.886	68.932	.379	-.180	.204	-.586	.226
Whether it is difficult for me to adapt to the pace of life	Equal variances assumed	.024	.878	-.214	69	.831	-.044	.205	-.453	.365
	Equal variances not assumed			-.213	66.193	.832	-.044	.206	-.455	.367
Whether it is difficult for me to go shopping	Equal variances assumed	3.778	.056	.719	69	.474	.104	.145	-.185	.394

Table 3.3.1.b. Independent samples test of socio-cultural adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		1-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Equal variances assumed	.328	.568	-2.265	69	.027	-.508	.224	-.955	-.061
	Equal variances not assumed			.697	51.648	.489	.104	.150	-.197	.405
Whether it is difficult for me to deal the conflicts with locals	Equal variances assumed	.216	.643	-3.040	69	.003	-.762	.251	-1.261	-.262
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.028	66.437	.004	-.762	.251	-1.264	-.260
Whether it is difficult for me to handle study	Equal variances assumed	5.453	.022	-2.237	69	.029	-.530	.237	-1.003	-.057

Table 3.3.1.b. Independent samples test of socio-cultural adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		1-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Equal variances assumed	.328	.568	-2.265	69	.027	-.508	.224	-.955	-.061
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.290	66.653	.025	-.530	.232	-.993	-.068
Whether it is difficult for me to express my opinions in class	Equal variances assumed	.704	.404	-2.988	69	.004	-.848	.284	-1.415	-.282
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.977	66.408	.004	-.848	.285	-1.418	-.279
Whether it is difficult for me to interact with teachers	Equal variances assumed	3.049	.085	-1.812	69	.074	-.344	.190	-.722	.035

Table 3.3.1.b. Independent samples test of socio-cultural adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Equal variances assumed	.328	.568	-2.265	69	.027	-.508	.224	-.955	-.061
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.782	60.604	.080	-.344	.193	-.729	.042
Whether it is difficult for me to understand the locals' values	Equal variances assumed	.627	.431	-2.533	69	.014	-.604	.238	-1.079	-.128
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.505	63.421	.015	-.604	.241	-1.085	-.122
Whether it is difficult for me to complain dissatisfied service	Equal variances assumed	1.654	.203	-7.034	69	.000	-1.659	.236	-2.129	-1.188
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.997	65.953	.000	-1.659	.237	-2.132	-1.185

Table 3.3.1.b. Independent samples test of socio-cultural adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		1-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Whether it is difficult for me to make friends with locals:	Equal variances assumed	.328	.568	-2.265	69	.027	-.508	.224	-9.55	-.061
Total	Equal variances assumed	2.591	.112	-4.437	69	.000	-10.392	2.342	-15.064	-5.719
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.371	61.542	.000	-10.392	2.377	-15.145	-5.639

As demonstrated in Table 3.3.1.a, the mean of all items in South Korea is 34.42, the same value in Russia is 44.82. It is much higher than the value in South Korea. So the author drew the conclusion that the Chinese students in Russia face more difficulties than the Chinese students in South Korea in the process of socio-cultural adaptation. Moreover, in Table 3.3.1.b, the Sig (2-tailed) for total items is 0.000 (<0.05). Thus, it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that there is a highly significant difference between Russian and Korean informants in socio-cultural adaptation. However, for the aspects of “Using public transportation,” “Understanding locals’ humor,” “Participating social events,” “adapting to custom,” “Adapting to the pace of life,” “Going shopping,” “Interacting with teachers,” the differences are not significant.

Although in the quantitative research, the author found that the Chinese students in South Korea adapt better than the Chinese students in Russia, it does not mean that there is no obstacle in their social adaptation process. In the qualitative research, the author asked both groups of students, whether they have faced any difficulties in their social adaptation, both sides gave the author a positive answer. One common obstacle for most students in both groups is language. As one male student who has just stayed in South Korea for two years said:

Well, the biggest obstacle for me is language. In China, I can well express myself, but in Korea because of my poor language ability, I am afraid of expressing my opinions. I hate such feeling. It makes me look stupid. With the lapse of time, my confidence is lost.

A male student in Russia also mentioned language as one of his most serious obstacles:

Language and climate are the barriers for me. I can overcome all the other difficulties except these two. The Russian language is so difficult! A lot of grammar rules. So I still can not fluently use the Russian language. By the way, the Russians must be very proud of their language. They tend to believe all the foreigners in Russia should speak Russian fluently as they do. So whenever I try to explain my opinion using my poor language, I can feel their feeling of impatience. It is a vicious spiral, can you get my point? Now I seldom speak Russian in public. And the climate is another challenge for me. I live in the south of China. I have never experienced such a cold Winter. I even seldom saw snow before. But in Russia, the Winter is frozen and lasts long. I can not imagine how I survived!

