

**A Comparison Between Media Representation of  
Asian International Students and Their Own  
Accounts of Experience in New Zealand**

**Xiaomei (May)QIN**

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## **Certificate of Authorship**

“I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institute of higher learning except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.”

Signed:

Xiaomei (May) QIN

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**Abbreviations:**

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Information Technology (IT)

International English Level Test System (IELTS)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)

New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA)

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Permanent Residence (PR)

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

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## Chapter One: Introduction

This research takes as its starting point the role of the media as a major influence on the way people understand and interpret events, focusing on media coverage of Asian international students in New Zealand. The thesis investigates the differences between media accounts of Asian international students and students' own perceptions of their experiences, using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

This topic has become one of high community interest since 1999 when the New Zealand Government changed its education policy to encourage the expansion of the export education industry, leading to the number of international students increasing rapidly. Many of these students are teenagers and come from non-English-speaking Asian backgrounds to study in universities, colleges, high schools and private institutions in New Zealand. As well as the obvious effects on the New Zealand economy, the presence of these students has also influenced New Zealand culture. For example, many international students have homestay experiences with New Zealand families. This meeting of different cultural backgrounds introduces both sides to different value systems, lifestyles, beliefs and customs. This cultural diversity not only challenges international students to adapt themselves to New Zealand society, but also provides an opportunity for native New Zealanders to understand the incoming cultures. For Asian international students in particular, this process can be problematic and their behaviours have been closely scrutinised by the media.

Since the survey was completed, with the closure of previously successful private education institutions, international student care has been a hot topic of the media. There were eight stories about international students in *The New Zealand Herald* from 1/11/03 to 15/11/03. Stories such as "Help for Carich students" (10/11/03), "Government must get tough say schools" (11/11/03) and "ERO to look at international student care" (12/11/03) were mainly focused on how to provide high quality education for these young people.

Despite television and the growing popularity of the Internet, the newspapers remain a significant place for news and other forms of information in New Zealand. *The New Zealand Herald* published by Wilson and Horton was chosen for the analysis simply because it is the largest daily newspaper in New Zealand based in Auckland where most Asian international

students study. Wilson and Horton published 41.2 per cent of the country's daily newspaper circulation in 1998, of which 27.7 per cent came from *The New Zealand Herald* (Rosenberg, 2000). The latest Audit Bureau of Circulation survey reported that *The New Zealand Herald* has maintained its share of total metropolitan newspaper circulation at 47 per cent in the country (*The New Zealand Herald*, 15/5/03).

The newspaper certainly holds the biggest market share and the most dominant position among daily newspapers in the country. Determining its content might therefore, also provide the most influential picture of the ethnic coverage of newspapers in New Zealand. In this regard, it is imperative to establish first the parameters of ethnic coverage. How can we determine whether *The New Zealand Herald's* coverage reflects the ethnic make up of the community it serves or not? It is necessary to set up a conceptual framework upon which the definition of a quality ethnic coverage fits. This should begin with the determination of the media's role in society, in other words, we should understand "what should the media do" (Husband, 2000: 200) and what we expect of the media in ethnic coverage, which is discussed in Chapter Two.

To establish voices of ethnic media for the purposes of this study, *The New Zealand Chinese Herald* as ethnic media was chosen. This newspaper was established in 1994 and owned by a local Chinese entrepreneur. It is free of charge newspaper with a nationwide circulation of approximately 17,000 copies in New Zealand and it is published twice a week on Wednesdays and Fridays in Chinese (*The New Zealand Chinese Herald Profile*, 2002). The reasons for the selection of this paper are outlined in Chapter Five. Although it is acknowledged that the Chinese language press in New Zealand is very limited in terms of its journalism and coverage of news. These are largely vehicles for advertising and possess few journalistic resources.

This study measured the quantity and quality of the two newspapers' ethnic coverage by analyzing the content to investigate whether evidence could be found that the newspapers provide a quality ethnic coverage in promotion of democracy.

Do *The New Zealand Herald* and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* contribute to the creation of the public sphere and the development of democracy? To help answer this question, the

analysis tries to find out whether the newspapers provide balanced reporting on Asian international students' issues if compared with students' own experiences.

As well, the study also tries to uncover the media's influence on Asian immigrants and students in terms of individual, and ethnic community effects and government policy change.

This research involves two stages. The first stage is a content analysis of themes of coverage of Asian international students in print media over a 18-month period. The coverage in *The New Zealand Herald* is compared with the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*. In the second stage, a structured written questionnaire surveyed 183 Asian students, mostly Chinese students, on their experiences. The survey also included in-depth face-to-face interviews with five of the respondents. These interviews captured more detailed information of the students' personal experiences. The media's coverage was then compared with the Asian students' own experiences.

Systematic studies of Chinese in New Zealand started with immigration histories in the 1980s (Chou, 2000:18). Since New Zealand has become a popular country to study for overseas students, a small number of the studies were focused on international students such as "The impact of international students on domestic students and host institutes" (Ward, 2002), "Voices of Asian Youth" (Papanui Community Board, 1998), "Pacific people and tertiary education: issues of participation" (Anae, Anderson, Benseman and Coxon, 2002) and "International student homestay guidelines" (Hart, 2002). These studies are helpful for educational institutions to understand more about Asian students. The studies are discussed in Chapter Two as part of the literature review.

However, while immigration and international student issues are currently being widely represented and studied in academia, the study of coverage of international students in the media is a new contribution to academic research.

### **Why look at media coverage of Asian students and immigrants?**

New policies regarding immigration or education, export and foreign trade can have both positive and negative influences on communities and people's social life. Throughout history, immigration has played an important role in the development of many countries in the

Western world including the former settler colonies of the United States, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.

New Zealand has a long history of immigration. People who come from a variety of countries and cultural backgrounds have made New Zealand their “home” (Chou, 2000: 14). Indeed New Zealand has had a steady history of immigrants since the arrival of the early Polynesians around 900 years ago, European migrants followed later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and more recently South Pacific island people and Asians have been moving in and settling down in a steady succession until today. It is this history of immigration that has helped shape New Zealand’s culture and society and continues to do so. However, in scrutinising immigration policy, we shall see immigration and the presence of ‘foreigners’ in New Zealand has often been a contentious subject. This is discussed in Chapter Two.

Any negative community attitudes towards Chinese immigrants are likely to affect Chinese students because in scrutinising the public behaviours of Chinese, it is difficult to identify them as recent immigrants, students on visas or even 4<sup>th</sup> generation New Zealand Chinese. Since 1999, encouraged by New Zealand’s open export education policy, more international students have arrived in New Zealand for study. By 2002 the numbers of international students totalled over 70,000. About 80 per cent of all foreign students are Asians (*New Zealand Press Association*, May 2002). According to a report more than 40 per cent of overseas students expressed an interest in gaining New Zealand residency after their graduation in 2001 ([www.greysky.co.nz](http://www.greysky.co.nz)). Therefore these students are likely to constitute the main potential immigrant group in the next five years. This could have several advantages for immigrant settlement. Compared with immigrants before 1999, the immigrants or potential immigrants after 1999 have the following characteristics: firstly, due to their experience of study or work in New Zealand before becoming resident, immigrants post 1999 have had more exposure to New Zealand society and are therefore likely to be better prepared to fit themselves into New Zealand life; these immigrants are also on the average younger than their predecessors for most of them arrive in New Zealand at the level of high school or tertiary education. Furthermore, immigrants post 1999 are more likely to think and behave like other New Zealanders since their time in New Zealand will contribute to a great extent to the formation of their future thoughts and behaviours. The New Zealand foreign student policy review is discussed in Chapter Two.

Study of this potential immigrant group would be instrumental for us to understand both the patterns of migrants' lives in New Zealand and their impact on society. Even if they are not planning to settle, international students studying in New Zealand frequently face similar issues and problems faced by ethnic immigrant communities. While their goals may be different, there is significant crossover between both groups. This research therefore explored the relationship and the similarities and differences between immigrants and the international students which are discussed in Chapter Six.

### **Thesis structure**

A massive increase in Asian international students coming to New Zealand has occurred in the past five years. Students are unlike immigrants because although they move far away from their home country to a new country, they do not belong to this country. Almost all come without their families (a tiny number are accompanied by a family member visiting for a few months) and most of them are young, some are just teenagers. Their behavior tends to attract the attention of New Zealand public and media as they are associated with perceived problems in Asian migrant settlement. This thesis starts with an introduction that addressed the objectives and significance of this research. Chapter Two focuses on a literature review of previous studies in this field and theories about the effect of media on media consumers.

New Zealand's success in education export policy has changed the education industry rapidly. In 2001, international students brought about \$1.4 billion for New Zealand economy, and it made \$1.7 billion profit for New Zealand in 2002 ([www.nztrade.co.nz](http://www.nztrade.co.nz)).

In Chapter Three the discussion draws on information to explain the background to the education sector's export value for the New Zealand economy.

Chapter Four presents a general view of what the media says about Asian international students and Asian immigrants.

In Chapter Five, the research methods used for the media research and the survey on the students' experience are explained. This research covers both secondary research on media representation and primary research on students' experience. The methods used are quantitative and qualitative analysis. The first stage of quantitative research is a content analysis of themes of media coverage of Asian international students and immigration in the selected print media over a 18-month period. The coverage in *The New Zealand Herald* is

compared with a Chinese newspaper *New Zealand Chinese Herald*. In the second stage of quantitative analysis is a structured written questionnaire surveying 183 Asian international students on their own experiences. The questions target the issues identified by the media so the media versions can be compared with the students' own accounts. Although the quantitative methods were employed in order to get quantifiable results, these results need further explanation. When people come to a new country, their feelings, experiences and development of their belief systems cannot be found out only by quantitative research. Thus, the five face-to-face in-depth interviews helped get more detail about their real experiences.

Today New Zealand is a multi-cultural society that includes people from different countries and different ethnic groups with different language and cultural backgrounds. Whether they are immigrants or foreign students, they are subjected to media scrutiny. Chapter Six focuses on how the media represented Asian international students and migrants. The story content in *The New Zealand Herald* and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* over the study period was analysed and the reporting tendencies were categorised as positive, negative or neutral.

Chapter Seven presents the results of the research of Asian international students. The figures, interviews and findings present a profile of Asian international students' experiences.

Chapter Eight focuses on the discussion of survey results. Any differences and gaps are identified and evaluated. Chapter Nine is the conclusion which summarises the findings of this study.

The 71,888 Asian international students recorded living in New Zealand in 2002 represent only a small proportion relative to the general population of the country (*New Zealand Ministry of Education*, December 2002). However their contribution and influence on New Zealand's economy, culture and society is important and should not be overlooked. Hopefully this research will contribute to an understanding of media and its coverage of Asian issues. Notably, all ideas and points of view in this thesis reflect the writer's own background and Chinese cultural fluency.

## **Chapter Two:**

### **Literature Review: Theories and Effects of Media Coverage**

Media are the main source of information regarding national and world events for most people today. The media often defines the structures by which the public view their immediate society and the world beyond. It is through the media that people get a sense of the world outside their limited existence. With no direct experience on a variety of issues, New Zealanders are seen to derive many of their understandings exclusively from the media (Spoonley, 1993). Many of the academic media studies concerning race, ethnic voices and the majority media, have been concerned about issues of representation, power and media effects. These studies provide various interrogations of the notions of race, and are necessary interventions into the politics and economics of media representations and media's role in society. This chapter reviews related literature concerning Asian immigrants and international student stereotypes and considers how the media's coverage might affect New Zealanders.

#### **The role of media in a democratic society**

What should be the role of media in a democratic society, particularly in its coverage of minority ethnic groups? Previous media studies in Western countries have defined the media as a "Fourth Estate" (Eldridge, 1995). The media as fourth estate is considered to have a political role in a democracy, independent of any government, scrutinising political activity and providing an arena for public debate. This role is based on the liberal assumption that media operate in a pluralist society. A pluralist society is made up of many different groups with different interests who are all heard in the political arena. No one group dominates. New Zealand is a democratic country with a diverse society and provides good potential for this approach to studying media.

The media is expected to keep citizens informed about politics and act as a watchdog over government activities, alerting the citizenry of government wrongdoing if that becomes necessary. These fourth estate functions coincide with Jurgen Habermas' notion of the public sphere where citizens are envisioned to participate actively in the discussion and shaping of opinions which are, in turn, expected to lead into political democratic actions (see Graber,

1992). Ideally, the public sphere as a marketplace of ideas would make available to the public politically relevant information in the form of news, ideas, discussions, policy debates, etc. (Dahlgren, 1995).

Dahlgren (1995) specifies that the public upon encountering relevant materials would reflect, discuss, and shape opinions and arrive at views leading to the formation of political will. Finally, these views would become articulated in the public sphere in preparation for political action through official mechanisms.

The increasing social complexity and mobility that characterizes late-twentieth-century and early twenty-first century societies has led to the media now being perceived as having an increasingly central role in facilitating dialogue among citizens (Husband, 2000). Curran (1991) has provided a particularly robust account of the critical importance of the media in relation to the public sphere. Curran argues:

According to classical theory, the public sphere is the space between Government and society in which private individuals exercise formal and informal control over the state: formal control through the election of governments and informal control through the pressure of public opinion. The media are central to this process. They distribute the information necessary for citizens to make an informed choice at election time; they facilitate the debate; and they enable the people to shape the conduct of government by articulating their views. The media are thus the principal institutions of the public sphere or, in the rhetoric of nineteenth century liberalism, “the fourth estate of the realm.

(Curran 1991:2, cited in Husband, 2000:201)

Husband (2000) extends the public sphere theory into a wider area, that is, the multi-ethnic public sphere. He specifies that:

A wide diversity of media serving audiences defined exclusively in terms of distinct ethnic identities may be consistent with group differentiated rights, but it would be a Babel of parallel and exclusive public spheres that would have no sympathy with a right to be understood.

(Husband, 2000:209)



Graham Murdock (1994) makes a strong case for multi-ethnic rights, arguing that all citizens should have the equal communicative rights in a complex democracy: “Communication rights, rights in relation to the production and circulation of public knowledge and public culture that are central to any definition of full citizenship in a complex democracy.” (Murdock 1994:4). He defines citizenship as the right to participate fully in existing patterns of social, political, and cultural life and to help shape their future forms, thus extending T.H. Marshall’s ideas by identifying four major clusters of rights for citizen communicative rights. He believes that “the information and cultural rights could only be guaranteed by open discursive spaces based on certain basic institutional prerequisites” (Murdock 1994:5). Such spaces must be independent of government. This is necessary if people see media as a ‘watchdog’ over the movements of government. On the other hand, he believes that because representation involves some social delegation there must be robust systems to ensure adequate accountability and participation.

Importantly, he points out that an open communication system in a democratic society must support a diversity of forms and allow different voices and views to appear on its public productions and it must be universally accessible for the exploration of differences. Although his study provided a clear blueprint for the citizens’ rights the question remains who orchestrates these representations or who makes what representations to whom?

Murdock considered whether Said’s study (1993:23-36) might answer some of these questions. Said believed that although different groups such as women, disabled, the elderly and the young groups pressed for “greater representation and attention to their claims and interests”, the most important assault was on the core notion of ‘national culture’ and on its “intimate but suppressed connections with the experience of empire and colonialism”. Murdock considered whether national culture included minorities’ culture and who represented the ‘national culture’.

The proliferating demands for representation might undercut the role of national culture in the broadcasting system. This is because broadcasting enterprises, like other business enterprises, had the same purpose of making profits. Murdock pointed out that:

Community programming remains marginal and precarious, a concession not a right, whilst minority channels continue to be defined in terms of niche markets rather than

social interests. But the nature of 'narrowcasting' constitutes its audiences as specific targeted groups. Channels are designed to appeal to their specific interests. Added to which, cable and satellite services are only available to those who can afford the subscriptions and other charges levied by the operators.

Murdock (1994:13)

Finally, Murdock concluded that "this is far cry from John Reith's original promise that 'There need be no first and third class' and that public service broadcasting would provide 'nothing which is exclusive to those who pay more, or who are considered in one way or another more worthy of attention' (see Aldridge and Hewitt eds, 1994; Reith 1924, p.218). The issues Murdock raised are important for the relationships between minority ethnic groups and the media in New Zealand.

### **Racism in media**

In a culturally diverse New Zealand, media studies often face the problem of 'race' and racism in media. Since the early 1990s the available literature which addresses this theme has become increasingly visible across the world (see, for example, Spoonley and Hirsh (1990); Riggins 1992; Spoonley 1993; Jakubowicz *et al.* 1994; Husband 1996; Gandy 1998). These studies were focused on questions such as does the media provide balanced reporting on ethnic issues? Does the reporting discriminate on the grounds of race? How does the media influence their audiences?

Why are people (not only the media people but also the public) concerned about the issue of race and the media? Hartmann and Husband's classic study showed how community attitudes towards race are often shaped by media accounts. They pointed out that "race in itself is a matter of no social importance. Race as a means of classifying people socially, however, is important, because people think it is important." (Hartmann and Husband, 1974: 10: 205). Their study of the mass media and racial conflict found that "media-supplied information carries the inference of conflict more than that from other sources" (Hartmann and Husband, 1974:100).

Dahlgren (1995) argues for coverage that would not focus on conflict. He sees the public sphere as a marketplace of ideas that would make available to the public politically relevant information in the form of news, ideas, discussions, policy debates, etc, so this “public” should include all, rather than only one or two specified groups. Therefore, “mass media should have a positive role to play in attacking racial inequalities and exploitation, and this cannot be achieved without a deliberate intent to seek out such injustices and expose them” (quoted in Hartmann and Husband, 1974:10:211).

Journalists work as story-seekers, investigating and composing news on issues they believe to be news worthy. It is important to remember that their own experiences and opinions affect their representation of these issues. Hartmann and Husband argue that journalists should adopt positive attitudes toward improving race relations and deliberately seek to publish material which challenges prevailing stereotypes. This requires investigative journalism which sets out to establish the background to racial situations rather than merely reporting events as they occur (Hartmann and Husband, 1974:10:211).

Judy McGregor has questioned how the low numbers of Maori journalists in news organisations might affect the content of news (see McGregor, 1992). Her research generated a greater consciousness of the problems that minority voices had in accessing the news. However, in a later essay she commented that “New Zealand had little or no discussion of the need for increased numbers of Maori journalists. This is reflected in the low numbers of Maori journalists and the insignificant growth in numbers across time. There far too few Maori and other ethnic minorities working in the mainstream news media, those who are employed occupy less senior positions and therefore have little influence on what news is covered” (McGregor and Te Awa, 1996:241). No equivalent study has been done on Chinese journalists.