It is worth mentioning that when asking about the obstacle of their social adaptation, all Russian interviewees suggested language, but some Chinese studying in South Korea claim that the Korean language is not difficult for them. As one female student who has studied in South Korea for three years said:

I haven't faced any real difficulties yet. The first months to study the Korean language can be seen as a small obstacle for me. But it is not so difficult to learn the Korean language. The pronunciation of many Korean words is quite similar to Chinese. So it is much easier for Chinese to learn the Korean language. Besides, when I can not clearly explain something, I can write it in Chinese. Many Koreans have studied Chinese characters in high school.

Besides language, all Chinese students in Russia complained about the bad weather in Russia. Some argued that the security is the biggest obstacle in their daily life. A girl who has stayed in Russia for four years said like this:

The life here is like an adventure. We need to protect ourselves from Central Asians, and Russian policies. All of the friends around me have the experience such as stolen or robbed by the Central Asians, and extorted by the Russian policemen. I can share with you a real story of myself. Once I took the bus to our university. At one stop a group of Central Asians, around five young persons, got on the bus. The bus was not so crowded, but they stood around me, quite close to me. I did not care about them. And they got off the bus quickly at the next stop. Only when I got to the university, I had noticed that they opened my backpack and stole my wallet. So how to ensure my safety is the biggest obstacle for me in Russia. Now I very seldom go out after 8 p.m.

Another male student in Russia shared his experience with us:

I lived in the south of China, from my childhood, I had seen snow only for several times. But in my three years of staying in Russia, I had seen the snow for so many times. The temperature in winter is around -20, without sunshine. I had no entertainment in winter. So I feel quite upset in every winter. Besides the bad weather, the Russian language is another obstacle for me. I came to Russia with no knowledge of Russian language, and I used to study English. However, the Russian language is so different from English, more difficult, I would say, with more prefixes and suffixes. The biggest challenge for me to study Russian is declension. I am still struggling against Russian language. Without the language as the tool of basic communication, I can hardly adapt into the Russian society.

Through the interviews and data analysis, the author found that both the Chinese students in Russia and South Korea face some challenges in the process of social adaptation, the difficulties may stem from different aspects of life. But the Chinese students in South Korea adapt into the host culture better than the Chinese students in Russia, and the difference of the adaptation degree between two groups is significant.

3.3.2. Results of psychological adaptation survey

For the measurement of psychological adaptation, the author adopted one existing questionnaire which is called “GHQ-12” (David Goldberg and Paul Williams, 1970). This questionnaire is a method to measure whether a person is under the risk of psychological illness. GHQ-12 is a test of 12 items with a four-point scale for each

informant. The informants choose an option from 1 to 4 according to their reality. To calculate the scores of the informants, the values are coded as “0-0-1-1”. In total, the score interval of one informant is 0-12. The higher score represents more risks of developing psychiatric disorders, which means the worse psychological adaptation into host culture in this thesis.

Table3.3.2.a. Mean, standard deviation and S.E. Mean of socio-cultural adaptation

	Country you studied in:	N of items	Mean	SD	S.E. Mean
Concentrate on things you are doing?	Korea	43	.18	.392	.068
	Russia	48	.32	.471	.076
Lost much sleep over worry?	Korea	43	.45	.506	.088
	Russia	48	.63	.489	.079
Able to play useful parts in things?	Korea	43	.15	.364	.063
	Russia	48	.32	.471	.076
Able to make decisions?	Korea	43	.30	.467	.081
	Russia	48	.32	.471	.076
Felt constantly under strain?	Korea	43	.21	.415	.072
	Russia	48	.42	.500	.081

Table3.3.2.a. Mean, standard deviation and S.E. Mean of socio-cultural adaptation

	Country you studied in:	N of items	Mean	SD	S.E. Mean
Concentrate on things you are doing?	– Korea	43	.18	.392	.068
	Russia	48	.32	.471	.076
Lost much sleep over worry?	– Korea	43	.45	.506	.088
Unable to overcome difficulties?	– Korea	43	.21	.415	.072
	Russia	48	.29	.460	.075
Enjoy normal activities?	– Korea	43	.06	.242	.042
	Russia	48	.24	.431	.070
Able to face up to problems?	– Korea	43	.15	.364	.063
	Russia	48	.26	.446	.072
Feeling unhappy and depressed?	– Korea	43	.27	.452	.079
	Russia	48	.47	.506	.082
Losing confidence?	– Korea	43	.12	.331	.058