So, how do the media go about reporting on issues of migrants and migrant groups? Nancy Wood and Russell King (2001) found that British media maintain a strong relationship with migrants and these interconnections between media and migrants have rarely been explored. Often, when events and issues have been reported, discussed or politicised, migrants become a major election issue alongside health and education. Wood and Russell argued that the media influence the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of British and European citizenry with respect to contemporary migration processes. There are three ways that the media play

an important role in the migration process. Firstly, media provides an image of destination countries, and whether the information is correct or not, it “can act as an important factor stimulating migrants to move”. Usually these images draw a picture of wealth, free and relaxed lifestyle in Western countries through mediums such as films, televisions and newspapers. Secondly, the host-country media may create stereotypes of migrants, depicting migrants as ‘other’, and often as ‘criminals’ or ‘undesirables’. These constructions of migrants shape the conditions for their exclusion or inclusion. Wood and King believed that “the stereotypes are very far from the truth and very hard to shake off”(Wood and King, 2001:3-7). However, Hartmann and Husband noted ‘the image is used because it exists and is known to have wide currency’ (1974:293). Thirdly, media play a dynamic role in the cultural identity and politics of diasporic communities. Wood and King also found interesting linkages between media and the creation and maintenance of translational communities whose members are able to function in two or more worlds, with varying degrees of comfort. They claim that continuing media contact with their country of origin “may help migrants feel ‘at home’ in their country of ‘exile’ but at the same time perhaps slow down their processes of integration and incorporation” (Wood and King, 2001:2). Finally, Wood and King concluded:

What is clear is that migration continues to exercise the British print media on virtually a daily basis. It is equally clear that, on the migration issue, newspapers have the power both to reflect and to shape public opinion, and there are clear links to political parties and ideologies of various types.

(Wood and King, 2001:10)

These concerns appear relevant to New Zealand media coverage of migrants which is also under scrutiny. One New Zealand newspaper editor, O.S. Hintz (in Basset, 1969) has argued that New Zealand editors would say the media’s role should be neutral in modern society. According to him, the first duty of a responsible newspaper is to inform not to entertain, not to shock, not to scandalize, not even to educate – but to keep its readers accurately and honestly informed on all matters in the public interest.

Basset (1969) stressed, however, that such a viewpoint is conservative, unduly narrow and restrictive. He also expressed grave doubts as to whether the newspapers in New Zealand perform this conservative function properly. Basset (1969) cited several instances where the newspapers failed to publish original statements of criticisms against the government. The

readers learned only about the criticisms only when the newspapers published the government reply to these criticisms. Another limitation of coverage is established by McGregor and TeAwa (1996) who point out that the media is an industry that is still dominated by Pakeha in New Zealand.

Certainly, the development of a public sphere underscores the media's role in the promotion and preservation of democracy. In other words, the media can serve democracy by helping to create an open public sphere (Hoynes, 1994). The framework upon which we can determine whether the media provide balanced and quality coverage would, thus, revolve around the open public sphere and democracy.

This framework serves as the main reference in measuring the quality of *The New Zealand Herald* and *New Zealand Chinese Herald's* coverage in this study. An analysis of the content of both these newspapers will establish whether the newspapers provide a quality ethnic coverage that boosts the generation of the public sphere and the promotion of democracy.

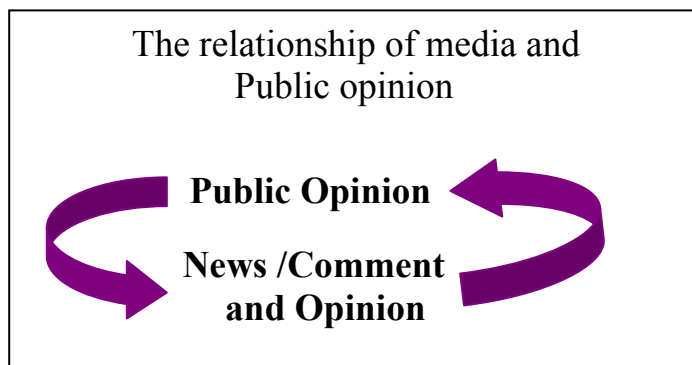
### **The relationship between the media and audience**

The relationship between the media and its audience is another popular field for media studies in most Western countries. Some media scholars such as Glynn, Carroll J. *et al* (1999) and Noam Chomsky (1994) believe that not only do the media have power to effect audiences but also that the audience have the ability to influence media's agenda setting. They suggest that many media now mainly follow their audiences' interests when reporting 'news'. For example, the private life stories of movie stars and public figures such as the late Princess Diana, Tom Cruise and Bill Clinton are frequently used to publicize and sell television programmes, newspapers and magazines. One of the reasons for media organizations providing coverage of this type is the amount of audience interest. Therefore, the demand has become the profit source of the media organizations. For example, the popular New Zealand broadcaster Paul Holmes, who works for TVNZ, has had several stories regarding his private life covered by *The New Zealand Herald*. His marriage news "Holmes opts for quiet country wedding this time" was the top news story on front page for *The New Zealand Herald* on 15/01/03. He also made headlines when he lost his personal contact book with the story titled "Those were our teens tonight" (*The New Zealand Herald* 15/03/03). Such gossip diverts the audience from serious matters which affect them as citizens.

It is hard to say whether media lead the audience or if it is the audiences' demands that lead the media coverage, it is more likely they affect each other and are interdependent in a symbiotic relationship. My research will investigate whether this factor is evident in New Zealand media coverage of Asian international students.

On the other hand, the audiences also have their own cultures and social backgrounds which Hartmann and Husband call their 'interpretive frameworks' (1971:100). They often debate with the media by writing letters to the editor, publishing their own articles and sometimes participate in direct debate with media via talkback or Television interview programs. Audiences also support the media when they agree with the media's stance. American media scholar Monge (1998:85) in his book *Communication Theory for Theory for a Globalizing World*, pointed out that public opinion is influenced by news comment and opinion, also the news comment and opinion is effected by public opinion. The following model illustrates how the media and public culture influence each other. The process is cyclical and it happens everyday.

**Chart 1: Peter R. Monge's theory of the Relationship of media and Public Opinion**



Source: Peter R. Monge, *Communication Theory for Theory for a Globalizing World* (1998).

## **How does the media make people believe them?**

Media is the main source of information on national and world events for most people today. But how do the media make people believe what they report? Greg Philo (1990) in his book *Seeing and Believing* said “seeing is believing.” His study mainly looked at how people believe what the television shows and says, and the degree of the audiences’ believing. The results of his research show that whether the audience actually accepts television’s versions of events depends very much on their interpretive frameworks - what beliefs, experience, and information they bring to what they are shown, and that our beliefs are often subject to being challenged and reworked in relation to new information (Philo, 1990: 149, 205). Obviously, his findings are not only relevant for television but also for newspapers, magazines and other media.

On an individual level, studies by Noelle-Neumann as well as Sherif and Milgram, provide evidence that people may be so affected by their perception of what others think through media accounts, that they feel pressured to conceal their own opinions (Glynn, Carroll J. *et al*, 1999). Humans are social, therefore others are important to them. Glynn, Carroll J. *et al* stressed that “we want others to like us, and we want to continue our relationships with others. To most of us, this is far more important than expressing an opinion that may deviate from those of our friends.” (1999:203).

However, Paulua (1989) argued that people are not persuaded simply by information from published polls, but by the extent to which such information is socially acceptable as evidence of the “real” political situation. It seems the “minority views” could affect change in public opinion.

The media as Fourth Estate or the public sphere would provide an arena for public debate, but how can the media change or motivate people’s opinion? Noelle-Neumann says that the media are ubiquitous and that they repeat the same messages over and over (consonance). Clearly, this is a simple but important truth. The media are constantly bombarding us with information, constantly framing our social reality. And we constantly hear the same message across different mediums – on the radio and television, in newspapers and magazines. These same messages are repeated from reporter to reporter, from medium to medium. Thus, according to Noelle-Neumann, we learn most of our societal norms and practices from the

media. What we believe is constantly being reinforced because of these media messages (Glynn, Carroll J. *et al*, 1999:205). That is why politicians always use media to represent their political opinions, commercial organizations love to use media to promote their products and those who have individual power such as movie stars or sport stars use media to represent their images.

The media influence what we think about by selecting which stories are told to the public each day. It is up to the media to decide whether a story on the achievements of Asian children in New Zealand gets aired or whether that gives way to a story about the latest safety technology of BMW. In New Zealand and abroad many people have stories to tell, many things happen everyday, but what actually gets printed or goes to air is entirely up to the news organizations. Therefore, agenda setting is “setting the order of importance” (James and Everett, 1996:6). The agenda setting is like any other industry agenda setting. Every social system must have an agenda if it is to prioritize the problems facing it, so that it can decide where to start work. Such prioritization is necessary for a community and for a society (Yong, 2000:210).

The media influence people’s attitudes particularly in a multi-racial society such as the U.K. and New Zealand. In their classic study of readers’ perceptions of newspapers’ stories about race, Hartmann and Husband (1974) studied the influence of mass media on attitudes and opinions in Britain. They selected 208 white working-class secondary school children, aged 11/12 years old and 14/15 years old. Half of them came from areas of high immigration in the West Midlands and West Yorkshire and half from Teesside and Glasgow where immigration was very low. They found some interesting facts about the children’s attitudes towards “colored” people from the comparison of the ‘high’ and ‘low’ areas. They found that the children who lived in areas of low immigration where they had few personal contacts with blacks, relied more heavily on the media for their information about blacks, than the people in high areas who had closer contact. They concluded:

Media-supplied information carries the inference of conflict more often than that from other sources. As a result these children are more prone to think about race relations in terms of conflict than are those in ‘high’ contact areas, even though the ‘lows’ live in places where the objective conditions for inter-group competition or conflict are absent. It would seem that while attitudes are responsive to the characteristics of the local



situation – i.e., the extent of immigration – interpretive frameworks, ways of thinking are heavily structured by the mass media, particularly in areas where there are few immigrants. (Hartmann and Husband, 1974:230)

They concluded “people in all-white communities are particularly liable to accept the interpretation of events offered by the media because they lack any basis of contact with colored people. Media influence is seen as operating on interpretive frameworks – the categories people use when thinking about race-related matters – rather than on attitudes directly” (1974:292).

Their study is important in understanding that media shapes peoples’ attitudes to different racial groups, when these people have no, or few, alternative sources of information to challenge media versions.

Hartmann and Husband (1974) pointed out that the media propels certain traits into the spotlight while effacing others, chooses and restricts issues that it sees fit for deliberation or recall. This allows the media to influence attitudes by structuring and selecting information that the public uses to make choices. The public’s opinions and values are influenced by what the media decides should be public knowledge. If we accept their conclusion, the media is deeply implicated in how society is interpreted by New Zealanders.

The gatekeeper theorists endorse this role of the media in shaping public opinion by emphasizing that the editors and journalists act as “gatekeepers” (Eldridge, 1995), because editors and journalists have to choose what will be news and what they believe will be of interest to their audience and what will not.

According to Morrison and Tremewan (1992) news editors work throughout the day selecting several stories out of vast amount of material to compile into a daily broadcast or publication. Much of the information is ignored. The items that survive the process are then subject to further decision on their placement and the prominence given to them i.e. will it be the day’s lead story and hence given the most prominence or simply used as a filler to occupy space in newspaper. News stories go through a series of decisions and judgments even before reaching the news editor – judgments on what news will be reported, what priority they get and how

they are approached. “Time constraints, all determine which issues are covered and which are ignored” (Morrison and Tremewan 1992:119).

In doing so, how can they not be influenced by their own cultural and social backgrounds, by the requirements of their organization, by their professional experiences and by the assumptions of their profession? They must also be influenced no less by the logistics of news production and by their assessments of the comparative cost of collecting news stories. News cannot be some sort of objectively established entity (ibid:17.29; Eldridge, 1995).

The power of “gatekeepers” lies not only in the fact that they can make decisions to choose what is news but also that they have power to choose what to say and how to draw the map for public. Therefore, Cohen (1963) observed that:

(Agenda setting) may not be successful much of the time in telling people *what to think*, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers *what to think about*. ... The world will look different to different people, depending on the map that is drawn for them by writers, editors, and publishers of the [news]paper they read.

(James and Everett, 1996:12)

### **Studies of Asian immigrants and students in New Zealand**

Academic studies of Asian migrants or international students have focused on settlement and the difficulties of adjusting to life in New Zealand. Not many studies have linked their experiences with media coverage. This section considers the relevant studies of Asian immigrants and international students separately.

New Zealand has a long history of immigration, starting with Maori settlements, followed by European immigration and more recently, by immigrants from the South Pacific and Asia. Migration has been a major feature of New Zealand’s history (Zodgekar, 1990).

Studies (Ip, 1995; Murphy, 1994) on the history of New Zealand immigration have revealed two distinct periods of policy. Early policy was of a unitary ethnic policy that only focused on

“white” or “European” migrants, recently policy has shifted to a more open, less discriminating entry on the basis of ethnicity. For example, Chinese were regarded as aliens and targets of exclusion and were defined as “undesirable” persons to settle in New Zealand in the successive official discourses (Murphy, 1994).

According to Murphy’s study (1994), the character of immigration policy moved from regulating ethnic groups to considering the economic benefits that migrants bring. New Zealand’s immigration policy was a “white immigrants” policy aimed to encourage people from “traditional source countries” such as Great Britain and Europe. Before the 1980s, immigration policy had given clearly expressed preference for “British”, Western and Northern Europeans. From the late 1800s and early 1900s, racialised immigration acts were implemented in New Zealand. During this period, the Chinese Immigrant Act passed in 1881 introduced a poll-tax for Chinese only, followed by a series of laws designed to limit Chinese immigrants (Greif, 1974; Ip, 1995; Palat, 1996; Ng, 1999). In 1896 the Immigration Restriction Act imposed an English reading test of 100 words on Asian immigrants with the intention to exclude Chinese and Indian migrants in 1899 (O’Conner, 1968; Gallienne, 1991; Trlin, 1992; Murphy, 1994; Ip, 1995; Palat, 1996), and until 1910, the Immigration Restrictions Amendment Act still imposed a bond of £100 pounds per “alien” immigrant and 200 pounds per Chinese who wished to obtain a permit to enter New Zealand (O’Conner 1968; Young 1973; Gallinne 1991; Trlin 1992; Ip, 1995).

Traditionally, New Zealand immigration policy encouraged British immigrants, and nearly all Asian applicants of permits for New Zealand entry were refused entry revealing that immigration policy was based on ethnicity during this period. The Immigration Restriction Amendment Act of 1920 reinforced the power of the succeeding Minister to pursue a “white New Zealand policy” by refusing all Asian migrants’ entries (O’Conner, 1968). At that time, only wives and fiancées of New Zealand – born Indians and Chinese were allowed entry (Trlin 1970; Gallienne 1991). For Chinese immigrants, in 1939 the New Zealand government introduced a temporary concession which allowed Chinese men to bring their families to New Zealand for two years with the obligation to post a returnable bond of 200 pounds (Chui, 2002). Only in 1944 the New Zealand government removed the poll tax policy for Chinese migrants.

Studies on Chinese immigration history in New Zealand by Ip (1995), Ho and Farmer (1995), Ng (1996) divide the history of Chinese in New Zealand into three or four periods: restriction,

exclusion, assimilation and liberalization. All these authors agree that the 1986 Immigration Act was a turning point in Chinese immigrant history in New Zealand.

According to previous studies, significant changes for New Zealand immigration policy occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, when the New Zealand immigration policy focused on fostering population growth to alleviate labour scarcity and to compensate for population loss through trans-Tasman migration (Poot et al. 1988). Burke signaled that New Zealand immigration policy would begin to use an economic perspective and consider how immigration could contribute to the economy (Burke, 1986 and Population Monitoring Group, 1986). He referred to how immigrants were encouraged to come as a supplement to the workforce in the 1950s.

With the contraction of the economy, there was less need for workers and immigration was restricted. The 1961 Immigration Amendment Act removed British subjects' privilege of being exempted from permits. The Act was non-discriminatory in wording. Immigrants continued to come from the narrowly selected traditional sources of Britain and West Europe (Ip, 1995). The Immigration Act of 1964 reflected this bias towards immigrants from traditional source countries (Young 1973; Chui, 2002). This immigration policy continued during the 1970s.

New Zealand Immigration policy shifted towards an economic rationale in 1986. The 1986 immigration policy reforms were significant because they opened immigration to a wider range of potential immigrants, regarding Asian countries as sources of migrants with business skills and investment capital (Bedford et al. 2000). The objective of business immigration policy was "to attract migrants who will contribute to economic growth by increasing New Zealand's skill base, encouraging enterprise and innovation and fostering international links". The Immigration Act 1987 abolished the previous discriminatory restrictions on nationality and ethnicity as the main criteria for entry of Asians. Personal merit, qualifications and potential economic contributions became the main elements for applicants (Burke, 1986). With effect from 29 March 1999 the New Zealand Government introduced two new business migration categories, the Entrepreneur Category and the Long Term Business Visa ([www.immigration.govt.co.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.co.nz)).

A points system was introduced in 1991 which awarded entry under a General Category while retaining the Family Reunification and Humanitarian categories. In 1995, the New Zealand Immigration Services urged new, tough immigration criteria to regulate the entry of Asian immigrants (Ng, 1996). The new changes required all adults to pass an English language test or pay \$20,000 bond each if they failed the test. At the same time, Winston Peters, leader of New Zealand First Party, criticized the opening up of immigration and announced his intention to cut Asian immigration and foreign investment (Beal and Sos, 1999).

In 2002, the immigration policy increased the English requirement of International English Language Test System (IELTS) from 5.5 points to 6.5 points under the Skilled Category and from 4 to 5 for Business Category applicants.

In 2003, the New Zealand Immigration policy abolished the points system and replaced it with an “invitation only” system. The points system had allowed any applicant who reached a pass mark to be approved. Pass marks were adjusted to change the numbers qualifying ([www.immigration.govt.co.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.co.nz)). The new invitation system allows more discretion for the Minister of Immigration and is by invitation, not application-based. The migrants, who are subject to current language, character and health tests and a fixed points threshold, will be assessed, and ranked. The new rules also allow applicants with relevant full-time job offers to be fast-tracked for residency and if no invitation to apply for residency has been made after three months, applications lapse. It seems New Zealand’s open door has now been left only slightly ajar to immigrants.

There have also been studies on the relationship between Asian immigrants and the media. Siaw (1999) studied the minority voices in the New Zealand media, focusing on media images of Pacific Islanders and Asians. Her study found that New Zealand media coverage of these groups has “over recent years presented the public with rather negative images of these ethnic minority communities” (Siaw 1999:41). She also stressed that “the stories on ethnic minorities are often told from a lack of sensitivity and understanding and the communities have often found themselves without the means to reply. They have also been unable to articulate through the media their needs and views on issues fundamental to all New Zealanders as citizens” (Siaw,1999:139). The immigrants were the main target but her research also included some cases of international students in her study.

Another media study by Lee (1997) focused on Asian migrants and refugee settlement in Australia. Lee reported that migrants have a public image problem resulting from too much negative media exposure in Australia. He claimed that the media constantly carry prominent stories on Asians or other migrants doing something undesirable or illegal. Sometimes, these reports may refer to members of a particular nationality like Vietnamese or Korean, but often suspects are lumped together as having an "Asian" appearance. The same is also done when referring to immigration - with such broad terms as "Asian migration" or "Asian migrants". This lumping together of people from 23 countries in the Asian region means that certain images are identified for the whole group in the mind of the general public. Often, these are not flattering images, when connected with crimes or when put forward by anti-immigration groups. There is a tendency for the mainstream media to use an "us/them" approach when reporting on people of ethnic backgrounds. Such an approach often resorts to myth, stereotypes and sensationalism without the need to check for accuracy or sensitivity" (Lee, 1997).

#### Studies of international students in New Zealand

The changes to immigration policy occurred in the 1980s, a period of deregulation and innovation in New Zealand. The deregulation and reforms were mainly focused on the economy. New right economic policy replaced a Keynesian model of state regulation, and widespread reforms were implemented in virtually every sector of the economy. In the education sector, the reforms included 'export education'. The 1989 Education Act empowered tertiary institutions, and subsequently schools, to set about actively recruiting full fee-paying students from overseas, from Asia, Europe and South America (*Export Education in New Zealand: A strategic approach to developing the sector* ([www.minedu.govt.nz/index](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index))). After 1990 there was a rapid but fluctuating growth in student numbers, largely due to the frequent changes in education export policy.