Table3.3.2.a. Mean, standard deviation and S.E. Mean of socio-cultural adaptation

	Country you studied in:	N of items	Mean	SD	S.E. Mean
Concentrate on things you are doing?	– Korea	43	.18	.392	.068
	Russia	48	.32	.471	.076
Lost much sleep over worry?	– Korea	43	.45	.506	.088
	Russia	48	.18	.393	.064
Thinking of self as worthless?	– Korea	43	.03	.174	.030
	Russia	48	.13	.343	.056
Feel reasonably happy?	– Korea	43	.21	.415	.072
	Russia	48	.53	.506	.082
Total	– Korea	43	2.36	2.608	.454
	Russia	48	4.11	2.115	.343

Table 3.3.2.b. Independent samples test of psychological adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Concentrate on things you are doing?	Equal variances assumed	7.118	.010	-1.291	69	.201	-.134	.104	-.341	.073
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.308	68.883	.195	-.134	.102	-.338	.070
Lost much sleep over worry?	Equal variances assumed	1.667	.201	-1.498	69	.139	-.177	.118	-.413	.059
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.494	66.907	.140	-.177	.118	-.414	.059
Able to play useful parts in things?	Equal variances assumed	11.756	.001	-1.625	69	.109	-.164	.101	-.366	.037
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.655	68.135	.103	-.164	.099	-.362	.034

Table 3.3.2.b. Independent samples test of psychological adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Concentrate on things you are doing?	Equal variances assumed	7.118	.010	-1.291	69	.201	-.134	.104	-.341	.073
Able to make decisions?	Equal variances assumed	.053	.819	-.114	69	.909	-.013	.112	-.235	.210
	Equal variances not assumed			-.114	67.784	.909	-.013	.112	-.235	.210
Felt constantly under strain?	Equal variances assumed	13.905	.000	-1.897	69	.062	-.209	.110	-.429	.011
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.922	68.871	.059	-.209	.109	-.426	.008
Unable to overcome difficulties?	Equal variances assumed	2.254	.138	-.740	69	.462	-.077	.105	-.286	.131

Table 3.3.2.b. Independent samples test of psychological adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Concentrate on things you are doing?	Equal variances assumed	7.118	.010	-1.291	69	.201	-.134	.104	-0.341	.073
	Equal variances not assumed			-.745	68.882	.459	-.077	.104	-.285	.130
Enjoy normal activities?	Equal variances assumed	22.284	.000	-2.080	69	.041	-.176	.085	-0.345	-.007
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.159	59.702	.035	-.176	.082	-0.340	-.013
Able to face up to problems?	Equal variances assumed	5.605	.021	-1.144	69	.257	-.112	.098	-0.306	.083
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.160	68.754	.250	-.112	.096	-0.304	.080

Table 3.3.2.b. Independent samples test of psychological adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Concentrate on things you are doing?	Equal variances assumed	7.118	.010	-1.291	69	.201	-.134	.104	-.341	.073
Feeling unhappy and depressed?	Equal variances assumed	9.183	.003	-1.753	69	.084	-.201	.115	-.430	.028
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.767	68.934	.082	-.201	.114	-.428	.026
Losing confidence?	Equal variances assumed	2.173	.145	-.724	69	.471	-.063	.087	-.237	.111
	Equal variances not assumed			-.733	68.951	.466	-.063	.086	-.234	.109
Thinking of self as worthless?	Equal variances assumed	10.930	.002	-1.534	69	.130	-.101	.066	-.233	.030

Table 3.3.2.b. Independent samples test of psychological adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Concentrate on things you are doing?	Equal variances assumed	7.118	.010	-1.291	69	.201	-.134	.104	-341	.073
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.600	56.499	.115	-.101	.063	-228	.025
Feel reasonably happy?	Equal variances assumed	17.753	.000	-2.833	69	.006	-.314	.111	-535	-.093
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.873	68.797	.005	-.314	.109	-532	-.096
Total	Equal variances assumed	1.482	.228	-3.106	69	.003	-1.742	.561	-2.860	-.623