Before 1999, New Zealand limited the number of overseas student enrolments per year. In 1998 the number was 1000 and this increased to 3000 in 1999. After October 1999, the New Zealand government deregulated the policy and the new policy contained no limit on the number of students per year. This opened the education market to anyone under the age of 35 years. A key feature of the new policy was that there were no English language requirements for applicants who wanted to study English ([www.nzis.govt.co.nz](http://www.nzis.govt.co.nz)). These changes gave a

new impetus to the education industry in New Zealand. In 2000 there were more than 7,000 international students in New Zealand schools, 35,500 in public tertiary institutions, 2,000 in private training establishments, and approximately 18,000 international students in the language schools (*Export Education in New Zealand: A strategic approach to developing the sector*. ([www.minedu.govt.nz/index](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index)). There were over 80,000 international students studying in New Zealand by 2002 (*New Zealand Statistics*, 2002, ([www.statistics.co.nz](http://www.statistics.co.nz))).

Several academic studies focused on the educational, social and cultural impacts of international students and the difficulties they faced fitting into society. Ward (2001) studied the impact of international students on domestic students and host institutions. She found that “the amount of interaction between international and domestic students is low and international students experience more problems than domestic students” (Ward, 2001:3-4).

Difficulties encountered by students who come from outside New Zealand was covered in a study by Auckland University academics which focused on Pacific students and the difficulties they experienced living and studying in New Zealand. Although this study did not mention whether these Pacific students were full-fee paying international students or not, they experience the same difficulties as international students. They found that the main problem for Pacific students is the difficulties they have in passing their courses in their tertiary studies. A lot of students lacked personal motivation and had negative experiences inherited from their secondary school experiences which are compounded in their tertiary experiences. These factors combined with the relatively easy-going tertiary lifestyles, place these students at risk (Anae, Ahderon, Benseman and Coxon, 2002: 9:168).

Another study “*Voice of Asian Youth*” (Shirley / Papanui Community Board, 1998) looked at the experiences of 13 – 19 year old Asian high school pupils’ students in Christchurch. This study covered a wider range of students’ experiences which included international students. They were questioned about their experiences in classrooms, school student care programmes, homestay communications, making friends, student activities and public services. They found that although overseas students have different cultural backgrounds, and encounter difficulties with communication, their experiences in making friends and studying were extremely similar to Pacific students. This study also offered some suggestions to schools, homestays, communities, public service organizations such as bus companies and banks about these students’ problems.

## **Chapter Three:**

### **Economics as a Priority: Economic Values of ‘Export Education’**

#### **International export education trends**

Education may make a difference not only for an individual but also for a country. Like other products, education can also be imported and exported. Over the last few decades, international education experience has become increasingly commonplace. Today about two million tertiary students are involved in formal education outside their own country in the world (*Study Abroad*, 2002). Education has become a major source of income for many countries such as Australia, Canada and the United States. There were 454,000 tertiary international students in the United States in 1996, and in 2000 to 2001 financial year, a total of 547,867 international students who contributed about US\$110 billion to the United States economy ([www.cctv.com/news/science/](http://www.cctv.com/news/science/)) 199,000 students study in the U.K and 102,000 in Australia.

Australia is the closest country geographically to New Zealand with a similar cultural environment. Thus, it is an example for New Zealand because in the past few years Australia has become one of most popular countries for Asian students.

‘Export education’ refers to a country using its educational policies to attract overseas students to study in the country. These students pay full tuition fees that are about three or four times higher than local students’ fees. Since the 1980s Australia has become one of the most popular countries in the world for international students to study in. Its recruitment of international students grew from 99,966 to 157,834 between 1994 and 1999 (*Australia Education International*, Overseas Students Statistics 1998, [www.aeo.us](http://www.aeo.us)). Most of these international students were from Asia. After 2000, due to its international education policy tightening up and becoming more restrictive, the number of international students has decreased but the education industry remains an important income resource to the Australian economy (*Study Abroad*, 2002).



International students have brought many benefits for the Australian economy. The tuition fees from both onshore and offshore students, have had a major economic impact on the Australian economy. Spending on goods and services by onshore students, including accommodation, food and travel, contributes more than twice the amount of the tuitions fees to Australia's economy (*Study Abroad*, 2002).

New Zealand's 'export education' has a long history, but the education industry was limited in scope due to the quota limit policy before 1999. In 2000, the New Zealand government removed the quota limits of international students into New Zealand, which led to a rapid increase in the number of international students. The number of full fee paying students in primary and secondary schools increased by 42.6% between 1999 (5,044) and 2000 (7,191) (*New Zealand Ministry of Education*, June 2001). Also New Zealand earned about \$1.14 billion from its new education export policy in 2001, and \$1.7 billion in 2002. ([www.nztrade.co.nz](http://www.nztrade.co.nz)).

### **Who are the customers?**

Thirty years ago, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea were all low-income countries. How they managed to bridge the income gap that once separated them from New Zealand and the rest of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), centred on their heavy investment in education and training. These were the countries where parents encouraged their children to study science and technology. Lots of young people went to western countries to study. For example, in Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea most young people chose the United States or Australia to pursue their bachelor, master or doctorate degrees, while most Hong Kong people preferred to go to the United Kingdom. Between 1988 (8,100) and 2000 around 32,000 Taiwanese went to overseas to study (*Asian Education Times*, February 2002).

Taiwan used to be the biggest provider of international students to the United States (Tang, 2002). Obviously it was a good opportunity for western countries to utilise the trade in education, because these Asian countries believed that their young people who studied overseas would bring the newest technology and knowledge to develop their own country when they returned home. As well, they believed that high educational achievement would

lead to economic growth. Therefore, Taiwan is a potential provider of large numbers of international students for New Zealand.

Many Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong teach English at secondary schools and universities. By contrast, Japan, Korea, China, Thailand and Vietnam use only their own language in their education systems. This factor has become a barrier in their cross-national communication. Simultaneously, the competition for human resources within countries is getting more and more intensive. Mastering a foreign language has become an important skill required by most employers. Young people in these four countries are encouraged to go to English speaking countries to study, to learn one or two foreign languages. This situation is likely to continue.

Australia's export education experience has clearly shown that South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong were the main sources in the region of international students. One report said: "Australia has the leading market share in both Singapore and Hong Kong. It is second to the U.S in Indonesia and third to the U.S and U.K in all the other countries listed" (Australia Education International, *Overseas Students Statistics* 1998, [www.aeo.us](http://www.aeo.us) ).

Since the mid-1990s, China and India have provided the biggest group of international students for Australia and New Zealand ([www.aeo.us](http://www.aeo.us)), as a consequence of the trade directions changing after Asian economic crisis in 1996. This change is marked by South Korea, the leading source country providing over half of the students in 1995 for New Zealand (Bennett, 1998:6), being replaced by China which is the biggest market of international students for New Zealand today.

## **The New Zealand education industry**

The provisions in the Education Act 1989 opened up the possibility of systematic recruitment of full fee paying students. It led tertiary institutions, and subsequently schools, to set about actively recruiting full fee-paying students from overseas.

Since 1990 the increase in student numbers has been rapid but with fluctuating growth. In 1999, the New Zealand Government removed the limited policies, and allowed the numbers of international students to increase exponentially. There were around 52,700 international students studying in New Zealand by 2001. This represents a 36% increase over the 2000 numbers (38,753) and an 86% increase over 1999 numbers (28,340) (*New Zealand Ministry of Education*, 2002 [www.ministry.govt.co.nz](http://www.ministry.govt.co.nz) ). In 2002 the numbers increased to 82,472 (*The New Zealand Herald*, 28 April 2003).

New Zealand's export education providers have tended to draw on a limited number of markets. For example, in the mid 1990s, Malaysia was a key source of international students in the tertiary sector. More recently, China, and Korea have accounted for most of the growth across all sectors.

The presence of international students in different institutions and regions throughout the country is variable. For example, in 2000, ten per cent of secondary schools had over half of all foreign fee-paying students, with a large proportion of these schools being located in higher socio-economic communities. Overall Auckland tends to dominate the export education market (*Export Education in New Zealand*, January 2002). Another statistical report shows that Auckland was the main destination region for international students in 2001. It is also the main destination for Asian migrants. This continues a trend over the last decade. 67% of primary school international students, 53% of secondary international students and around half of public tertiary international students were studying in Auckland (*Foreign Fee Paying Students Statistics to 2001*, September, 2002).

## Contribution to the economy of ‘export education’

The rapid growth in New Zealand’s export education industry has been lucrative for the education institutions involved. Currently, New Zealand educates over 40,000 international students per year, primarily on-shore in New Zealand (*Foreign Fee Paying Students Statistics to 2001*, September, 2002).

Since the late 1990s, when New Zealand entered a new phase of engagement in international education, the contribution of export education to the economy has climbed from around \$500 million a year in the late 90s to an estimated \$700 million in 2000. From July 2000 to July 2001, the number of international students has risen to 3,364, an increase of 46.8% (*Education Statistics News Sheet*, July 2001). There were around 52,700 international students studying in New Zealand which contributed \$1.14 billion to the New Zealand economy in 2001 (*Foreign Fee-Paying Students In New Zealand*, 2001). This increased to approximately \$1.7 billion in 2002 when the export education industry became New Zealand’s fourth largest export earner.

**Table 1: Number of international students in New Zealand, 2001**

Number of FFP Students in New Zealand, 2001							
Schools		State Tertiary			Private Tertiary	English Language Schools	Total
Primary	Secondary	Uni	Poly	Coll of Ed			
1,823	8,732	8,247	4,337	65	3,289	26,203	52,696

Source: Foreign Fee-Paying Students In New Zealand: Trends, *A Statistical Overview*. 2001

A statistical overview of the foreign fee-paying students in New Zealand shows that the majority of international students in 2001 were of Asian citizenship (*The foreign fee-paying students in New Zealand*, 2001). For example, 92% of both primary and secondary school international students, and 83% of public tertiary international students were of Asian citizenship. China was the most common country of citizenship of international students in 2001, but Japan remained the most common country of citizenship of international students in

English Language schools in 2001 with 11,634 Japanese international students (*The foreign fee-paying students in New Zealand*, 2001).

**Table 2.      Number of international students from the Asian region by  
country of citizenship as at July 2000 and 2001**

	China	Japan	Korea	Thailand	Taiwan	Hong Kong	Other
2000	1989	1254	1496	513	426	374	302
2001	3554	1422	2746	628	430	390	375

Source: *Education Statistics News Sheet*, December 2001

International students have brought several benefits to the New Zealand economy.

Firstly, universities worldwide are facing shrinking government support (Bennett, 1998:8) and are seeking alternative sources of revenue. In this climate, overseas students' full tuition fees are becoming an important income resource. Universities have been able to use the extra revenue to improve the facilities for New Zealand students and staff, and to provide funds for research (Timer, 2002).

Furthermore, the statistical overview of the foreign fee-paying students in New Zealand shows that there has been strong growth in the number of foreign fee-paying students in all public tertiary institutions over the period 1994 to 2000. Over that time the numbers of tertiary students have been increased by 191%, from 3,945 in 1994 to 11,490 in 2000 (*Foreign Fee Paying Students in New Zealand: Trends*, June 2001).

Secondly, the report claims that both domestic and international students benefit from exposure to other cultures and perspectives, enabling them to develop skills to succeed in cross-cultural contexts.

A third advantage is that it could create job opportunities in the New Zealand education system. The Education Statistics News Sheet shows that between July 2000 and July 2001 fifteen new state schools opened in New Zealand (*Education Statistics News Sheet*, December 2001), and *The New Zealand Herald* reported that at 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2002, more than 50 private

language schools were approved by New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) (*The New Zealand Herald*, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2002). Thus, the numbers of international education providers through the country are growing quickly. There are 700 schools providing educational programmes for international students, including 120 English language schools in 2002 (*The New Zealand Herald*, 25 November, 2002). The export education industry is also estimated to have created up to 20,000 jobs ([www.nztrade.co.nz](http://www.nztrade.co.nz)).

Fourth, the contribution of international students to the economy also includes expenditure by visitors who come for special ceremonies (like graduation) or visit to spend a holiday with their children (*Asian students in New Zealand*, 1998). It was estimated that in 2000 expenditure was approximately \$1000 NZ dollars per international student ([www.immigration.govt.co.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.co.nz)).

Fifth, according to Neville Bennett (1998), international students could help educational institutions orient themselves towards vital Pacific Rim markets, develop the internationalisation of New Zealand education and encourage the broadening of the cultural experience of its inhabitants. For example, the international students would increase income and increase the capacity to invest in the institutional development of the education system, as well as increasing staff competence in cross-cultural teaching.

The sixth advantage is that it increases foreign exchange earnings that can lead to a stronger value for the New Zealand dollar and create benefits for New Zealand import industries for international trade.

However, there are less tangible benefits that have not been quantified. For instance, Dawkins *et al* (1991) identified important links between immigration and education in Australia. Causation runs both ways. The same situation is happening in New Zealand. Students come to like the New Zealand lifestyle and this leads to eventual migration to New Zealand. The presence of relatives and friends in New Zealand provide support for students living in a new country. Relatives and friends visiting students in New Zealand will also have a chance to familiarise themselves with New Zealand and look for business opportunities.

New Zealand education export with its contribution of \$1.14 billion to New Zealand's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2001 has put it in the top five contributors to the economy (*The*

*New Zealand Herald* 25/11/2002) and it has become the third-largest export earner in 2001 ([www.nztrade.co.nz](http://www.nztrade.co.nz)).

However, although the booming education industry has brought benefits these are seen as problems to New Zealand by some critics. In a column headed “Far too much immigration without preparation”, Garth George pointed out that these people who come to New Zealand whether immigrants or foreign students, cause many problems such as “overcrowded schools, teacher shortages, overflowing hospitals with interminable waiting lists, near-grid locked roads and house prices that make the Kiwi dream a fantasy” (George, 15/08/2002). Similarly opposed voices have recently appeared in television programmes or other New Zealand media outlets.

In January 2003, *The New Zealand Herald* ran a story reporting on the Government’s plan to cap the number of foreign fee-paying students in schools to ease the teacher shortage. Reportedly both the Immigration Minister Lianne Dalziel and Education Minister Trevor Mallard were seeking to restrict international student numbers “because the strain they place on the state education system is prompting teachers to resign”(reported in *The New Zealand Herald*, 23/01/2003).

Other arguments have appeared in the academic field as well, with complaints that “they are coming into secondary schools and sitting NCEA, despite not having any prior knowledge of New Zealand history or literature” (reported in *The New Zealand Herald*, 28/04/2003). This apparently places even more pressure on teachers. There are concerns that the current national curriculum may not be suited to Asian students and that the extra attention they require from teachers may also lead to native students receiving less attention, undermining the quality of education they receive.

Another concern is that New Zealand attracts students from too narrow a range of countries - about 40 per cent from China, 20 per cent from South Korea, and 17 per cent from Japan (reported in *New Zealand Education Ministry Newsletter*, May 2003) – and this makes the industry vulnerable to regional events such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

This vulnerability is evident in the decrease of numbers of foreign students in 2003. *The New Zealand Herald* article “Foreign student flood slows” speculated “the flow of language

students could drop by up to 50 per cent by the end of the year and worsen further in 2004” (*The New Zealand Herald*, 14/05/2003). According to the statistics report of Education New Zealand 2003, the numbers of Chinese international students reduced by 21.3 per cent, Korean students reduced by 39.2 per cent and Japanese by about 12 per cent from January to June in 2003 (Education New Zealand statistics 2003). The recent SARS virus is one of the main reasons for the significant decrease in Asian overseas students coming to New Zealand.

What are the other reasons that foreign students are staying away? The reasons were investigated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) recently. They reported that the factors behind the downturn included the fact that “the SARS virus encouraged parents to keep their children close to home; that the strengthening New Zealand dollar made the country more expensive and that negative reports in the Asian media over our attitude towards foreigners and rising unemployment among Chinese graduates made tertiary qualifications less desirable” (*The New Zealand Herald*, 14/05/2003). Another reason is SARS also made New Zealanders fearful of accepting more Asian students especially those who are from Singapore, China and Taiwan because of the risk of infection. Some New Zealand Immigration Office branches had to close during the period of SARS (*The New Zealand Herald*, 02/06/2003)

Thus, increasing number of foreign students studying in New Zealand has raised a few concerns and created some public debate over the benefits of this industry. However, despite these concerns there is still a high level of optimism regarding the future of the export education industry as an economic earner. Some analysts believe the industry has the potential to grow to \$5 billion in 10 years. If so then optimism will be replaced with a growing confidence. Regardless of its future economic success, debate over the concerns mentioned above will continue and may deter foreign student as discussed below.



## **Chapter Four:**

### **What the Media Says**

#### **— A general media view of Asian**

#### **immigrants and students in New Zealand**

It is not easy to measure or see in a tangible way all the effects of the media on the settlement process of migrants and international students, and whether the media is a positive or negative influence on their process of adjustment to a new life in a new country. The systematic study looked at only 17 months' coverage from two newspapers. Thus, the results are limited by the restrictions on time and number of newspapers. An overview of media coverage is useful in order to trace longer trends of media representation about Asian immigrants and international students.

On the other hand, people who come from outside this country always keep an eye on how the host media represents their stories. They are interested in what the media says about them, especially, in a democratic country like New Zealand, where freedom of speech means that the media can publish any opinions it deems "good" for a democratic community.

New Zealand media carry many stories about Asian migrants and Asian international students in New Zealand. This overview of media accounts of Asian immigrants and students covered wider media carriers which were from print media newspapers, magazines, broadcast media television, radio programmes to the Internet. Media often put Asian migrants and international students' issues together in the story or coverage. Maybe this is because they are seen to have very much in common such as their similar ethnic backgrounds and their processes of settlement and adjustment in a new environment. Because of these close associations, it seems unnecessary to separate them when looking at images of the Asian international students through the media. In this respect, this thesis follows Hartmann and Husband's study. Before they embarked on their detailed studies of a sample of print media stories and survey of reader reception, Hartmann and Husband (1974) gave an overview of media coverage of blacks. This chapter takes a similar approach, looking at Asian immigrants.

New Zealand is an attractive place to live and study for migrants and international students. A study from Christchurch (Shirley and Papanui Community Board, 1998) shows that New Zealand is perceived as clean, green and safe. These factors are increasingly important these days and cause many international students to choose it as a study place (*Voices of Asian Youth*, Shirley/Papanui Community Board, 1998). New Zealand's education system is considered to be of a high standard, and it has been a cheaper destination to complete a bachelor's degree, including course fees and living costs, than Australia, the U.K, Canada or the U.S.A ([www.idp.com/aboutidp/mediacentre/march2002](http://www.idp.com/aboutidp/mediacentre/march2002)). Also New Zealand's more liberal immigration and education export policies make it accessible for people.

Adjustments to immigration policy in 1986 discussed in Chapter Two made New Zealand a more open and acceptable place for Asian migrants. Subsequently, the growth in the numbers of migrants who come from Asian countries like China, India, Korea and Japan to New Zealand has been remarkable. The increasing population of Asian migrants led the host media to pay more attention to this non- white ethnic group.

Generally speaking, there are two main polarized points of view which appeared in the media, support for Asian immigration and opposition to Asian immigration. These views came through media to the public especially in the period of New Zealand's election campaign in 2001 when Winston Peters, as the leader of New Zealand First, led the public attack on immigration and Asian migrants in particular. A particularly hostile story in *The New Zealand Herald* by Pravin Char entitled "War on our streets, fear in our homes" dated 10 November 2002, reiterated Winston Peters' ideas focusing on ethnic violence and the rise in Asian unemployment to 70 per cent. Char claimed that (Asian migrants) were "bringing the third world to New Zealand and dividing society" and warned of race riots and a religious war comparable with Kosovo. The next day *The New Zealand Herald* published a reader's letter which wrote that "Employers who were also claiming to be 'desperate for skilled labour' were in fact desperate to keep wages down. We do not need to import skilled labour, we need to educate New Zealanders. There is nothing immigrants can do that Kiwis could not do at least as well with the proper training" (see *The New Zealand Herald*, 12/11/02).

As anti-Asian immigration voices received more media coverage on mainstream television, radio, newspapers and Internet, voices opposing discrimination appeared in the same New Zealand mainstream media and ethnic media such as the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*, BBC

AM 990, *Korean Times* and *New Zealand India Times*, as well as left wing publications like the *Socialist Review*.

Most of these stories strongly criticized people who shared ideas with Winston Peters. The magazine *Socialist Review* printed an article in March 2002 (*Socialist Review*, Summer 2002/3) opposing Winston Peters' ideas, entitled "Asians are welcome here: Racism and the great "immigration" swindle". They questioned whether "Asians were flooding the country". They commented "But surely immigrants should take on board "our" culture when they arrive?" and asked "How do we fight against Peters?" As well, they pointed out that:

The most recent statistics available ([www.dol.govt.nz](http://www.dol.govt.nz)) show that Chinese and Indians make up only a third of all arrivals to New Zealand. 3,512 Chinese arrived between 1 July and 16 November this year (2002) – less than the 4,160 whites from South Africa and Great Britain who arrived in the same period. Peters claims to be trying to get a debate started around "the Balkanization of our country" and immigrants "mainly from the third world" show that his campaign has far more to do with skin color than immigration itself. It is in fact nothing whatsoever to do with "immigration" – it is anti-Asian racism. Winston is creating racism, he is not simply stirring it up, he is targeting a group.....

(*Socialist Review*, Summer 2002/3: 12-15)

The National Business Review –HP Invent poll of 750 reported their finding that 45 per cent of New Zealanders and 54 per cent of Aucklanders thought there were too many Asian immigrants (see *The New Zealand Herald*, 9/11/2002). These results show that a high proportion of people are interested in the terms of the immigration policy and the contribution of migrants to the country's future. *Holmes* of TV One ran three programs about Asian immigration issues during November 2002. One of these episodes featured a live debate between Winston Peters and a recent immigrant protesting over what he believed were racist comments made by Peters regarding Asian immigration.

At the same time, the immigration supporters, local ethnic media and mainstream media were busy countering the negativity through speeches and articles in the media. *Chinese Express* and *The New Zealand Herald* both published an article by Massey University professor Kerr Inkson, entitled "Immigrants in need of a working welcome". Inkson analyzed why Asian immigrants have difficulty finding jobs in New Zealand. One of his main points was that Kiwis do not give migrants work or even an opportunity for a job interview. There are some

good examples from other stories in the media supporting his point of view and this coverage is widened to cover Chinese who have been here several generations. The *Sunday Star Times* (7/06/2003) ran the story of Wong a well-known chef in New Zealand who is a several generation Chinese New Zealander. Due to his reputation for high quality cooking, he has appeared on television cooking shows and in magazine articles. However, because of his Chinese name, he could not find a job. As he said, “I could not even get a chance for interview, I had to change my name”.

As with the above stories in this period, some migrants’ stories in *The New Zealand Herald* recounted how people found it hard to settle. For example, “Seven years’ delay to find the right job” (Cumming, 9/10/2002), “Know how, can do” (Herrick, 18/11/2002) and “Korean migrants drift north” (Collins, 29/9/2002) were very similar in their content.

When the New Zealand Government suddenly changed its immigration English requirement from the General level of 5.0 to 6.5 points for the applicants who were under the General Skills Category at the end of November 2002, it seemed that Winston Peters’ views had prevailed on this issue. However, the battle of words continued. The New Zealand Government’s sudden changes to immigration policy provoked feedback from the wider community. Some complained yet again that the country had attracted more migrants than they wished; some urged migrants to do things together to challenge race discrimination from the Government. *Socialist Review* ran an article with title “Asians are welcome here: Racism and the great “immigration” swindle”. It pointed out that:

And, what is worse, Winston says it – Labour does it. Only days after Peters started his latest vile and racist campaign of abuse against Asians, Labour’s Lianne Dalziel announced a new Government policy that would see migrants without university level English refused entry. This policy is a blatant capitulation to Peters’ campaign, and it is based on exactly the same false logic drives New Zealand First.

(*Socialist Review*, Summer 2002/3: 12-15)

Media focus on the unemployment of Asian migrants was central to the discussions regarding Asian immigration, however many were still debating whether New Zealand should become a multicultural society or not.

With the strong focus on ‘Asian’ stories it is not surprising that Asian international students also have become another popular topic for journalists in New Zealand in the past few years.

These stories on international students cover issues such as export education, educational problems, cultural conflict and students' behaviors. For example, in the front page of *The New Zealand Herald*, 21 May 2003, "Chinese crime: officer faces grilling." This article covered the explanation and apology made by the Police Association following comments made by an Auckland policeman in a letter to the editor of *The New Zealand Herald*. In his letter the policeman claimed that police were overrun by the criminal offending of some Asian students. He stated that, "I am attending the results of what some of them study; theft, fraud, fighting, intimidation, and a sideline in extortion and weapon carrying." Following this front-page story was another story on page A3 of the same paper entitled "Kidnapper jailed for eight years." The story carried a large picture of convicted Chinese student criminal Da Wan and comments from a judge warning Asian students they face harsh punishments for such crimes.

Many stories reported these young people's success and difficulties as international students such as the story "Students open many doors" by Estelle Sarney in *The New Zealand Herald* on 25 November 2002. Other media such as television and radio also paid a lot of attention to this subject as well. During the 2002 New Zealand election campaign, television and radio invited people to discuss the development of the education industry. Most of these programs revolved around benefits to the New Zealand economy. On the other hand, some stories reported on difficulties such as Alan Perrott's article "Overseas students face a culture gap" (see *The New Zealand Herald*, 28/04/03).

In sum, the way media depictions are constructed helps create a public impression and may influence peoples' attitudes. This coverage aroused my interest to do more systematic research, mainly focused on New Zealand newspapers' reporting on Asian students and the influence of media's negative coverage.

## **Chapter Five:**

### **Research Design and Methodology**

#### **Methodology**

This research takes as its starting point the role of the media as a major influence on the way people understand and interpret events, focusing on media coverage of Asian international students and immigrants in New Zealand. The thesis investigates the differences between media accounts of Asian students and students' own perceptions of their experiences, using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Because the emphasis of this study is on the comparison of media representation and individual views of reality as experienced by overseas students, the study initially used written documents as a basis of the media voices. The individual experiences uncovered in the survey are what Sarantakos (2000) defines as a "biographical method".

The quantitative research involves two stages. The first stage is a content analysis of themes of media coverage of Asian international students and Asian immigrants in a sample of print media over a 18-month period. The coverage in *The New Zealand Herald* is compared with the Chinese newspaper the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* by an analysis of every story in the period. The differences between these two newspapers are identified and their characteristics discussed. In the second stage a structured written questionnaire surveyed 183 Asian international students on their own experiences. Respondents to the survey were anonymous. The questions targeted the issues identified by the media so the media versions could be compared with the students' own accounts. The results from cross referencing the data were analysed using SPSS software.

#### **Media selection**

Two newspapers, *The New Zealand Herald* and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*, were selected for the research purpose of media representation.

*The New Zealand Herald* is the most influential newspaper in New Zealand, in terms of its circulation and readership. It is the country's largest English language newspaper with a circulation of more than 210,800, particularly strong in Auckland ([www.nzherald.com](http://www.nzherald.com)). It also publishes for Australian readers. More than 550,000 readers read *The Herald* six days per week including on-line readers, and more than a million read the paper each week ([www.nzherald.com](http://www.nzherald.com)). The latest Audit Bureau of Circulation survey reported that *The Herald* has maintained its share of total metropolitan newspaper circulation at 47 per cent in the country (*The New Zealand Herald*, 15/5/03).

Choosing a Chinese newspaper was more difficult. There are several Chinese newspapers in New Zealand. The actual state of New Zealand's Chinese newspapers is disordered and not well organised and their journalistic resources are very limited. Most of them focus on either business interests or community issues. I considered three main papers for comparison with the *New Zealand Herald*; *The Mandarin Times*<sup>1</sup>, *The Independence Daily*<sup>2</sup> and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*. *The Mandarin Times* claimed 'widest circulation' with its free of charge market stratagem, but most of this paper's pages are taken up by advertisements, and there is no editorial or proper reporting, usually the news items are taken 'from the wire' and translated into Chinese. On some big issues such as immigration and international students' affairs they run their own column of readers contributions. Similar criticisms can also be made of the other two papers. Unlike the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* and the *Mandarin Times*, *The Independence Daily* is not a free newspaper, although it has a free circulation on Wednesdays which is very popular. However, the circulation for this paper during the rest of the week is lower than others. Also the *Independence Daily* is part of a Taiwan-based loosely linked international group which carries news from Taiwan, Hong Kong and China with a distinctive political flavour. This flavour is seen as pro-independence. It is more likely that one will find negative news about China in this newspaper.

The quality of these Chinese papers cannot be easily compared with the *New Zealand Herald*, however they all play an important role in the Chinese community. Most Chinese rely on

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<sup>1</sup> *The Mandarin Times*: Established in 1991. A free of charge Chinese newspaper with widest circulation of approximately 37,000 copies. The main readers are mainland Chinese ([www.mpages.co.nz](http://www.mpages.co.nz)).

<sup>2</sup> *The Independence Daily* is owned by the Taiwan Democracy Progress Party and carries a perceptible political line. Taiwanese are the main readers, its circulation about 17,000 and the retail price is NZ\$1.4 dollars (*The Independence Daily* profile 2004).

these newspapers to get information and to find out about New Zealand culture especially new immigrants and international students.

After consultation with three local Chinese journalists and academics working within the field, a decision was eventually made to follow their own preference and to use the Auckland-based Chinese newspaper the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*, as the subject to be analysed for media representation. The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* was established in 1994. It is a free-of-charge Chinese newspaper with a nationwide circulation of approximately 20,000 copies and is published twice a week on Wednesdays and Fridays in Chinese (*The New Zealand Chinese Herald Profile*, 2002). It was felt this paper was slightly preferable than the others although all three papers considered were all of a similar standard.

There were two main reasons for selecting the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*. Firstly, the newspapers' free of charge strategy has created an interesting consumer culture within the Chinese community of consumers getting used to reading free newspapers without editorial or in-depth news content. Circulating the newspapers free of charge ensures a wider circulation than a pay newspaper such as the *Independence Daily*. Secondly, the content was taken into consideration, both the *Mandarin Times* and the *Independence Daily* appear to focus on particular communities within the Chinese population however the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* is regarded as having a wider coverage of issues including China, Hong Kong as well as Taiwan. According to a Chinese journalist who has worked on both *Independence Daily* and *New Zealand Chinese Herald*, although the *Independence Daily* does have the image of a more 'proper' newspaper, in reality the difference in content between all three papers is minimal (Anonymous, 2004). None of the three newspapers have reporters as in *The New Zealand Herald*. Most of their local news contents are translated from *The New Zealand Herald* and supplemented by reader's contributions.

### **Media sample**

The sample for this thematic analysis of content are articles on the topic of Asian international students. The sampled period for *The New Zealand Herald* and *New Zealand Chinese Herald* is from 18 February 2001 to 18 August 2002. Because of the different publishing frequencies of these two newspapers; there were 390 days in the 78 weeks for *The New Zealand Herald* and 156 days in the 78 weeks for the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*.



In the second stage, two types of studies were employed: the survey's self-completion questionnaire and the qualitative interviews.

The survey questionnaire (see Appendix) sought to uncover Asian international students' experiences, attitudes and relationships towards such things as homestays, educational institutions and media. The questions targeted the issues identified by the media, so that the media versions could be compared with the students' own accounts. The survey questions were completed by 183 Asian international students, mainly Chinese, as well as a small number of respondents from other nationalities. All respondents were anonymous. Then in-depth interviews were conducted with five of the respondents to the questionnaire, who contacted the researcher and volunteered to participate (see interviews in Appendix) to give more detailed answers to some questions that could not be analysed by the questionnaire itself. The identities of these respondents remain confidential.

### **Content analysis method**

Content analysis as a method of studying media is a long established practice in the social sciences. The method embraces a wide range of different techniques, most of which fall within the definition offered by Bernard Berelson at "the objective systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communications." (McQuail, 1997).

Anders (1998) explains that content analysis is a quantitative method that seeks to identify and count the occurrence of specified characteristics or dimensions of texts, and through this, to be able to say something about the messages, images, and representations of such text and their wider significance. This, he says, points to the need to place what is counted in content analysis within a theoretical framework which articulates in the form of a model of communication influence the social significance and meaning of what is being counted.

Lee (2000) says that content analysis can help provide some indication of relative prominence or absences of key characteristics in media text, but drawing inferences from these indications depends entirely on the context and framework of interpretation by which the analysed text are circumscribed.

Sarantakos (2000) adds that the framework allows the main purpose of analysing the content of media “beyond the definition of simple open or hidden media messages”(Sarantakos, 2000: 279), and some people believed that the content analysis also can test that whether the media provides a quality editorial or news coverage that promotes the public sphere and democracy. Usually content analysis starts by categorizing the content of the newspaper based largely on a coding frame first utilized in the research carried out for the first Royal Commission on the Press in Great Britain during the period 1947-1949 (Lee 2000: 210). Errors and subjectivity might occur in the analysis, as content analysis could never be entirely objective due to choices and subjective judgements that are made in classifying the content of the newspapers (Anders, 1998).

### **Students’ self-completion questionnaires**

The multiple-choice questions, rating questions and open-ended questions were the main types of questions in the questionnaire.

For the multiple-choice questions, the respondents were offered a list of choices from which a single item or more than one response could be chosen. The questions covered a range of information such as opinions, attitudes, motives, behaviours and facts.

Rating the questions was designed to measure the degree of the respondents’ reaction to, and satisfaction with issues. In this research, questions were designed based on a semantic-differential scale (Blankenship and Breen, 1992). These questions provided a range from 1 to 5 points for each question. Respondents were expected to choose an appropriate answer. For example, question 31 asks “*How well do you fit in with the local culture?*” it was expected that the respondent would choose a number from 1 = Not at all, 2 = A little, 3 = OK, 4 = Well, 5 points = Very well.

In this questionnaire, the open-ended questions were designed to ask for the respondents’ reasons and opinions. For instance, question 50 asks “*Are you aware of any English media coverage of Asian international students? If yes, what were the stories about?* ”. A previous study showed that there is usually a low response to open-ended questions (Chou, 2000).

### **Face- to - face interviews**

To add depth to the analysis of data, the questionnaire was followed by five face-to-face informal qualitative interviews to flesh out findings from the questionnaire. The interview questions focused on investigating their responses to the questionnaires particularly the emotional and physical difficulties of adaptation, with regard to their opinions and experiences.

### **Translation and credibility**

The original questionnaire for international students was designed and written in English. In order to increase the response rate and to ensure that respondents fully understood the questions, the questionnaire was then translated into Chinese. The main translators were all native speakers of Chinese who were also proficient in English. The answers to all questions were translated back into English. For the other nationalities like Korean and Japanese an English version of the questionnaire was used.

All interviewees were Chinese and the interviews were either in Chinese or in English depending on the interviewees' English proficiency. This was because the interview was a good opportunity for respondents to speak out about their personal feelings concerning their experiences. If the student could not speak fluent English, the interviews were in Chinese. All Chinese interviews were translated into English by qualified Chinese who were also proficient in English.

### **Asian international students selection**

This study selected five educational institutions in which to do the research. They were Auckland University of Technology (AUT), Unitec, Auckland Institute of Studies (AIS), Modernage Institute of Learning and Edenz Colleges. A total of 183 Asian international students were selected to identify key variables.

The researcher selected the students with the assistance of the institutions that agreed to participate. The researcher and an administrator from the institution went into student classes

together. There, the researcher explained the study to all the students. The students who were New Zealand permanent residents or citizens were asked to leave the classroom before students were given the survey form. So all students who completed the survey were full fee paying international students as that was the basic condition explained by schools' administrators and researcher.

Almost all of these students were either Chinese (nearly 81%) or Korean (nearly 13%) which reflects recent statistics from the Ministry of Education for the Year 2002, that shows over two years the highest numbers of Asian international students came from China and Korea. The number of Chinese international students was 30,875; Korean international students were 14,933 in 2002 ([www.ministry.govt.co.nz](http://www.ministry.govt.co.nz)). This research therefore chose to focus on students from these two countries. However, a small number of students of other Asian nationalities students were included such as Thai, Japanese, Cambodian and Indian. This is because they were also Asian international students and were in the same classes with other international Chinese and Korean students. As well, a few international students were not Asian because the schools wanted to treat all international students the same and not exclude them from the briefing on the basis of ethnicity. The forms from the non-Asian respondents were excluded from the survey.

### **Data analysis**

Data analysis involved two steps. The first step was to process the raw data by editing, coding and data entry using the computer software "SPSS". Data was edited into the same unit of measurement. Through this process errors could be checked out and all raw answers were translated into pre-statistical form. "SPSS" was employed to store the data for further analysis.

## Chapter Six:

### **Media Coverage of Asian international students and migrants in two New Zealand newspapers**

\_\_ Money welcome, behavior unacceptable:

How New Zealand media represented Asian international students and migrants

Although the main focus of media coverage was planned to be on stories about Asian international students, stories on Asian migrants were included in the sample. This is because (as emphasised already) the coverage of Asian international students and Asian migrants are interconnected. The relationship between immigration and overseas students is an important one that cannot be overlooked. There are two main aspects of the relationship explained here.

Firstly, as mentioned in Chapter Two, Asian immigration has a long history in New Zealand, but an influx of new Asian migrants and a mass of Asian international students have come into New Zealand in the past decade. It is likely that the public perceptions and media representation of the Asian international students are influenced by the public images of Asian immigrants. Therefore, the media coverage selection and media content analysis included immigration stories.

There is limited research regarding Asian international students and the media. Most research either focuses on immigration or Asian students, like Yvonne Palmer's study "Voices of Asian Youth", which mainly focused on Asian students' needs in New Zealand; or like McKinnon's research on "Asian immigrants in New Zealand". Most of this research did not mention the relationship of Asian international students to immigrants. Only Australia researchers Dawkins *et al* (1991) identified important links between immigration to Australia and education. Dawkins *et al* emphasize that:

Students get to like the Australia lifestyle and this leads to eventual migration to Australia. The presence of relatives and friends in Australia provides support for

students in a strange country. Relatives and friends visiting students in Australia get a chance to get to know Australia and look for business opportunities.