Table 3.3.2.b. Independent samples test of psychological adaptation

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Concentrate on things you are doing?	Equal variances assumed	7.118	.010	-1.291	69	.201	-.134	.104	-3.41	.073
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.060	61.619	.003	-1.742	.569	-2.879	-.604

In Table 3.3.2.a the total means for the Chinese students in Korea and Russia are 2.36 and 4.11 respectively. The mean scores for both groups of students are not high, so both groups well adapt to host cultures psychologically. To make a horizontal comparison, the author claims that the Chinese students in South Korea better adapt in the host culture than the Chinese students in Russia. Meanwhile, as demonstrated in Table 3.3.2.b, the sig (2-tailed) value in total is 0.003 (<0.05), so the author drew the conclusion that the difference of psychological adaptation between two groups is highly significant. Though the difference in total is significant, most Sig (2-tailed) values for the specific items are bigger than 0.05. Only when answering the questions of “Can you enjoy normal activities?” and “Do you feel reasonably happy?”, the students in South

Korea and Russia show different attitudes and the differences are significant.

According to the interviews conducted with both groups, the author also found that both groups well psychologically adapted to the host culture. As one interviewee who is studying in South Korea said during the interview:

Well, I am quite satisfied with my life here. Generally, I keep the same habits like in China. The pressure of study is not so huge, so I get time to hang out with my buddies. At the weekend, I will go shopping with my friends, have a big dinner, when there are concerts of my idol, I can easily purchase a ticket and go to the show. Usually, people may think that the life of students studying abroad is boring. But I try to make myself busy. I regularly go to the gym. I have almost walked around the whole country. I enjoy taking photos. Those years I have already taken thousands of pics about my Korean life.

Another female student who is studying in Russia has a unique casual life, she works as an overseas buyer for Chinese, as she said, such experience make her happy and make her have the feeling of being needed:

My life in Russia is quite busy. During my casual life, I spend most of it in shopping malls. I accidentally did my friend a favor, helped her buy a lipstick from Russia. Since then, I started doing such thing as a way to earn money. I made a lot of Russian friends during this period, most of them are shopping guides of different brands. I regularly post some new cosmetics in my social network. Now I have more than 1500 followers. The success of my part-time job makes me feel being needed. I enjoy the moment when I found a cosmetic which someone in China has dreamed for a long time.

Besides, students of both groups have experienced the process of feeling lonely and being isolated. Most of them need some periods to psychologically adapt to the host culture. During this period, the students have psychological fluctuation. But such feelings gradually decrease over time. A student recalled his first month in Russia as:

Well, of course, the first month was tough, very tough. I knew nothing about the Russian language, the living condition of our dormitory is terrible. The first week was a challenge for me. I even cried once in the midnight because of homesickness. But luckily, my roommates were Chinese too. So at least I got some companies. And when the class of Russian language began, I was busy with the study. So I had no time to sad. I got used to my life in Russia.

Students use different strategies to overcome the feeling of loneliness in Russia and South Korea. Some of them chose to immerse in the virtual world; some actively took

part in different social events, some students chose to find a companion. One male student who has already studied in Russia for four years told the author during the interview:

I met my girlfriend during the prior course. Both of us just got to a new environment. Girls need to be taken care. So I got the chance... Now we have been together for almost four years. We live together, I seldom feel lonely, because my girlfriend is talkative, haha. It is so great that there is someone with you in an unacquainted place. In those four years, we traveled a lot, we have been to the Nordic countries, we have been to France, Germany, Britain and Turkey. I am quite sure without her, my life here will be very boring.

To conclude, through data analysis and interviews, the author found that all students have experienced a period of psychological fluctuation during their adaptation. However, all of them have their strategies to overcome this psychological discomfort. To make a horizontal comparison, the Chinese students in South Korea psychologically adapt better than the Chinese students in Russia, and the difference of psychological adaptation between two groups is highly significant. However, to make a vertical comparison, both groups well psychologically adapt into the receiving society.

3.4. Relationship between culture distance and cross-cultural adaptation

In this section, the author aims to find the relationship between culture distance and cross-cultural adaptation. Thus, the data analysis tool “SPSS” was used once again by the author. The author calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient (r). The Pearson correlation coefficient ranges from -1.0 to 1.0. -1.0 refers to perfect negative correlation, while 1.0 refers to perfect positive correlation. In this thesis, the independent variable is “Culture distance,” “socio-cultural adaptation” and “psychological adaptation” are named as the dependent variables (Pearson, 1895).