(Dawkins *et al*, 1991:76)

Australia and New Zealand have much in common, so this situation could happen in New Zealand as well. Therefore, in this study, we surveyed the percentage of international students wanting to apply for New Zealand Permanent Residence after they finish their courses. This is discussed in Chapter Six.

The second connection between students and immigration is an interesting phenomenon that I observed with some of the students in my care. Some businesses which have been established in Auckland recently were not set up by the immigrants, rather by international students. These businesses include Internet bars, fashion shops, restaurants, amusements and student service centers. The young investors were more interested in doing business or making money than in applying for New Zealand residency. These students are entering into these business ventures despite the fact that they hold only student visas and are legally not permitted to do so. Many are aiming to become permanent residents.

It is emphasized that no similar research has previously been done to compare the content of *The New Zealand Herald* and the *NZ Chinese Herald*, and, therefore, the analysis could not validate nor refute earlier work. It is also stressed that the analysis is not conclusive since only a sample of issues of the newspapers were selected for analysis. The results and the analysis relative to the main problem apply to the data surveyed in the newspapers that was subjected to content analysis. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that the sample was representative of each newspaper's content and the results of the analysis can offer a picture of how the newspaper as a medium of communication operates in New Zealand society today.

### **Media sample**

The content of this research was all the stories on Asian international students and migrants published in the *New Zealand Herald* and *New Zealand Chinese Herald* over eighteen months from 18 February 2001 to 18 August 2002. There are differences in publishing frequency of these two newspapers; one is published 6 days a week and the other twice weekly. Thus the

sample covers 390 days in the 78 weeks for *The New Zealand Herald* and 156 days within the 78 weeks for the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*.

The dates of stories found from *The New Zealand Herald* and *New Zealand Chinese Herald* are shown below:

**Table 3: The dates of stories from the New Zealand Herald and the New Zealand Chinese Herald**

Date Month	The New Zealand Herald (18/02/01-18/08/02)	NZ Chinese Herald (18/02/01-18/08/02)
February /2001	28,	
March	02, 09,	01,01,15,
April		12,12,
May		
June	30,	
July	11,13, 13,19,	
August	15,25,28,	
September	03,	
October	18,23,	
November	01,	22,16
December	21,29,	20,
January /2002	10,16,26,	17,17,24,24,24,31,
February	02,12,13,13,15,	07,07,28,
March	27,	28,28,
April	03,06,10,13,13,23,	04,
May	11,13,18,	17,
June	01,12,14,21,26,	
July		19,20
August	01,01,08,15,16,	16,
<b>Total: 69</b>	<b>45 items</b>	<b>24 items</b>

Note: The dates not appearing indicate no relevant articles for that day.

During the set time period of 18/02/01- 18/08/02, both *The New Zealand Herald* and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* reported on a considerably wide spectrum of stories involving Asian international students and Asian migrants in New Zealand. Reporting methods were divided into either news stories or comments (opinions) and included charts, graphs, photographs, cartoons as well as investigations of societal issues. The articles on Asian international students and migrants were classified into six categories; immigration, Asian student achievement, culture, education trade, behavior and survey.

All the above articles and reports were defined as positive, negative or neutral. The rationale for these definitions is part of the analysis.

## Explaining the categories

From 18 February 2001 to 18 August 2002, *The New Zealand Herald* contained 45 stories on the issues involving of Asian international students and immigrants while the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* had 24 stories. The total for both papers was 69 stories. There were 390 days in the 78 weeks for the *New Zealand Herald* and 156 days in the 78 weeks for the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*.

As stated, for the purpose of this study these stories were placed into the categories of immigration, Asian student achievement, culture, trade, behavior and surveys. The numbers of stories for each category shows as table 4.

**Table 4: Categorising themes by the *New Zealand Herald* and the *NZ Chinese Herald***

Media Theme		The New Zealand Herald		NZ Chinese Herald		Total (%)	
Time / Period		18.02.01-18.08.02		18.02.01– 18.08.02			
Total Number		45 Stories (%)		24 Stories (%)		69 Stories (%)	
Category	Immigrants	16	35.6%	7	29%	23	33.3%
	Asian achievement	3	6.7%	4	16.7%	7	10.1%
	Culture	4	8.8%	4	16.7%	8	11.6%
	Education trade	11	24.4%	4	16.7%	15	21.7%
	Behavior	8	17.8%	3	12.5%	11	16%
	Survey	3	6.7%	2	8.4%	5	7.3%

### Immigration:

The immigration category contained the highest proportion of stories. This is not surprising since immigration is currently a very topical and controversial issue in New Zealand receiving widespread media interest. Reports on this issue were divided and summarised into three aspects; immigration policy, migrant employment and racial discrimination.



Media reporting on immigration policy contained arguments and opinion by columnists including individual rebuttal comments, news stories and policy analysis such as the story “Place new homeland above all – Peters” and “Unwelcome in a new home”.

Migrants’ employment stories reported on how migrants survive in their new country, the problems they encounter, and why they do not easily find a job in New Zealand, such as “Immigrants with the world at their feet” and “Dialogue: Immigrants in need of a working welcome”.

Obviously, as racial discrimination was a feature of immigration historically, some stories reported on migrants’ rights and migrants history. These included comment such as “Dialogue: Clark’s apology to Chinese only a first step in amends” and “Rudman’s city: Contrition is good for the soul – and it makes us remember”.

### Asian achievement

Some media reports on Asian achievement referred more specifically to Asian international students, particularly their achievements such as those reported in the story: “Chinese youth won the best designing award”. Other stories were not always clear as to whether they were referring to Asian international or local students such as story “Switched on and so bright”. Whether international or local, Asian students were regarded in the same positive light.

### Culture

Media reporting that included cultural issues included consideration of Asian customs and culture, the role of foreign culture and some deficiencies relating to cultural understanding such as the articles “Dialogue: Gullible Kiwis only too easily taken for a ride” and “Foreign cultures play strong role”.

### Education Trade

The main content of media reporting on the education trade included articles on analysis of the education market, opinion from organizations and individuals, education service and

education trade surveys. Articles included the stories “Overseas student keeping state school afloat” and “Mean hosts jeopardize a billion-dollar industry”.

### Behavior

This category included media reports covering social issues and individual accounts of Asian international student behavior and experience as they attempted to adjust to living in New Zealand. Examples of these stories included “Asian students and fast cars a bad mixture” and “Student escapes being deported”

### Survey

Occasionally the media published the results of surveys on immigration, Asian students, and education marketing and commented on them. Surveys are a separate category and cover topics from other categories. The surveys generated stories such as “Survey reveals kinder view of Asian migrants” and “The relationship of selection of university subject and employment in New Zealand”.

## **Content analysis**

### **Immigration category**

Immigration was the biggest issue in the total of six categories for both of newspapers. There was a total of 23 stories on immigration of all stories, a 33.3% proportion. *The New Zealand Herald* had 16 and *New Zealand Chinese Herald* had 7. The issues discussed in these 23 stories range from migrants' lives, immigration policy, policy analysis, employment, immigrants' history to events.

For the purpose of this study, the 23 stories were placed into five sub categories under the immigration category. These sub categories were political point scoring, preparing for immigration, economic benefits of immigration, cheating by migrants and international students and migrants' settlement. These sub categories covered the basic themes and content of reporting on immigration.

Analysis for each story was conducted in order to find out why people would be interested in this issue and also to examine the differences in approach between New Zealand host media and minority community media. It was hoped this comparison would also help develop better understandings of different perspectives in the future, so the media do not act as a barrier to good communication.

### **Immigration sub categories**

Political point scoring was the biggest sub category in the immigration category with eight stories. These stories focused either on what politicians were reported to have said or the government's ideas regarding immigration or migrants. There were five stories in the *New Zealand Herald* which mainly focused on Winston Peters' ideas about immigration and the government's apology to migrants for its mistakes in the past.

The high media coverage of immigration news during September 2001 to June 2002 was anticipated as it was a central issue in the election campaign over the period. Winston Peters,

leader of New Zealand First, and Prime Minister Helen Clark, spoke frequently on the issue. The reporting format were interesting, Winston Peters commented critically, revealing a negative attitude towards immigration. This was seen as a blatant attempt to gain support from a public who shared his ideas, such as *The New Zealand Herald's* stories "Peters staring into the fight of his life" (11/5/02) and "Winston Peters: Our right to speak out on immigration" (26/06/02). In contrast, the *New Zealand Herald* also reported comments with a positive tendency from the Labour Government such as their apology for previous governments' mistreatment of migrants in the past particularly Chinese, such as "Government to say sorry for tax on Chinese" (12/2/02) and Manying Ip's story "Dialogue: Clark's apology to Chinese only a first step in amends" (12/2/02). These comments were aimed at gaining support from the Chinese community. Therefore, it seems both New Zealand First and the Labour Party had same purpose of attracting voters through their activities and both used media to communicate with their constituencies.

In contrast were three stories reported by *New Zealand Chinese Herald* during March to July 2002. Two of these stories responded to previous statements by Peters. One story examined Peters criticisms and agreed with some of his points in the article entitled "Think about Winston Peters' words". Another story criticized Peters' ideas as racially prejudiced. However there was no comment made in the *Chinese New Zealand Herald* concerning the Government's apology which was a surprising omission.

However, both papers endorsed the issue of migrants' problems in their comments. *The New Zealand Herald* (26/6/02) claimed "they (migrants) get benefits from our social welfare". The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* (17/7/02) saw clearly that "some of migrants borrowed money again and again, study and study, they never think about returning the money back, and some of migrants took their family to this country to gain benefits from New Zealand's social welfare."

The location of the story in the newspapers also can reflect the topic's importance. Both newspapers were interested in Winston Peters' views of immigration. *The New Zealand Herald* ran a story about Winston Peters on A7 titled "Place new homeland above all – Peters" (03/09/01) and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* had a story "Think about Winston Peters' words" on the page two which reflected that both papers highlighted what Winston Peters said about immigration and thought their readers were interested in it as well.

The sub category of political point scoring stories' titles and time outlined as below:

Political Point Scoring		
New Zealand Herald		NZ Chinese Herald
2001		
Feb		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July		
August		
Sep	03/09/01 pA7 Place new homeland above all – Peters Comment / Negative	
Oct		
Nov		
Dec		
2002		
Jun		
Feb	12/02/02 pA8 Government to say sorry for tax on Chinese News / Positive  13/02/02 pA5 Clark's apology to Chinese only a first step in amends Comment / Positive	
March		28/03/02 p6 The relationship of immigration policy and education policy Comment / Negative
April		
May	11/05/02 pB1 Peters staring into the fight of his life Comment / Negative	
June	26/06/02 pA15 Our right to speak out on immigration Comment / Negative	
July		19/07/02 p2 Think about Winston Peters' words Comment / Neutral  20/07/02 p3 Eliminate prejudice, then you can blend water and milk together Comment / Positive
August		
Total	5	3

There were three stories in the 'preparing' sub category, *The New Zealand Herald* had two which focused on whether people were ready to accept each other from the perspective of both migrants and mainstream society.

In *The New Zealand Herald* (19/7/01) column entitled "Dialogue: Patronizing attitudes no help to our immigrants", The author, Raymond Jianqiang Huo, a Chinese New Zealander, criticized New Zealanders, arguing that:

New Zealanders must stop regarding migrants as aliens or addressing the issue as though migrants are outsiders. Migrants should be treated as part of the family and any I-thou mentality is childish and disharmonious.” And he also claimed that “New Zealand also should learn from its counterparts in Australia and the United States where the question people ask is not why they should have immigrants but how to have them and how to mostly benefit from their presence.

His arguments reflect my own experience that a lot of New Zealanders keep asking why they should have migrants coming to New Zealand, whether New Zealand really needs them, and what kind of migrants New Zealand desires. But these questions are seen as acceptable according to Garth George whose article “Far too many immigrants without preparation” (*The New Zealand Herald* 15/8/02) claimed that “too many immigrants arriving in New Zealand particularly in Auckland and too quickly” George pointed out that New Zealanders need to do some preparation in order to accept this change.

He challenged Helen Clark’s and *The New Zealand Herald*’s views about the economic benefits that immigration had brought to Britain. He asked:

Is that where we’ve come to? Is the only thing that matters in what we do or do not do, that it will put more money in our pockets?

At the end of the story, he wrote: “I do not give a damn who wants to pin that label on me, I am persuaded that this ill-considered immigration policy is doing us more harm than good”.

Obviously, George did not believe that migrants would bring benefits to New Zealand rather, they would be a liability. His meaning of the “harm” caused by immigration policy was “overcrowded schools, teacher shortages, overflowing hospitals with interminable waiting lists, near-grid locked roads and house prices that make the Kiwi dream a fantasy”. He shared with Peters’ the idea that migrants are the main cause of these social problems. However, neither Peters nor George asked whether such problems would go away if New Zealand closed the door to the migrants.

In comparison, the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* did not make any response to the above debate. It ran one story that provided some general information to help migrants settle into life in New Zealand.

Preparing for immigration		
	New Zealand Herald	NZ Chinese Herald
2001		
Feb		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July	19/07/01 pA11 Dialogue: Patronizing attitudes no help to our immigrants Comment / Negative	
August		
Sep		
Oct		
Nov		
Dec		
2002		
Jun		17/01/02 p11 Answers to common questions of NZ immigrants News / Neutral
Feb		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July		
August	15/08/02 pA13 Far too much immigrants without preparation Comment / Negative	
Total	2	1

Despite the debates over whether migrants brought benefits or trouble to New Zealand, the media appears to have tried to present balanced reporting. This was reflected by *The New Zealand Herald* containing four positive stories regarding the economic benefits of immigration during November 2001 to April 2002.

Two stories (1/11/01, 15/2/02) by Associate Professor Manying Ip, a Chinese lecturer at the University of Auckland, presented a more systematic attempt to study the contributions of Asian migrants to New Zealand. Ip believes that Asian migrants have been playing a positive role in the past couple of decades. She claimed that:

The Asian communities have given New Zealand a taste of what a vibrant and multicultural society could be like, which means more than sushi bars and noodle houses. The local born Chinese New Zealanders are high achievers; the new migrants, with their diverse skills and outlook, are also harbingers of the dynamic success stories of Asia. All of these are forcing mainstream New Zealanders to admit the reality that New Zealand is becoming a country of an increasing mix of colors.

The two other positive stories published in *The New Zealand Herald* were “Four roads to a richer tomorrow”(13/2//2) by Andrew Laxon and “Meeting for Asians seeking to invest” (13/4/02) by James Gu. Both authors claimed that immigration could bring economic benefits to New Zealand economy and Gu provided an example of that. He pointed out that from April 2001 to February 2002, it was estimated that 8400 people from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Macau came to New Zealand as business migrants or under the long-term business visa scheme. Supposedly each of these 8400 investors has an average of \$250,000 cash in New Zealand banks, making the total amount an estimated \$2.1 billion New Zealand dollars.

On this theme the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* (16/11/01) used a different way to advocate for migrants. It ran one story which copied an article from outside media that represented the benefits of migrants throughout the world. Obviously, the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* lacked the resources to investigate original stories.



Economic Benefits		
New Zealand Herald		NZ Chinese Herald
2001		
Feb		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July		
August		
Sep		
Oct		
Nov	01/11/01 pA13 Dialogue: We can learn a great deal from our Asian migrants Comment / Positive	16/11/01 p3 Immigrants change the world Comment / Positive
Dec		
2002		
Jun		
Feb	13/02/02 pA12 Four Roads to a richer tomorrow Comment / Positive  15/02/02 pA17 Rudman's city: Contrition is good for the soul – and it makes us remember Comment / Positive	
March		
April	13/04/2002 pC5 Meeting for Asians seeking to invest News / Positive	
May		
June		
July		
August		
Total	4	1

There were a total of three stories relevant to the sub category of cheating. These stories represented migrants' bad behavior in cheating to get benefits from others. *The New Zealand Herald* had two stories about some migrants either cheating to exploit Kiwi's kindness or cheating its immigration policy. The author Raymond Jianqiang Huo (28/8/01) is a Chinese New Zealander. He used sharp words in the story "Dialogue: Gullible Kiwis only too easily taken for a ride" to claim that some people abused New Zealanders' kindness and trust to gain benefits by cheating them. He used examples of the faked refugee or family reunification applications, and argued that human rights or racial discrimination have become convenient tools for their cheating. These events not only frustrated the communication between Kiwis and Asians but also undermined the relationship for Asians who were losing their reputations as a consequence of some Asians cheating.

Another cheating story reported by Tony Wall in *The New Zealand Herald* (6/4/02) was about how people cheated the immigration policy by arranging fake marriages to gain residency.

In this sub category, reporting from both papers reveals a sharp delineation of the factors of migrants' weakness. The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* had one story focused on the problem of Chinese community, which criticized the Chinese community for not providing efficient services to Chinese migrants, particularly new arrivals. The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* claimed that the priority of the ethnic community was to build up smooth communication between migrants and the majority society rather than focus only on the matters within the community.

Cheating		
	New Zealand Herald	NZ Chinese Herald
2001		
Feb		
March		01/03/01 p9 Personal gain---the real purpose of service Comment / Negative
April		
May		
June		
July		
August	28/08/01 pA11 Dialogue: Gullible Kiwis only too easily taken for a ride Comment/ Negative	
Sep		
Oct		
Nov		
Dec		
2002		
Jun		
Feb		
March		
April	06/04/02 pA2 Jailed mystery man ran marriage racket News / Negative	
May		
June		
July		
August		
Total	2	1

Another important theme crucial to immigration is that of migrants' settlement and how they are identified and investigated in news portrayal. There were a total of four stories in both papers on this issue. *The New Zealand Herald* had three and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* had one story. This theme included migrants' employment and how hard they worked for their settlement.

In this subcategory, the content of two papers were very similar, both identified that life is not easy for migrants with different language and cultural backgrounds. Simon Collins' story "Immigrants with the world at their feet" (25/8/02) in *The New Zealand Herald* investigated a couple who immigrated from Hong Kong in the 1980s and their experiences and success in immigrating to New Zealand.

An interesting point in the news coverage is that both papers' stories mentioned that employment is the most important and difficult thing for both migrants and the Government. Both papers endorsed the claim that migrants' different cultural and language backgrounds could be the main barriers to finding a job, entering mainstream society and to settling down to life in New Zealand.

*The New Zealand Herald* gave more emphasis to migrant unemployment. In page A7, a story by Angela Gregory (28/2/01) "Unwelcome in a new home" covered an Indian couple who immigrated to New Zealand and realized that they could not find jobs. Both were well educated. They complained that the main reason that they could not get employment to match their skills was discrimination. But another two stories in *The New Zealand Herald* had different views on this Indian couple which suggested that the migrants' did not have the right skills. As well, because of the limitations of New Zealand's human resources, market size was a factor in causing unemployment for migrants. At this point, *The New Zealand Herald* did not make further comment on the Indian couple's complaint.

Compared with the above stories, the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* had only one story in 12/4/01 that studied the progress of Chinese migrants to New Zealand from the 1860s to present. This story also informed readers about how Chinese migrants were treated by earlier New Zealand Governments and how the legal processes from 1862 to 1996 were changed in 1997 to recognize migrants rights.

The extent to which the paper explored discrimination is obviously deeper than *The New Zealand Herald*. In contrast, the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* ignored migrants' own limitations which affected their ability to get employment.