3.4.1. Relationship between culture distance and socio-cultural adaptation

As demonstrated in Table 3.4.1, the Pearson correlation is 0.310, and the Sig (2-tailed) value is 0.008 (<0.01). Thus, there is a significant medium positive correlation between culture distance and socio-cultural adaptation, which means the larger the culture distance is, the more difficulties students will face in the process of socio-cultural adaptation.

Table 3.4.1. Correlation between cultural distance and socio-cultural adaptation

		Total of Cultural Distance	Total of socio-cultural adaptation
Total of CD	Pearson correlation	1	.310**
	Sig (2-tailed)		.008
	N of items	91	91
Total of SA	Pearson correlation	.310**	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.008	
	N of items	91	91

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Through the interviews, the author also found that the Chinese students in Russia face some questions in their interaction with Russians, and the students themselves attributed these difficulties to cultural distance.

I would like to make friends with Russians, but the problem for me is that we do not have so many commons, so sometimes I do not know how to get along well with them. I believe the different values among us is a major reason for this problem (A male student in Russia for four years).

I have several Russian friends. Firstly, I can not accustom to their etiquette. Russians shake hands a lot, even with close friends. But in my understanding, “shaking hands” is used in some formal occasions, like a business negotiation. Secondly, sometimes, we Chinese tend to show our hospitality, so we prefer inviting Russian friends to some Chinese restaurants. But most of them insist on splitting the bill. This behavior slightly distances us (A male students in Russia for five years).

I still feel that there are some distances between my Russian friends and me, such feeling just exists. You know? Though we hang out together a lot, we chat on the social network, I do not feel I am relaxed as with my Chinese friends. Perhaps the differences in languages impede our friendship to be closer; but I suppose I can blame on the differences between our cultures, too. I can have fun with my Russian friends, but when I am in troubles, I will firstly come to my Chinese friends seeking for help (A female student in Russia for three years).

3.4.2. Relationship between culture distance and psychological adaptation

In Table 3.4.2 below, the value of Pearson correlation is 0.14, and the Sig (2-tailed) value is 0.905 (>0.05). Therefore, there is no significant correlation between culture distance and psychological adaptation.

Table 3.4.2. Correlation between culture distance and socio-cultural adaptation

		Total of Cultural Distance	Total of psychological adaptation
Total of CD	Pearson correlation	1	.014
	Sig (2-tailed)		.905
	N of items	91	91
Total of PA	Pearson correlation	.014	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.905	
	N of items	91	91

The author asked the interviewees some questions which may reflect their psychological adaptation in the interviews and found that the students in Russia and South Korea both deny that they face some psychological discomforts. As recently there are several cases of suicide caused by Chinese students in Russia, the author asked the interviewees in Russia an additional question which sounds like “How do you judge the suicide of Chinese students recently? Is it caused by the culture differences?” The replies from two of them as following:

Well, I heard that piece of news. But I do not think we can connect such thing together with culture differences. There are so many cases of suicide everywhere, even in our home country. How do you explain a suicide of Chinese student in China? I admit we face many pressures in different cultures, but I believe most people will regulate themselves by different ways (A female student staying in Russia for six years).

Um...I do not want to judge so much about the behavior of some dead person. But I do not believe the death is caused by culture distance. A simple example, I may be upset because of something, but it will not last long. I definitely will do something to make me happy, to distract my attention. It is our self-regulation. In the circumstance of a different culture, it also works. We definitely will do something physically or mentally to avoid ourselves from being crazy, right? (A male student staying in Russia for three years)

Depend on the data analysis and interviews, the author drew the conclusion that there is no significant correlation between culture distance and psychological adaptation. Both the students in South Korea and Russia deny they face any psychological discomfort. Most students believe in self-regulation and are optimistic about psychological adaptation.

Chapter Four: Discussion on Hypothesis

In this chapter, the research questions and hypothesis which was raised in Chapter Three will be discussed.

4.1. Question One and the hypothesis of the author

Question: Is there any significant difference in cross-cultural adaptation between Chinese international students in Russia and South Korea?

Hypothesis: Chinese students in South Korea better adapt into host culture than those in Russia.

According to data analysis, the author got the conclusion that Chinese students in Korea enjoy a better degree of cross-cultural adaptation than the Chinese students in Russia.

To be more specific, the mean value of socio-cultural adaptation of the informants in South Korea is 34.42, the same value in Russia is 44.82, higher than the value in South Korea. It may reveal the fact that the Chinese students in South Korea enjoy a better socio-cultural adaptation than the Chinese students in Russia. Besides, regarding psychological adaptation, the mean score for the informants in South Korea is 2.36 while the mean score for the informants in Russia is 4.11. As scores of GHQ-12 range from 0 to 12, both 2.36 and 4.11 can be seen as good in general. Therefore, the Chinese students in South Korea and Russia are psychologically healthy.

Although in the interviews, most students had claimed that they had faced some psychological discomfort, they frequently mentioned the terms like “lonely,” “homesick,” “stressful” and “communication disorders.” However, all interviewees have their methods to overcome the discomfort. For instance, developing new interests like fitness, traveling or photography; Some interviewees prefer using another method like seeking for companions, to make some friends or find a lover; Some keep in touch with his or her relatives and friends in China through Internet, by using social support from their home country to cure psychological discomfort.

In the Independent Sample T-tests of socio-cultural adaptation and psychological adaptation, the Sig (2-tailed) for the former is 0.000 (<0.05), and the Sig (2-tailed) value for the latter is 0.003 (<0.05). Thus, there is a highly significant difference in both socio-cultural adaptation and psychological adaptation between the informants in

Russian and South Korea. In the interviews, some participants from South Korea also claimed that they enjoy their lives in Korea, most respondents said they face no difficulties in Korea, including the aspects of climate, food and living condition. However, many interviewees in Russia showed a negative attitude toward their lives in Russia. The most frequently mentioned problem they faced is the inclement weather and different dietary structure in Russia. The phrases of interviewees coincide with the result of data analysis.

According to the results and discussion above, the Chinese students in South Korea culturally and psychologically adapt to the receiving society better than the Chinese students in Russia. Therefore, the first hypothesis was supported.

4.2. Question Two and the hypothesis of the author

Question: What is the culture distance between China and Korea and between China and Russia?

Hypothesis: The culture distance between China and Korea is smaller than the culture distance between China and Russia.

The data results showed that the mean score of culture distance for the informants in South Korea is 22.00, while the mean score of culture distance for the students in Russia is 30.55 (>22.00). As larger score represents a larger culture distance between the host culture and home culture, the students in Russia enjoy a larger culture distance than the students in South Korea. The Independent samples T-test proved the difference of culture distance between those two groups was significant. The interview showed the same results as the author got from the data analysis. The Chinese students in Korea claimed that there are similarities between Chinese and Korea cultures. They frequently mentioned the impacts of “Buddhism,” and “Confucism” to Korean culture. They claimed that many Koreans well know Chinese culture, because they used to study Chinese culture and language as an optional course in high school. Many interviewees also mentioned the complex relationship between Korean culture and Chinese culture. Korea had been China’s dependency for many years in ancient time, so they borrowed many traditions and cultural customs from Chinese culture. Thus, it is reasonable that Korean culture and Chinese culture share lots of similarities. On the other hand, the students studying in Russia stated the culture distance between Chinese and Russia cultures are huge. They had mentioned the different religions, customs, traditions and

values between those two cultures.

To better understand the culture distance of those two groups of Chinese students, the author believes it is necessary to clarify the culture distance between China and those two countries.

The cultural exchange between China and Korea can be traced back to three thousand years before. From “Three Kingdoms period,” the Korean king of every dynasty had canonized by the Chinese emperors. The Korean kings sent envoys to China and brought lots of codes and records back to Korea. Before establishing Korean written language, the Koreans had used the Chinese characters for many centuries. “Confucism” influenced Korean culture a lot. It brought Korea into the “Confucian culture cluster” together with Chinese culture. Early in the first-century A.C, the works of Chinese philosopher “Confucius,” like “The Spring and Autumn Annals,” “Confusion Analects,” had already been widely read in Korea (Li Yingwu, 2005). Thus, there are many commons in Korean and Chinese cultures.

Unlike Korean culture, though in the fifties of last century, China and USSR had a period of “Honeymoon” and the common ideology obscured the differences between these two countries, Russian culture shares few similarities with Chinese culture. China and Russia are different in geography, religion, history, and social system, dietary structure, and language.

To conclude, Korean culture share many similarities with Chinese culture, while Russian culture is different from Chinese culture. Therefore, the culture distance between Russia and China is larger than the culture distance between Korea and China. Hypothesis Two was supported.

4.3. Question Three and the hypothesis of the author

Question: To what extent can culture distance influence cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese international students in South Korea and Russia?

Hypothesis: Chinese international students with larger culture distance tend to have a low level of cross-cultural adaptation. Therefore, there is a positive correlation between culture distance and cross-cultural adaptation.