Migrants' Settlement		
New Zealand Herald		NZ Chinese Herald
2001		
Feb	28/02/01 pA7 Unwelcome in a new home News / Negative	
March		
April		12/04/01 p7 Rarely-known history of Chinese immigrants in NZ News / Neutral
May		
June		
July		
August	25/08/01 pB5 Immigrants with the world at their feet Comment / Positive	
Sep		
Oct		
Nov		
Dec		
2002		
Jun	10/01/02 pC3 New migrants a different breed News / Positive	
Feb		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July		
August		
Total	3	1

**Table 5: Immigration category issues percentage in *The NZ Herald* and *NZ Chinese Herald***

Issue Media	Political point		Preparing		Benefits		Cheating		Settlement		Total
<b>The NZ Herald</b>	5	30%	2	11%	4	24%	2	17%	3	18%	16 stories
<b>Chinese NZ Herald</b>	3	44%	1	14%	1	14%	1	14%	1	14%	7 stories

To summarise the immigration category media comparisons, the first common point for both newspapers was the interest in what politicians were saying about immigration. Winston Peters played an important role in making this a significant issue in the 2002 election campaign.

Peters' views were widely disseminated during this period. For example, Peters made speeches in Parliament and in public places such as in Tauranga, his electorate. He claimed that Asian migrants caused higher rates of unemployment for New Zealand, and raised the prices for both petrol and property. The increasing numbers of Asian migrants and students led to problems of crowded classes, congested traffic and increased house prices for New

Zealanders, Aucklanders in particular. These criticisms caused a reaction from Asian migrant communities and individuals. They started a verbal battle with Winston Peters and his supporters through media, sometimes face to face. All media were widely represented, for example, “*Holmes*” and “Asia Down Under” of TV One reported and discussed these ideas in their programmes.

The second similar factor for the immigration category was that there was more comment than news stories in both newspapers.

The third interesting common factor was that there was no opinion or news story that analysed the relationship between immigration policy and unemployment in either paper, despite the flaws in New Zealand’s immigration policy which could have been linked to migrants’ unemployment. There are many examples of its limitations. The current Skilled Category policy does not consider applicants’ specialist academic qualifications. This leads to migrants not linking into the local labour market when they arrive. These factors should not be overlooked by the government. In fact, New Zealand could learn something from other countries’ mistakes such as Australia, Canada or the United States. These countries had the same problems of migrant unemployment five to eight years before New Zealand, so they adjusted their policies. Their current immigration policies take into consideration applicants’ educational background and requirements for migrants ensure that they match up with their country’s labour market. Of course, the New Zealand Government tried different ways to make the immigration policy more fit with its labour market in recent years and it seems getting better than before 2000.

Both papers exemplified the point that Tom Rosenstiel made, that today’s journalists do not have enough time to think about issues and lack the resources for investigative journalism (see Price, 2001).

A significant difference between the papers is their reporting tendencies. The positive, negative and neutral stories were 56%, 44% and 0% in *The New Zealand Herald*, and 28.5% 28/5% and 43% in *New Zealand Chinese Herald* in the immigration category. The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* carried the highest proportion of neutral reports while *The New Zealand Herald* carried the highest proportion of positive reports.

**Table 6: Immigration category report tendency in *The NZ Herald* and *NZ Chinese Herald***

<b>Media Category</b>	<b>The NZ Herald</b>				<b>NZ Chinese Herald</b>			
		Positive	Negative	Neutral		Positive	Negative	Neutral
<b>News</b>	5 32%				2 28%			
		3 60%	2 40%	0		0	0	2 28%
<b>Comment</b>	11 68%				5 72%			
		6 55%	5 45%	0		2 40%	2 40%	1 20%
<b>Total</b>	16	9 56%	7 44%	0	7	2 28.5%	2 28.5%	3 43%

### Why are media interested in immigration?

To explore the factors that lead the media keeping an eye on specialized issues is complex and explanations involve many internal and external factors such as ideology, the role of the public sphere, global influences, political interests, media intentions and even the reporter's and editor's personal interest. For many people immigration raises the issue of protecting national identity and whether new arrivals are 'fitting in'. Here I am not going to discuss these complicated processes, but rather discuss this issue from three perspectives: the perspective of New Zealand's Asian population, immigrants' employment and culture shock, because these are issues that are closely tied into this society.

During the past decade, New Zealand's Asian population has increased rapidly. According to a government report *Growth of the Asian Population* (2001), New Zealand had over 180,000 Asians, with the largest increase being in the Chinese group. The Chinese population increases of about 85,000 people accounted for nearly half the Asian population increase between 1986 and 2001 (*Growth of the Asian population*, 2001). This report found that from 1986 to 2001, the fastest growing Asian community in percentage terms was the Korean. The Korean population in 1996 was 28 times larger than a decade before. The Korean group became the third largest Asian group after the Chinese and Indians in 1996. Undoubtedly immigration has been the main factor contributing to the growth of the population in New Zealand.

Elsie Ho's study (1997) found that unemployment was the most serious problem for Asian migrants. Her study showed that one third of the immigrants from China were not working although they had been actively seeking employment (Ho,1997). The statistics showed that the unemployment rate among the Taiwanese and Korean immigrants ranged from 24% – 30%. Only the Hong Kong group had less than 20 per cent of their economically active population claiming to be unemployed (Ho, 1997).

The comparison of total unemployment among Pakeha, Maori and Asian from 1996 to 2002 is shown below:

**Table 7: Total unemployed by ethnic group from 1996 to 2002**

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
<b>European</b>	68.8	70.0	73.4	83.4	74.8	64.9	60.2
<b>Maori</b>	24.6	25.0	29.4	31.1	27.1	23.9	22.7
<b>Asian and other</b>	7.8	8.7	12.0	13.2	11.3	10.5	11.4

Source: Labour Market Statistics, Statistics New Zealand 2002

Most Asian migrants find it hard to get a long-term job or a suitable job that could fully utilise their skills and experiences because of their poor English. Also, the New Zealand market place is limited in its ability to offer sufficient opportunities for the growing population. Usually most unemployed Asian migrants have two options; either they rely on the support of government welfare or they establish their own business and become self-employed. Some may also find illegal ways to survive in the black economy such as “cash work”, which usually involves evading tax.

Elsie Ho (2000:58) found that “self-employment is a solution for coping with the difficulties of finding work. The Koreans have the highest proportion of self-employment, whereas the Chinese, those who are Chinese born, the lowest”.

Therefore, it is no surprise that people keep questioning whether New Zealand really needs migrants. For example, Garth George in his series of articles in *The New Zealand Herald*, claimed that Asian migrants were taking benefits from New Zealand's welfare.

## Asian student achievement category

From 18/02/01 to 18/08/02 a total of seven stories (10.1 % of 69 stories) covering students' performance, were reported by *The New Zealand Herald* and *New Zealand Chinese Herald*. *The New Zealand Herald* had three (6.7%) stories while the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* had four (16.7%). These stories mainly focused on Asian students' study results, such as stories headlined "Switched on and so bright" (16/8/02), "Perfect score no problem for young achiever"(2/3/02) reported in *The New Zealand Herald* and "Chinese youth won the best designing award" (22/11/01), and "A look at Asian students' study from marking national bursary examination" (31/1/02) covered by the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*. Most of these stories were positive in their reporting. The reporting tendency and details are shown below in table 8.

**Table 8:**

**Asian international student achievement category reports tendency in *The NZ Herald* and *NZ Chinese Herald***

Media Category	The NZ Herald				NZ Chinese Herald			
News	3	Positive	Negative	Neutral	2	Positive	Negative	Neutral
	100%	3 100%	0	0	50%	2 50%	0	
Comment	0	Positive	Negative	Neutral	2	Positive	Negative	Neutral
						1 25%	0	1 25%
Total	3	3 100%			4	3 75%	0	1 25%

## Comparison between media

The most common point for both newspapers in this category was the absence of any negative reports. All stories reported in *The New Zealand Herald* were positive while there was only one neutral story "A look at Asian students' study from marking national bursary examination" (31/1/02) in this category which appeared in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*. This story's author Weixiong Huang analysed the character of Bursary and the reason for Asian student failure. He claimed that New Zealand has different styles of teaching and



examinations and that Asian students not only need to improve their English ability, they also need a better understanding of New Zealand's educational culture.

The positive stories reflected Asian students' outstanding performance in study. For instance, the story "Switched on and so bright" reported in *The New Zealand Herald* (16/8/02). This story represented a Korean student who obtained an A+ mark in English in New Zealand and was then accepted by Harvard University in 2002. Another story "Chinese youth won the best designing award" (22/11/01) in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* reported that two young Chinese girls designed the web site for a school in competition with 50 other contestants and won the best design prize. Whether international or local, Asian students were regarded in the same light.

The point of difference is that all three stories in *The New Zealand Herald* were news items about student success in their study while the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* contained both news items (2 stories) and articles providing comments (2 stories). One comment story was focused on analysing the differences of educational culture such as teaching style and the other story reported the great achievement of Taiwanese overseas.

The two newspapers were extremely similar in this category, the reporting tendencies were all positive reflecting similar attitudes within both newspapers towards achievement.

### **Culture category**

A total of eight stories concerning cultural issues were contained in the two newspapers for the period concerned. This represents an 11.6 per cent of the 69 stories. Both newspapers contained four stories each. The stories covered topics related to cultural influence and interaction as well as culture shock.

In this category, both papers' themes were similar, which reflected that they had similar agendas concerning culture issues. For example, both papers had two stories commenting on how different cultures could influence each other such as *The New Zealand Herald* (21/12/01) story "Feng Shui ethos counts at new Auckland bank" and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* (12/04/01) story "Asian cultural scene".

Another similar topic was the concern about the impact of different cultures on New Zealand identity. Cultural identity reported in *The New Zealand Herald* (26/01/02) story “Foreign cultures play strong role” and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* (28/03/02) story “What is good about New Zealand”. These articles expressed the view that New Zealand is a culturally diverse country in which many groups including New Zealand European, Maori, Indian, Polynesian and Asians now share social resources together. Each of these cultures influences each other with their different cultural values, shaping a future multicultural environment very different from yesterday.

The challenge of cultural influence is to face the experience of culture shock. In this subcategory, the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* contained more reporting. There were two stories reported on 20/12/01, “Pursuing dreams in New Zealand” and 04/04/02 “New immigrants at loss”. In the story “Pursuing dreams in New Zealand” the author Fei Meng believed that people immigrate to other countries seeking dreams that may be impossible to realize in their own countries. These dreams usually involve the search for a better life or just for freedom. Often however, these people find it difficult to adjust to the new country in terms of life concepts, lifestyle, language and even food, leading to culture shock.

Undoubtedly, culture shock is one of the main barriers for students and migrants to overcome. The story “New immigrants at loss” reported on the experiences of some new immigrants after arriving in New Zealand, in particular the struggle with some of the more simple aspects of life. For example, it is not considered rude to ask people their income and age in many Asian countries; people do not mind guests visiting unexpectedly, and even phone calls late at night are acceptable in most Asia countries. All of these things that are regarded as acceptable by many Asian immigrants, are not generally accepted in New Zealand or other Western cultures.

Culture in many ways reflects human spirit, because when comparing behaviors between different cultures there can be no intrinsically right or wrong way of doing things. When new immigrants are faced with different cultural expectations they can choose to change or modify their habits to fit in with their new environment. This article suggests that new migrants may fail when they stick stubbornly to their previous cultural behaviors.

*The New Zealand Herald* (29/12/01) had one similar news story which reported that in the past ten years, 82 tourists and immigrants have drowned in New Zealand. It is likely that language and cultural differences contributed to the poor knowledge of local conditions that led to these deaths. When Asian migrants want Kiwis to accept their culture, the Kiwis are also wanting these migrants to learn more about their rules and cultural practices.

### General comment

Culture is a central element of human interaction and communication, influencing all aspects of daily life. Media portrayal of minority cultures can provide an insight into the extent of understanding or misunderstanding held by a community regarding smaller ethnic groups. In other words, the extent to which migrants are accepted by host residents depends on how well or how deeply their culture is understood by host residents. Without understanding, both sides will keep their distance or perhaps have negative perceptions each other. Irwin (1991) emphasized that learning to manage cultural differences requires an appreciation of different cultural backgrounds and an awareness of cultural differences.

In this category, 75% of stories in *The New Zealand Herald* were news items, while 75% of items in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* were articles providing comment. The difference between news and comment in journalism is that news is just representing what has happened and reporting the facts without any subjective ideas or interpretation, while comment provides opinion typically influenced by a journalist or editor's experience and cultural beliefs. According to Eldridge (1995) "comment may have more power than news to influence people's minds, and sometimes can change their ideas."

When media focus on a particular issue this may either signal that the issue is of current interest in the public sphere or that media wish to draw public attention to the issue. Comment by the media can also provide information regarding media views and public opinion on issues. Such news is slanted by selection. For example, there are three column comments in the *NZ Chinese Herald* and only one column comment provided in *The New Zealand Herald* regarding the strong role foreign cultures play in New Zealand. We could conclude from this that the New Zealand Chinese media is attaching more importance to cultural issues than their New Zealand media counterparts. The content of reporting provides a good example, 50% of reporting was about how migrants felt lost and struggled to adjust to the majority cultures,

while New Zealand media comment reported that foreign cultures are acceptable because they “play a strong role” in the economy.

The reporting of cultural issues in both newspapers was not extensive. Although eight stories reported for both newspapers (four stories for each), the proportion of the reporting on this category differed for each paper. *The New Zealand Herald* devoted 9% (four out of forty-five stories) while the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* devoted 17% (four out of twenty-four stories), almost 50% more. These reporting tendencies are recorded in table 10.

There were three news stories and one comment reported in *The New Zealand Herald*. Two stories “Feng Shui ethos counts at new Auckland bank”(21/12/01) and “Foreign cultures play strong role” (26/1/02) were neutral, there was one positive story “Bread and butter venture finds a niche in Korea” (2/2/02) and one negative story, “Language barrier lethal when surf’s up” (29/12/01).

The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* on the other hand provided three comments and one news article titled “Asian cultural scene” (12/04/01). Two of the stories were positive and the other two were neutral and negative. The positive story mainly focused on New Zealand cultural identity, representing New Zealand as an attractive place for migrants and international students, such as the story “What is good about New Zealand” (28/03/02). The negative stories reported migrants’ culture shock and confusion in New Zealand such as the story “New migrants at loss” (04/04/02). A 17% proportion of reporting involved cultural issues in *New Zealand Chinese Herald*.

**Table 9: The Culture category reporting tendency in *The NZ Herald* and *NZ Chinese Herald***

Media Category	The NZ Herald				NZ Chinese Herald			
News	3 75%	Positive	Negative	Neutral	1 25%	Positive	Negative	Neutral
		1 33%	1 33%	1 33%		1 100%		
Comment	1 25%	Positive	Negative	Neutral	3 75%	Positive	Negative	Neutral
				1 100%		1 33%	1 33%	1 33%
Total	4	1 25%	1	2 50%	4	2 50%	1 25%	1 25%

## **Education trade category**

Significant media attention in New Zealand has been given to export education and training services since the emergence of this industry as an important contributor to the New Zealand economy.

A range of media including television, radio, newspaper, magazine the Internet, have been involved in the reporting on export education. There are a total of fifteen stories (22%) identified in this research by both newspapers. Most stories involved analysis of the education market including evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of export education policy. For the purpose of this study, I set up a subcategory and divided the fifteen stories into three types that are critical policy, economic benefits and economic forecast.

## **Content analysis**

In the ‘critical’ subcategory, the content appeared critical of the New Zealand government and its development of trade policies regarding Asia. The trade policies covered education and other industries. There was one story for each paper. *The New Zealand Herald* (09/03/01) story by Gilbert Ullrich titled “Dialogue: Let’s knock on China’s door” criticized the Labour Government’s missing chances to make business deals with China and suggested New Zealand’s focus should be on the much larger market of Mainland China rather than only making a free trade deal with Hong Kong. Although not mentioned directly, trade in export education is likely be included in any such agreement or policy. At the same time, the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* (15/03/01) had a critical story titled “Why New Zealand Government carefully examine the Chinese educational records?” which criticized the Government’s performance and work efficiency. Although they targeted different areas, both stories took negative views towards the Government’s activities.

Reporting in the *New Zealand Herald* from the August 2001 to June 2002 contained a total of seven stories regarding education export and its economic benefits, all of these stories were either positive or neutral. During this period no negative views concerning policy were expressed. Reporting during this period contained the following headlines; “Foreign students move in” (5/08/01); “Foreign students view New Zealand as a safe destination”(18/10/01); “Asia view: Global education markets still have a long way to grow” (16/01/02); “Asia view:

Decline in Asian studies programs worrying sign for New Zealand business”(27/03/02); “Asia view: How New Zealand can benefit as China reaches for the stars”(10/04/02); “Overseas students keeping state schools afloat”(18/05/02); “Education industry revving up”(12/06/02) and the “International education needs to be give and take” (21/06/02).

The three “Asia view” articles were written by Vaughan Yarwood. In his opinion Asian markets still have the potential to grow, especially in the area of education. Of the estimated two million Asian students studying outside their own country worldwide in 2000, New Zealand managed to entice just 35,169. Over the same period, the United States hosted 514,723 students, Britain 223,000 and Australia managed more than 100,000.

In contrast, the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* did not respond to the changes happening in export education perhaps overlooking its role as a communication agent reporting on such issues. However, *The New Zealand Herald* agenda was becoming clearer through this period with its concentrated positive reporting on economic development as a priority.

As shown in Chapter Three, the fast growing business of international education is proving profitable for New Zealand. However, what will happen in the next three to five years remains uncertain. Can the New Zealand education industry continue to expand well into the future? There were three stories in both papers about New Zealand’s economic forecast that not only focused on the education industry but also related matters such as the global money markets, house prices and the influence of migrants in New Zealand.

*The New Zealand Herald* had two stories; “International education needs to be give and take” (21/06/02) and “New Zealand prospects at the mercy of Uncle Sam” (01/08/02). The first story provided comment on what the author Chris Hawley perceived as New Zealand’s short-term focus on export education and what they can ‘take’ rather than ‘give’. The article emphasized that the current strategy regarding international students is short-term in its approach. Hawley believed that “if more of our young people were able to work or study in the Asia-Pacific region” that will ultimately lead to better long term relationships between New Zealand and its Asian trading partners in the Asian-Pacific region.

The second article in *The New Zealand Herald* (01/08/01) provided analysis and forecast for the New Zealand domestic economy over the next three years. The report suggested that

United States economic factors would play an increasingly influential role. Also the author Brian Fallow considered immigration as a key aspect influencing the future of New Zealand's economic development.

The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* (17/05/02) had similar considerations in the story "Migrants, international students, new challenge, new opportunity". The author, WeiXiong Huang, provided analysis and forecast for the New Zealand domestic economy. But he took a more pessimistic view for the future compared with Brian Fallow in the *New Zealand Herald*.

### General comment

The education trade category was the second largest of the six categories. A total of fifteen stories were printed on this issue, eleven stories in *The New Zealand Herald* (24.4%) and four in *New Zealand Chinese Herald* (16.7%). Stories on education trade were all positive. This could be attributed to the financial benefit to New Zealand.