According to the data analysis, the author drew the conclusion that there is a significant medium positive correlation between culture distance and socio-cultural adaptation, which means the larger the cultural distance is, the more difficulties the

students will face in their socio-cultural adaptation. In the interviews, the informants in Russia mentioned various difficulties they faced, many of them had mentioned interaction with Russians. They claimed that different cultural backgrounds made them difficult to find common points with the Russians. But for the students in South Korea, though some interviewees also mentioned that they do not know how to communicate with the Koreans, the phenomenon is caused by language, but not culture distance. Most interviewees pointed out that because of the similar culture, it is much easier for them to adapt to Korean culture. This finding coincides with some previous research, such as the research carried out by Waxin (2004), who claimed that the larger culture distance might result in less adjustment.

However, the data analysis showed that there is no significant correlation between culture distance and psychological adaptation. And in the interviews, the students from both groups admitted that they had experienced a period of psychological discomfort. They mentioned negative feelings like “Loneliness,” “homesickness,” “stressful,” and “grief.” But they claimed that they have already come out from those shadows. The finding does not conform with the author’s hypothesis. The author gave his explanations to the unconformity. Firstly, people are not willing to admit they have any psychological problem, even in an anonymous condition. Secondly, the psychological mechanism is complex; the author ignored the role of mental self-regulation in the process of psychological adaptation. People will mentally regulate themselves to adapt to a new environment. As the informants of current study had already lived abroad for minimum one year, so it is reasonable that they had already psychologically adapt into the host culture. It explains why culture distance had no more impacts on their psychological adaptation. The finding is inconsistent with some previous research, such as the research of Furukawa (1997), and Irina Galchenko, Fons. J. R, van de Vijver (2007). They both found that there is a positive correlation between culture distance and psychological adaptation.

The author admits that there are some drawbacks in the design of psychological adaptation scale (GHQ-12). Because this questionnaire is designed to measure the psychological health level by investigation on the mental status of recent two weeks, the results can not reflect the difficulties and time consumed to adapt to the host culture psychologically. Further research should improve this point.

According to the results of data analysis and interviews, the findings partly

coincided with the author's hypothesis. Thus, Hypothesis Three was partly supported.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion

In conclusion, the research used both qualitative and quantitative methods, tries to examine the cross-cultural adaptation degree of the Chinese students in Russia and South Korea. Besides, by comparison, current research tries to explore the correlation between culture distance and cross-cultural adaptation. After data analysis by SPSS 18 and interviews discussion, the study discovered several significant findings as following:

- 1.The culture distance between China and Russia is larger than that between China and Korea.

- 2.The Chinese students in South Korea socio-culturally and psychologically adapt to the host culture better than the Chinese students in Russia.

- 3.The Chinese students both in South Korea and Russia maintain a healthy psychological state.

- 4.In socio-cultural adaptation, a larger culture distance results in a more difficult adaptation for Chinese students. The correlation between culture distance and socio-cultural adaptation difficulty is positive.

- 5.There is no significant correlation between culture distance and psychological adaptation.

To conclude, Hypothesis One that Chinese students in South Korea better adapt to the host culture than those in Russia and hypothesis Two that the culture distance between China and Korea is smaller than the culture distance between China and Russia are well proved by the research. However, the third Hypothesis which Chinese international students with larger culture distance tend to have a low level of cross-cultural adaptation is partly proved by the research. The study proved that there is a positive correlation between culture distance and socio-cultural adaptation difficulty. However, Current research has not found any significant relationships between culture distance and psychological adaptation. This research contributes some findings to the research field of “culture distance and cross-cultural adaptation.” The findings of the research partly support the previous studies but also partly contradict with them.

5.2. Implication

Current research has several implications. On the one hand, from the perspective of home culture, in this paper, it denotes China, current research could be treated as guidance for Chinese students who are preparing to study abroad; inform them to take culture distance seriously and make better preparation before departure. On the other hand, from the perspective of the host culture, this study prompts the institutions and governments to think deeply: How could they weaken the impacts of culture distance for international students and provide them a better circumstance of cross-cultural adaptation? Moreover, current study can be seen as a reference to the host culture to make strategies toward international students, to provide them social support.