**Table 10:**

**The education trade category reporting tendency in *The NZ Herald* and *NZ Chinese Herald***

Media Category	The NZ Herald				NZ Chinese Herald			
News	2 18%	Positive	Negative	Neutral	2 50%	Positive	Negative	Neutral
	2 100%							2 100%
Comment	9 82%	Positive	Negative	Neutral	2 50%	Positive	Negative	Neutral
	3 33%	1 11%	5 56%		1 100%	1 100%		
Total	11	5 45.5%	1 9%	5 45.5%	4	1 25%	1 25%	1 50%

### Comparison between media

The remarkable feature of education trade category was that there was more comment than news in both newspapers. Another common feature was that there was more neutral reporting than either positive or negative reporting. There were nine comment stories and two news stories in *The New Zealand Herald*, which included five neutral stories, five positive stories

and only one negative story. There were two news and two comments in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* with two neutral stories, one positive and one negative story.

Another feature was that most of the comments (56%) in *The New Zealand Herald* were neutral unlike the immigration category in which 55% of the comments were positive without any neutral stories.

Comment is representative of attitude. The expression of neutral attitudes could mean that people have not had enough experience or exposure to an issue in order to have an opinion and possibly need more time to evaluate what is going on. New Zealanders' experience in export education has developed only over the past two or three years. During this time, some businesses have become deeply involved in the student service field. For example, airline companies, car sales businesses, house renting and travel businesses are all affected by students. Some new businesses have been created specifically for international students such as homestay companies.

A telephone survey reported by *The New Zealand Herald* 23/04/02 was carried out on 750 New Zealanders. This survey revealed that about a third of Auckland people are involved with Asians in either their work or home environments. When asked about Asian students some thought it a short-term business activity. However, 62% had positive views regarding these students. The results of this survey reflected the positive views generally held by New Zealanders regarding export education and the effect of Asian students studying in here, which could explain the high incidence of positive reporting in this area by the media or the possibility that the media influencing the attitudes.

In comparison, there were 55% positive, 45% negative stories and no neutral reporting in the immigration category. The significant difference between the immigration and education categories was that many people believed that international education was short-term business activity, and judged it more positively than migrants who are long-term settlers.

Both papers had one negative story in this category which was "Dialogue: Let's knock on China's door" (09/3/01) in *The New Zealand Herald* and "Migrants, international students, new challenge, new opportunity" (17/05/02) in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*. Both stories criticized the Government's trade policies.



## **Behavior category**

While the New Zealand economy benefits from the flourishing export education industry, society is at the same time experiencing the rapid growth in young overseas students numbers. This growth in overseas students numbers has drawn the attention of the media which covered several stories concerning student behavior and experiences as they attempted to adjust to living in New Zealand. This category includes media reports covering social issues and individual accounts of Asian international student behavior in New Zealand. From 18/02/01 to 18/08/02, a total of eleven stories were reported by both newspapers in this category. *The New Zealand Herald* had eight stories and *New Zealand Chinese Herald* three.

## **Content analysis**

It was a case of bad news making good news for both papers when reporting on international students' behavior. Stories ranging from students recklessly driving fast cars, abortions, gambling and kidnappings to cases of fraud and falsification of documents provided the media with plenty of headlines.

The obvious difference between *The New Zealand Herald* and *New Zealand Chinese Herald* in this category was that *The New Zealand Herald* concentrated on the serious problems the students had, while the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* focused on some smaller problems such as students being untidy and loud in public places. The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* largely overlooked serious issues such as abortion, kidnapping and gambling. Due to the wide range of reporting, it was not possible to set up subcategories.

*The New Zealand Herald* carried three news stories concerning Asian students as bad drivers following the stereotype of "Asians as bad drivers" started by Pat Booth and Yvonne Martin's story in their infamous 'The Inv-Asian' special feature (Booth and Martin, 1993). This stereotype was reinforced in other stories reported in *The New Zealand Herald* such as, "Asian students and fast cars a bad mixture" (11/07/01); "Student escapes being deported" (13/07/01) and the "King on Queen suffers a driving whopper" (08/08/02).

These articles explored the issues of Asian students driving illegally on New Zealand roads as well as gambling and the inability to manage their behavior and money independently. Concerns are increasing with reports that overseas students frequently have little supervision and are getting into trouble with the law.

Currently there are over 50,000 international students studying in New Zealand and most of these Asian international students are living and studying in New Zealand on their own. Often this is the first time they have had to manage life without the guidance of their family. For some of these students this freedom is too sudden and they are unable to manage themselves safely and end up in bad situations. Without appropriate supervision there is potential for increasing numbers of these students to experience similar problems.

Based on my experience working as an Asian student counselor in a New Zealand educational institute for over three years, I saw the problems first hand. Some Asian students not only lack the ability to manage themselves but due to their unacceptable behavior often put themselves into a difficult situations and get a poor public profile. In only three or five years, young Asian students are seen as not often going to school, driving fancy cars but not skillfully, and increasing the crime rate through activities such as kidnapping. It seems that the stereotype of Asian students in New Zealand is based on reality and it becomes difficult to change people's bad impressions. *The New Zealand Herald* delivered some truths to the public but it lacked objectivity in some of its reporting. An example of the issue of Asians as bad drivers in another paper, the *Auckland City Harbour News* (16/04/03) had a story titled "Disoriented drivers a new threat on Kiwi roads" which said that:

There was a lack of research to back criticisms of Asian driving. "I guess there is an element of racism and jealousy of people's success," says Mr. Carroll. "Are they any worse than us or more noticeable driving BMWs or Mercedes?"

Another story in the *New Zealand Listener* on 16, August 2003 ran a story "Driving while Asian" claimed that the different road culture is one of the reasons for road shock.

Interestingly the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* failed to cover these important issues in their reporting on this category. Its coverage of student behavior lacked clear themes. Their stories focused on helping students to fit into society and emphasized that students need to learn

some Kiwi culture in order to adjust to life in New Zealand. It seems the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* had either lost contact with real issues regarding student behavior or more likely they just preferred not to report on such negative images of overseas student behavior in New Zealand. In other words, it was a can of worms they did not want to open, or they were concerned that such negative stories could upset people and influence their advertising and profits. This demonstrates a weakness in using the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* as a comparison media. They appear more likely to shy away from reporting serious social issues and lack the depth of investigative journalism to really deal with such issues. Instead this paper as with other similar ethnic newspapers, is primarily focused on advertising.

In contrast, *The New Zealand Herald* provided some investigative coverage of negative student behavior, going below the public surface to reveal some of the behind-the-scenes forces they felt contributed to these events. For example, from July 2001 to May 2002, *The New Zealand Herald* had one kidnapping story (13/7/01) which appeared on the same day as the story “Student escapes being deported;” one story covering the high rate of Asian abortion (3/4/02); one homestay problem story (13/4/02); one story reporting on an education agent’s problems on 13/5/02 and one editorial: “overseas students need care” on 14/6/02 which summarised all these aspects. The editor suggested that educational institutions need to take responsibility for providing sex education and students’ parents should provide more guidance rather than just providing money to their children.

### General comment

The behavior category was the third largest issue in the six categories, containing 15.7% of all stories. A total of eleven stories reported on Asian students’ behavior and experiences as news; there were eight stories in *The New Zealand Herald* (6.5% of 45 stories) and three stories in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* (8.4% of 24 stories).

In this category, nine of the eleven stories (87%) were negative in this category with only two stories (13%) neutral; seven of the negative stories were news stories. This confirms the saying “the bad news is good news for journalism”.

Reports on Asian students’ social behavior focused on negative events such as the comments on their driving skills, sexual problems and poor financial control.

The behavior category contained seven news stories and four commentaries in both newspapers. The tendency was nine negative reports with two neutral reports, no stories in this category can be regarded as positive reports.

**Table 11:**

**The behavior category reporting tendency in *The NZ Herald* and *NZ Chinese Herald***

Media Category	The NZ Herald				NZ Chinese Herald			
<b>News</b>	7 87.5%	Positive	Negative	Neutral	0	Positive	Negative	Neutral
			7 100%					
<b>Comment</b>	1 12.5%	Positive	Negative	Neutral	3 100%	Positive	Negative	Neutral
			1 100%				1 33.4%	2 66.6%
<b>Total</b>	8		8 100%		3		1 33.4%	2 66.6%

Comparison between media

There was no positive reporting in either *The New Zealand Herald* or the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* in the behavior category. All stories reported by *The New Zealand Herald* were negative. The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* contained one negative and two neutral stories for this category.

The obvious difference between the two newspapers was that the main reporting style was news in *The New Zealand Herald* while the preferred reporting style in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* was comment.

The content of the reporting provides another difference between both newspapers in this category. Almost all of *The New Zealand Herald* stories focused on issues of driving skills and Asian student abortions. The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* did not provide any coverage of these issues; instead they focused on stories of Chinese students adjusting to life in New Zealand and advice on how to make good impression to the host society. The following table further reflects this.

**Table 12: Behavior category issues percentage in *The NZ Herald* and *NZ Chinese Herald***

<b>Issues</b>	Total	Driving Skill	Abortion	Behavior Education	Other
<b>Media</b>					
<b>The NZ Herald</b>	8	3 37.5%	2 25%	0	3 37.5%
<b>NZ Chinese Herald</b>	3	0	0	2 66.6%	1 33.49%

*The Chinese Youth*, China's biggest daily youth newspaper published an article titled "The Chinese overseas students as rubbish" (*The Chinese Youth*, 20 July 2002). The new generation of overseas Chinese students have become a hot topic in Chinese media in China. According to this article, the journalist visited four countries, Japan, Germany, England and Thailand investigating the situation of Chinese students abroad. He found that the academic achievement and reputation of the new generation of overseas Chinese students was not as good as students who studied abroad before the late 1980s. In that period, most of students worked hard in their academic fields, a lot of top students in overseas universities were Chinese and most of them got full scholarships and had high reputations, particularly from universities in the United States and Canada. In the 1980s, these two countries were the most popular places for Chinese to study.

The significant differences between the two generations were over their study purpose and their financial background. Prior to the 1990s, the pathway for almost all students who wished to study overseas was to get support by applying for full or part scholarships from universities. These students were usually over 25 years old with a university level English ability. Most of them studied abroad for higher academic credentials. Most of their families did not have the ability to support their study or their living costs overseas. Usually they took part-time jobs to support themselves.

In contrast, the purpose for the 1990s Chinese overseas students is more a focus on gaining some overseas life experience. They wish to use the chance to see the world and to learn not only academic knowledge but also about Western lifestyles and wider culture. On the other hand, the quality of life in China is not like what it used to be. After the 1980s, there were fewer students who could rely on getting scholarships to study abroad, and most of the current students are supported by their parents and themselves. Thus, the overseas students are no longer the most academically able students in China but they are students whose family

circumstances give them the opportunity to study abroad. Furthermore, the Chinese Government introduced a new student loan policy in 2001 to encourage people to study overseas. The more flexible financial ability combined with an encouraging education in New Zealand, Australia, Japan and the South East countries has led many younger people to take up overseas education so easily that they feel it is normal.

Although there are differences of reputation and academic achievement between the old and younger Chinese overseas students, and there have been problems created by these younger people such as those represented by the media above, it is still too early to claim that they are like “rubbish”, maybe they will contribute to New Zealand in their own way in the future.

### **Survey category**

Five stories, accounting for 7.3% of the total 69 stories, were surveys. These included stories on migrants, visitors to New Zealand and international students. Content covered by the surveys included tourism, work opportunities and New Zealanders’ views towards Asians in the story headlined “Survey reveals kinder view of Asian migrants” reported in *The New Zealand Herald* on 23 April 2002. There were a total of three survey reports in *The New Zealand Herald* and two in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* during the period covered.

### **Content analysis**

Again, the targets or themes were different between two papers in this category. *The New Zealand Herald* concentrated on immigration and the satisfaction of public while the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* focused on providing information to either students or migrants to help them settle into life in New Zealand. *The New Zealand Herald*’s stories were “Thumbs up for Christchurch in visitor survey” (30/06/01) found that Christchurch attracts a significant number of Asian international students; Japanese in particular are attracted by the regions beauty, lower living costs, and high quality education institutions such as Canterbury and Lincoln Universities. The survey showed that of the main reasons for visiting Christchurch, 60 per cent were for holidays, 22 per cent for visiting friends and relations and 8 per cent for English courses.

Another survey in *The New Zealand Herald* (23/10/01) “Dialogue: Immigrants in need of working welcome” explored the problem of unemployment facing new immigrants to New Zealand. The survey shows that only 35% Chinese were able to find full-time work, 13% had part-time employment, while 42% of the sample was unable to find any employment. The author Kerr Inkson, a Professor of Management at Massey University, also identified several barriers to employment for new immigrants such as absence of local working experience, language, overseas qualifications not recognized, being overqualified for the job market, New Zealand discrimination and cultural differences. He commented that “the situation is not reassuring”.

The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* had one similar survey “The relationship between subject choice and employment” (28/02/02) that focused more on students although both papers had a similar theme.

Education and potential employment should be considered by not only students but also their parents. When Asian international students come to New Zealand, many have no idea about the employment market and the potential income levels they can expect. Traditionally in most Asian cultures the priority of most Asian parents is to create opportunities for their children to receive an education that can lead them to a successful career. The situation with Asian students in New Zealand is slightly different; many of these students pursue a course of study without direct guidance from parents who are either thousands of miles away, or do not have easy access to information on their child’s course of study.

The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* article served to provide some information and raise awareness of the issues around the need for students to make careful decisions when choosing a course of study in New Zealand.

The relationship between New Zealand and Asia is of concern to New Zealanders now more than ever and *The New Zealand Herald* story (23/04/02) “Survey reveals kinder view of Asian migrants” focused on this issue. The survey found that the negative views on Asian immigrants have declined from 37% five years ago to 28% and 8% of respondents have a positive view of Asian trade and 83% surveyed have positive views of Asian tourism, and 62% have positive views of Asian students. One third of New Zealanders claimed involvement with Asian people and culture.

### General comment

The survey category was the smallest of the six categories in this research accounting for 7.3% of the 69 stories covered. There were a total of five reports of surveys, three in *The New Zealand Herald* and two in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald*. All of the stories were either neutral or positive news items. There were no negative stories.

**Table 13: The survey category reporting tendency in *The NZ Herald* and *NZ Chinese Herald***

Meida Category	The NZ Herald				NZ Chinese Herald			
News	3 100%	Positive	Negative	Neutral	2 100%	Positive	Negative	Neutral
		2 75%		1 25%				2 100%
Comment	0	Positive	Negative	Neutral	0	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Total	3	2 75%		1 25%	2			2 100%

### Comparison between media

As presented in the table the survey stories were reports of the results of research and depending on what issues were researched the tendency is for either positive or neutral stories in both newspapers.

The significant difference between both newspapers is again the content of the surveys. *The New Zealand Herald* covered wider aspects than the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* such as employment, foreign visitors and views toward Asian immigrants. The *New Zealand Chinese Herald* surveys focused on providing information for students such as the living costs in New Zealand and what field of university study to pursue.



## Summary of content analysis

The reporting tendency of newspapers in the total of 69 stories is shown below:

**Table 14: The result of newspapers reporting tendency**

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
<b>The New Zealand Herald</b>	20	17	8
<b>NZ Chinese Herald</b>	8	5	10
<b>Total</b>	28 41%	22 32%	18 27%

Content analysis of each category revealed that 41 per cent reporting was positive, 32 per cent negative and 27 per cent neutral reporting in both newspapers. The most positive reporting appeared in the categories of education trade and Asian student achievement, while the negative reporting focused on immigrants and students behavior categories. These negative stories mainly revealed media's concern regarding student behavior, cultural shock and possible future concerns.

In all of the positive stories, compared with education trade stories, *The New Zealand Herald* allocated only a very small space for the other categories. For example, there were no positive news on student behavior in either newspaper. This news, notably, was bad news. Of course, bad news is news for media. There are reasons behind the prevailing news coverage of the newspapers. Foremost among them is the fact that the newspaper is commercially owned and operated like other business organizations. The owner, like other capitalists, is driven by profit and therefore must make the newspapers appealing to the readers who are the buyers. This is understandable since the kind of news that seems ideal from the perspective of sound democratic citizenship is not ideal for attracting the audience numbers that media needs to survive financially (Graber, 1992). Despite the factual content of these stories, the media focus on the behavior of very few students was out of proportion to the life experiences of most international students.

The newspapers' coverage of Asian student behavior also revealed an absence of balanced reporting. Like other western media, the stories reflected mainly western views. They paid more attention to voices that were anti-Asians and lacked comment that from Asian migrants themselves or Asian supporters. The newspapers' contents obviously did not serve well for

the formation of public opinion which should include all ethnic groups and actions that are necessary in promoting the public sphere and democracy. In other words, the newspapers failed to provide quality coverage of a range of voices.

If news does not serve as a tool for the formation of public opinion and citizen participation, the fabric of democracy would certainly deteriorate (Graber, 1992).

The discussion comparing media representation and students' own experiences focused on the results of negative reporting. The issues mentioned above in terms of student behavior, culture chock and the future concern are discussed in Chapter Eight.

## **Chapter Seven:**

### **Research Results: Interviews and Survey Summary**

None of the Asian international students in the research were born in New Zealand, all were full fee-paying students and none of them are migrants. They either followed their parents who were visiting here or were sent here by their parents to attend the local schools. Some of them did not have a choice or much input into the decision to go abroad, while others were able to choose the country they went to. Several students were happy to leave their home countries because of the tremendous pressure in the schools there. They liked having the freedom to manage their New Zealand life, but some of them were not happy to leave their parents, friends and the environment they knew well.

The follow-up interviews with five students were useful as a comment on some of the trends uncovered in the survey. The following analysis of the survey methods is interspersed with comments from interviews. These give more insight into the survey analysis.

#### **Demographic and background data**

A total of 200 Asian international students were selected and 183 people responded to this survey, which gave a final response rate of 91.5%. The 183 respondents consisted of 148 Chinese, 23 Korean, 2 Japanese, 3 Thai, 4 Cambodian, 1 Indian, and 2 Taiwanese. Of these respondents, 83 (45.4%) were female, and 100 (54.6%) were male.

The 183 respondents were distributed into four age groups. Forty eight students were (26.2%) 17 to 19, 123 (67.2%) 20 to 29, 9 students (4.9%) were 30 to 39 and only one student was (0.5%) over 40 years old. One student missed this question.

The respondents' education background before they came to New Zealand was that half had a high school background, 29.5% (54) a diploma, 9.8% (18) a bachelor degree and 3.3% (6) respondents had a master degree. There were 3.8% (7) people who did not answer this question.

Nearly 80.3% (147) of the respondents were students in their home country, 13% (24) had a job, 2.7% (5) were employed in administration as a manager and 2.7% (5) respondents were unemployed. Two people missed this question.

### **Why the New Zealand decision?**

This survey shows that “easy to get a visa” was the main reason for Asian international students (30.1%) chose New Zealand as their study location. Thirty nine (21.3%) of respondents chose New Zealand to study because they thought it was cheaper than other countries while 24 (13.1%) came for its quality of education. Less than 10% (17) of respondents had friends or relatives in New Zealand and 15 (8.2%) respondents came to study here because of the opportunity to immigrate after their study. One person missed this question.

This survey also revealed that about 46 (25%) respondents had applied to other countries before coming to New Zealand. Of these, the most popular country for Asian international student applications was Canada with a 6.6% (12 students) proportion, Australia was the second most popular country with about 10 (5.5%) students applying there before coming to New Zealand. Usually, they considered New Zealand after their first country of choice denied their application.

This survey also showed that 124 (68%) respondents came to New Zealand through an agent, 33 (18%) came through friends or relatives, 15 (8.2%) through the Internet and only 7 (3.8%) people came attracted by advertising.