5.3. Limitation

Like all research, the current research has several limitations. Firstly, the limited sample is a major limitation of the current research. Although the author tried his best to recruit informants, the sample of the research was still limited. The findings of the research will be more convincing if the sample could be larger. Secondly, as it had been mentioned in the previous chapter, the poor choice of psychological adaptation scale could not reflect the psychological adaptation difficulties of students. Thus, the correlation between culture distance and psychological adaptation did not clearly investigate. Besides, the author only found that there is no significant correlation between culture distance and psychological adaptation. However, it lacks an explanation of this phenomenon. In further studies, the weaknesses should be improved. Thirdly, the interview guidance was designed by the author. Obviously, it lacks professionalism and needs to be improved. Some questions could not be clearly understood and led to answers that out of the author's expectations. Last but not the least, although the study discovered the correlation between cross-cultural adaptation and culture distance, the research lacks the study of factors which may lead to better cross-cultural adaptation and the suggestions about how to overcome culture distance. As those two directions are more pragmatic, in the further study, some detailed research should be carried out.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire of cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese students studying abroad.

Block 1. Personal information

- 1.What is your nationality?
- 2.Your gender: male or female?
- 3.How old are you?
- 4.How many years have you studied abroad?
- 5.In which university are you studying?
- 6.What is your education degree?

Block 2. Scale of culture distance

Scores from 1 to 5 represent the degree of similarity from very similar to very dissimilar (1=very similar; 2=similar; 3=not sure; 4=dissimilar; 5= very dissimilar).

- 1.Local customs.
- 2.Living conditions.
- 3.Using health care systems.
- 4.Transportation system.
- 5.Living costs.
- 6.Quality and kinds of food.
- 7.Climate.
- 8.Language.

Block 3. Scale of socio-cultural adaptation

Please indicate the difficulties you are facing abroad. It is a five point likert scale, 1=not difficult; 2=slightly difficult; 3=moderately difficult; 4=very difficult; 5=extremely difficult.

- 1.Making friends with Russian/Korean.
- 2.Using the public transportation system.

3. Adapting to the local food.
4. Being used to local living condition.
5. Dealing with the climate.
6. Understanding locals' jokes and humor.
7. Participating social events and gathering.
8. Understanding the local language.
9. Communicating with locals.
10. Adapting to local customs.
11. Adapting to the pace of life.
12. Going shopping in food stores or shopping malls.
13. Dealing the conflicts with locals.
14. Coping with the study at university.
15. Expressing your opinions in class.
16. Interacting with teachers at university.
17. Understanding the locals' values.
18. Overcoming and dealing dissatisfied service.
19. What is your favorite Russian/ Korean food?
20. How often do you go to social events and what kind of event is it?
21. What differences in customs between the host culture and your home culture have you seen?
22. How often do you go shopping? You prefer going shopping alone or finding yourself some companions?

Block 4. Scale of psychological adaptation

Answering the following questions using four options: 1= not at all; 2= no more than usual; 3= rather more than usual; 4= much more than usual. Your answers should depend on your psychological state of last two weeks.

1. Can concentrate on things.
2. Loss sleep because of worry.
3. Feeling yourself playing a useful part in things.
4. Able to make decisions.
5. Frequently have the feeling of under stress.

- 6.Unable to overcome challenges and difficulties.
- 7.Can enjoy working and holiday activities.
- 8.Able to face problems.
- 9.Feeling unhappy and depressed.
- 10.Losing confidence.
- 11.Consider yourself useless.
- 12.Feeling reasonably happy.

Appendix 2: Guide of interview

- 1.Why do you choose to study in Russia/ South Korea?
- 2.Is it a decision of yourself? What is the role of your parents in your decision-making process?
- 3.Do you know Russia/ South Korea well before your departure?
- 4.What are the biggest differences between Chinese culture and Russian/ Korean culture for you? Have you already adapted to the differences?
- 5.Is there any similarity between Chinese culture and Russia/ Korean culture?
- 6.Can you adapt the living conditions/ food/transportation in Russia/ South Korea?
- 7.What is the biggest obstacle/difficulty for you in Russia/ South Korea?
- 8.Do you have any Russian/ South Korean friends? How often do you interact with Russian/ Korean? (Further questions to seek reasons).
- 9.Do you spend more time with Chinese or with the locals? (Further questions to seek reasons).
- 10.From your perspective, what is the Russians/ Koreans' attitude toward Chinese?
- 11.When you first come to Russia/ South Korea, what differences do you notice and shock you?
- 12.Can you call back your first months in Russia/ South Korea? Is it tough? You spend how many time to adapt into Russia/South Korea?
- 13.Did you ever have homesickness? If yes, how do you overcome it?