Interviewee B, a 17 year-old high school student, said:

*I like city life, big city. Unfortunately, when my agent showed me the pictures of New Zealand, the pictures were of Sky Tower and Auckland city center, it looked like a modern city with blue sky and sea, those pictures made me feel that Auckland is similar to Sydney, Australia, so I came here. I never expected New Zealand was a farming country with so many sheep and cows. I do not like New Zealand at all. I have been here for four months now and I found the New Zealand quality of life and environment is better than China's. For example, New Zealand's population is much less than China, quality of life is higher and the fresh air is very good.*

(Interviewee B)

The interviewee E finished a Masters degree in New Zealand 2002, and had already got a working permit and found a job. She said:

*I chose New Zealand because of the cost (lower than other countries). The reasons I chose to stay in New Zealand longer are, firstly, I want to finance my losses, and I want to find a job in New Zealand. Secondly, it's a quiet and peaceful country, lovely environment. The life is so different (if compared with China). In China I already had a better life, suddenly I wanted to change to have a quiet life.*

(Interviewee E)

## **Study plans**

From these 183 respondents, 173 (94.5%) had English language school study experience in New Zealand. The remaining 10 (5.5%) students had entered into tertiary programmes directly.

Because New Zealand opened the door of education as free trade only recently in the four years since 1999, there is limited research information about the relationship of students' time in New Zealand with their achievement in New Zealand.

For length of study, 83 (45%) of the 183 students planned to study in New Zealand for four years or more. Sixty three (34.4%) students planned to study for two to three years and 34 (18.6%) students planned to study for less than one year. Two students were not sure and one did not respond.

Among 183 respondents in this research, 109 (60%) students were studying languages, 40 (21.9%) studying business, 14 (7.7%) studying computer, 6 (3.3%) studying arts and 14 (7.7%) studying other (unnamed) subjects.

For university study subjects, of the 183 respondents, 84 (46%) students said they chose the subject because of their interest. Surprisingly, this result was much higher than a previous study that showed only 27.9% Asian international students followed their interest when choosing a course of study (Wang, 1999). Forty two (23%) people considered that it would help them find a job, 11 (6%) because it was a popular subject, 10 (5.5%) because it was their parents' wish, 10 (5.5%) to get a New Zealand qualification and 10 (5.5%) to get immigration

points It is likely that those students who wanted to get immigration points planned to use their skills or qualification to immigrate.

Finding out how many Asian international students are interested in staying longer in New Zealand after finishing their study was one of main aims of this research. The significance of this information is that their plans can make a difference to and influence New Zealand's economy, culture and society.

In order to test students' real aspirations for their future plans there were two types of questions in the questionnaire. For example, those such as question 17, "Do you have any plans to stay longer in New Zealand after your study?", and the type of questions as in question 18, "Do you have plans to do business in New Zealand if you are allowed. Do you have any plan to immigrate?", Question 17 acts as a sleeping question which respondents may not reply to with their real intentions. However, a deeper question such as question 18 is more likely to receive valid information. As expected only 57 (31%) respondents said they planned to stay longer, and 65 (35.5%) students answered "not sure yet", but the real information came out from the question "Do you have plan to immigrate?" 91 (49.7%) students responded yes to this question, not including the 81 (44.3%) people who planned to do business in New Zealand. These results revealed that perhaps as many as half of the students surveyed had long term plans to immigrate to New Zealand.

**Table 15: Plan to immigrate New Zealand**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	91	49.3
No	88	48
No response	5	2.7

**Table 16: Plan to do business in New Zealand**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	81	44.2
No	92	50.3
No response	10	5.5

Interviewee D had finished his Masters degree and started the second degree in Information Technology (IT). He had his own point of view about staying longer in New Zealand particularly on becoming a New Zealand resident. He said:

*A residence permit is more like a destination point for some people's overseas study life. I don't think being a resident would bring a great change to people's lives although this permit obviously gives me more convenience living in New Zealand. However, I don't think it would help to achieve my career goal and to reach my life expectation. Some people may take the permit of New Zealand residence as a kind of achievement of their study in New Zealand.*

(Interviewee D)

Interviewee C had no plans to stay longer after finishing study. She explained:

*I do not have a long term plan to stay in New Zealand after my study finishes. I think there are two main barriers to this. Firstly, my age, English is my second language, I don't expect that I can speak as well as a native speaker so this is a weakness for my career. On the one hand, I have got a Masters degree and I want to get into high level business management, I don't want to do physical work, and I'm also not interested in working for someone forever. On the other hand the higher position has higher requirements for which language is a big block in my way.*

*Cultural difference is another difficult thing to accept with New Zealanders. I came to New Zealand for education, to learn Western culture and to gain some work experience if I can. So I will go back to China to develop my career.*

(Interviewee C)

This survey also showed that about 35.5% (65) respondents were not sure whether they would stay longer or not. Interviewee A explored her uncertainty:

*I came to New Zealand for my parents and myself. They pushed me to study abroad really hard. I think it's easier to find a job if I have experience and New Zealand qualifications. I also plan to immigrate to New Zealand. I see a lot of people want to get PR [Permanent Residence], I think it must be an advantage for my life, and therefore, I want to get it too. The benefits such as the tuition fee will be much cheaper than for overseas students.*

(Interviewee A)

## Homestay impression

Among these 183 respondents, a total of 154 (84.2%) Asian students have experienced living in a Kiwi homestay. Nine students have not homestay experience and two students did not answer this question.

Among these 84.2% (154) respondents, about 88% (135) students felt their homestay was okay or were satisfied. There were 12% (19) students who reported they were ‘never satisfied’ with their homestay experience. About 30% respondents had changed their homestay at least once. Twenty eight (15%) students reported they had homestay experience but did not respond as to whether they were happy with their homestay experience or not. Two did not respond at all.

**Table 17: Whether satisfied with homestay**

	Frequency	Percent
Never satisfied	19	12.3
Ok	80	52.1
Satisfied	34	22
Very satisfied	19	12.3
No response	2	1.3

Although 72.7% (133) students felt their homestay experience was acceptable, the results indicate there are still some difficulties between homestays and students. Most students had mixed feelings about their homestays. Again, communication blocks such as differences in culture can create problems not only for students but also for homestays. Interviewees A and E said that:

*There are not any problems with language, my listening and speaking are good but we have so many cultural differences. When I was living in my first homestay, I found it difficult to fit the homestay rules. She gave me a limitation of 10 minutes to take a shower, she had rule for using the phone, I paid \$185 NZ dollars per week, but my homestay did not often cook the dinner. The dinners usually were fast food, which you just put into the microwave, that's it. I was surprised about her attitude, I wanted to be her friend, and unfortunately I found it was hard to really get close to my first homestay family.* (Interviewee A)



*The language barrier is not mainly a communication barrier, the main barrier is the lack of knowledge of culture.* (Interviewee E)

### **Communication blocks**

Among these 183 respondents, 135 (73.7%) students said that they had communication barriers with their homestay, school staff or classmates. Seventy six (49%) thought that the barriers were language, 39 (28.9%) mentioned that communication barriers were cultural and 14 (10.4%) respondents believed that their communication barriers were discrimination either in their homestay or at school with people such as school staff, teachers, classmates. Six (4.4%) respondents thought the communication barriers included language, culture and discrimination.

Several students experienced varying degrees of difficulty with the English language, particularly the Kiwi accent (or other accents like Korean or Japanese) and slang.

*I learned American English in China, but New Zealand English is so different, I find it hard to understand what people say.*

*When I first came to New Zealand, language was the only problem I had. It's hard to make friends with the Kiwis.*

(Interviewee B)

Besides communication problems, differences in cultural misunderstandings also contributed significantly to the difficulties Asian international students encountered in coping with their studies and in adjusting socially. Interviewee A commented on how the support she was offered, was not sustained:

*I found that people have two faces to offer to me. For example, in school, the teachers are very good and kind to everyone, but after school, it is impossible if you want to get help from them. It made me feel that they are warm in the working time but after that they are cold to you and treat you as a different person. This was hard for me to accept.*

*In church, people are so warm and kind, they given me hugs and ask me what I need. However, when the church meetings finish at 9 o' clock their kindness has gone too.*

(Interviewee A)

The survey also showed that 6 (4.4%) students felt that the communication barriers were based on discrimination, language and culture. Several students' experiences made them feel this way. Interviewee B complained that:

*They never asked other international students and me to have dinner with the family members together, and the food we had was different from the family's food also. They ate good cooked food and we were not happy that our food was different. We also were not allowed to have fruit and dessert but their children had it anytime they wanted. Only once they gave us an ice cream and said that actually you guys should not have it, just because today we are happy.* (Interviewee B)

One of the language school students once complained to me that:

*The homestay quality surprised me. They just do it for money, I have no chance to talk with them, they go out early and come back late. Once my homestay got a 0900 phone bill that was over thousand dollars, she said it was my bill, it's funny, if my English can be good enough to make these kind of phone calls. I did not need to live in a homestay. Finally, it was found that her son made the calls.... I try to forget it.* (Anonymous)

The experiences of Asian students with their Kiwi friends were not all negative. In fact, some of them had good Kiwi friends.

*I came to New Zealand for education and to learn Western culture.*

*If there was a problem in our friendship, I don't think it was because of the difference of our ethnicity. Even in China, I may still have problems with some people. So it really depends on individual characteristics.* (Interviewee D)

Also a lot of students had good experiences with their homestay. Many students appreciated their homestay experience and they felt that they learned a lot from them.

## **Transport**

Among the 183 respondents, bus was the most useful transportation for 110 (60.1%) students go to classes, 36 (19.6%) drove their own car, 17 (9.3%) walked, 5 (2.7%) went by train, nearly 17 (9.3%) went in a friend's car, only one student chose another means of transport such as a bicycle.

Vehicle problems were a hot topic for students, media and also for the public. Among these 183 respondents, 49 (26.8%) respondents had vehicles.

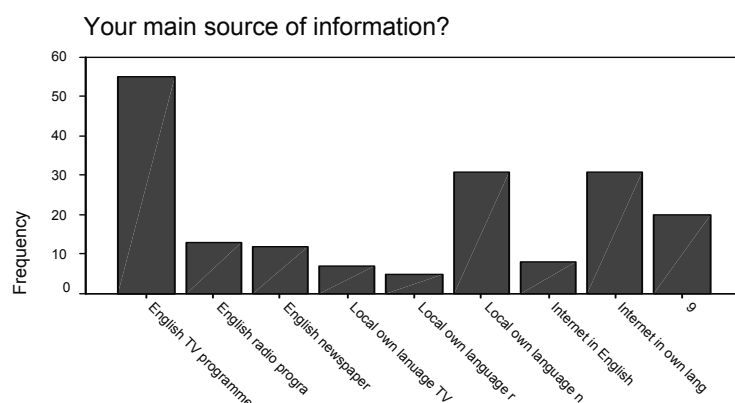
For the vehicle type of the 49 respondents who had a vehicle, 13 (7.1%) had a sports car and 35 (19.1%) had normal cars. Among these people, 27 (14.7%) had got traffic tickets from the police or other road organizations like the Auckland City Council. The highest fines in total were over \$2000 New Zealand dollars.

Among these people, 45 (24.5%) said their parents or guardian agreed that they could have their own car. Only 5 (2.7%) said their parents did not know they had a vehicle.

## Media consumption

The “media effect” question not only elicited respondents’ ethnic and mainstream media viewing habits, but also surveyed how these students felt about media’s attitude to them.

**Figure 1:**



English language television was the most popular media form for Asian international students to get information about what was happening in New Zealand. Of the 183 respondents, 58 (31.7%) students chose television. The second highest media forms were the Internet and own language newspapers. Thirteen students reported that English radio programmes were their primary source of information. The lowest reported media form was English newspapers, chosen by 12 (6.6%) students. Eighteen students did not respond to this question.

**Table 18: How often do you watch English TV programmes?**

	Frequency	Percent
Daily	72	39.3
Several times a week	65	35.5
Several times a month	19	10.4
Monthly	4	2.2
Never	18	9.8
No response	5	2.7

How did these choices reflect the patterns of student media consumption? This research also surveyed the frequency of students' media consumption. Television was the most popular media form for Asian international students to get information. Of the 183 respondents, 137 (75%) watched English television programmes every day or several times a week. Twenty three (12.5%) watched English television programmes several times a month or monthly and 18 (9.8%) students said they never watched English television programmes. Five students did not respond to this question.

When asked which program is your favourite English television programme, 51 (27.8%) respondents said that drama series were their most preferred programmes.

Although English language radio programmes were ranked third as an information source, interestingly the frequency was similar to television. Of the 183 respondents, 115 (62.8%) students listened to radio every day or several times a week, 35 (19%) listened to radio several times a month or monthly and 31 (17%) said they never listened to radio. Two people did not answer this question.

The answers also identified 40 (22%) respondents who chose the BBC News and music programmes as their favourite radio programmes.

English newspapers were not only the lowest consumed media form by Asian international students but also had a low frequency compared to television and radio. Sixty two (33.9%) students reported reading English newspapers frequently with only 8 (4%) students reporting they read them daily. Eighty two (44.8%) read them several times a month or monthly and 39 (21.3%) said they never read English newspapers. Two students missed this question.

*The New Zealand Herald* was the most popular newspaper for Asian international students, with about one third of students (33.3%) choosing it as their favourite newspaper. The *Times* and the *Leader* are rated with 10 (5.5%) for both newspapers.

Also 3.3% of students responded that they had no favourite programmes.

**Table 19: What subjects interest you in English language media?**

	Frequency	Percent
News	78	42.6
Sports	36	19.7
Service information	13	7.1
Advertising	15	8.2
Financial	5	2.7
Political	10	5.5
Policy	11	6.0
No response	10	5.5

Seventy eight (42.6%) people reported the news as their favourite subject, however, only 10 (5.5%) people chose politics as their most interesting subject with 11 (6%) people choosing the policy subject. Sports was the second most popular subject for Asian international students with 36 (19.7%) students choosing while 15 (8.2%) people chose Advertising. 10 (5.5%) students missed this question.

These findings show that while some students reported being interested in the news, less were able to indicate what aspects they were interested in, perhaps suggesting that they were not particularly interested in the content. Although half of the students planned to immigrate to New Zealand many of them appeared poorly informed about the country's political, immigration and education policies which would greatly influence their future. Another possibility could be that students were not really looking closely at the news content, but instead viewed the news as an opportunity for improving their English language and listening skills. This is borne out by answers to the question on what motivates Asian students to be interested in English media which was one of main questions in this research. 117 (64) respondents who said that 'improving English' was their main purpose in focusing on English media. 34 (18.6%) students did it just to 'find information I need' and 15 (8%) for enjoyment.

The interviews reveal students' stated purpose for their contact with media.

*I do not often read newspapers but watch English TV programs several times a week. Usually, I watch the news at 6:00 clock. The main purpose is to find out how much I can understand from the news, I think it can help me to improve my English. (Interviewee B)*

*Actually I do not really like the English media. I do not often watch English news or read English language newspapers. If I turn the TV on at the news time, I will watch it, usually just for enjoyment.* (Interviewee C)

*[English media] Not much, even Chinese TV I seldom watch. When I look for some information, I prefer to do it in a fast way. So my mother tongue is still my first choice. Only when I can't find the information through Chinese media, do I turn to English media.* (Interviewee D)

*I'm keen to know everything that is happening here so I am keen to read newspapers and listen to the radio. I read the local newspaper The New Zealand Herald, the biggest newspaper of New Zealand, every day. I watch the One news every day, I like the music programs on the radio. When I drive I always listen to a music program.* (Interviewee E)

As mentioned in Chapter Five, the open-ended questions in the survey were used to find out the respondents' opinions and reasons for these opinions on media coverage of Asian international students. However, there was a low response to these questions, and the one to one interviews did not uncover why there was a low response. Questions such as question 50, "Are you aware of any English media coverage of Asian international students? If yes, what were the stories about", only 37 (20.2%) students were aware of any English media coverage of Asian international students. 103 (56.3%) said no, while 43 (23%) students did not answer this question.

These numbers are interesting considering that well over two thirds of respondents (137) reported 'often watching TV'. Of these only a small amount 37 (20.2%) were able to follow closely enough to notice media coverage of Asian students. A surprisingly high amount (103) actually responded that they had never heard any reporting on Asian students in New Zealand. These responses are surprising given the reporting at the time, when issues regarding Asian international students were a common feature on television. Perhaps respondents to the survey over reported the amount they followed television believing this to be socially desirable or they simply did not understand the details of media coverage.

Similarly, question 51 "Were these stories different from your own experience? If yes, how are they different?", invited students to recall the content of stories that were covered by English media. Of the 37 (20.2%) who answered 'Yes', only 5 (2.7%) respondents said that these stories were similar to their own experiences, 30 (16.4%) thought these stories were different from their own experiences and 31 (17%) said that they were unsure. Quite a high number of students (29) missed this question.

Only 18 (9.8%) students recalled the content of media's reporting. There were no positive stories for this question, and 15 (8.2%) of students' answers were negative to stories, such as "Students drive fast cars" "Student kidnapper" or "Students were murdered in New Zealand". Forty five (24.5%) respondents did not give an answer. It is likely that this question did not apply to these people as the next section explains.

**Table 20: Experience of discrimination**

	Frequency	Percent
Never	51	28.0
Seldom	62	33.8
Sometimes	44	24.0
Often	11	6.1
Always	5	2.6
No response	10	5.5

This table shows that as a result of the language and cultural barriers many students in this study experienced difficulties in making friends with Kiwis. Several students did not think that the barriers to communication were only language and culture, discrimination was raised as another possible barrier with a high student experience of discrimination. Of the 183 respondents, 122 (66.6%) respondents encountered discrimination from New Zealanders in different degrees while 51 (28%) students responded that it never happened to them. Ten (5.5%) students did not answer this question.

More than one third of respondents (33.3%) said discrimination occurred in public places such as on the roads, in parks, in bars and in cinemas. Twenty one (11.5%) students indicated 'other' places such as homestays. Ten (5.5%) thought it happened in business organizations such as banks, immigration offices, schools or shopping centers and 13 (7.1%) students said it happened in the media.

The interviews showed that many students shared the media's attitudes towards Asians. Some commented that media criticism was understandable, because of the way the media functions to spread 'bad news', but they were also aware that this media focus was biased, and did not reflect typical student behaviour.

*Obviously, the numbers of negative stories outnumber the positive coverage in New Zealand mainstream media today. I am not sure if the reality is like this or the media are just starting to focus more on negative reporting. I do not have evidence to prove my point of view but I have the impression from the media recently that media's tendency is towards negative representation of Asian international students.* (Interviewee C)

*It is hard to define what kind of behavior is about discrimination. Few people will judge a person just because of the difference of race.*

*The stories from New Zealand's media, I think, are based on the facts, but the media showed more interest in reporting bad things about these Asia students and focused more on bad examples of these students. That is understandable. Since people mostly pay more attention to negative news instead of normal life, the media need to find something special to report to satisfy their commercial purpose. The normal life of Asia students wouldn't be worth reporting, however, the bad things seem more valuable from the news reporter's perspective.* (Interviewee D)

*I think the media reports the facts. Whatever they report, they write about the facts. They make some comments. In my eyes there is no discrimination there, if that was me, I would make a comment like that.*

*Lately more and more stories about Chinese students were not positive. I think the negative stories are more numerous than positive ones. I did the answer about the discrimination from media. For me that means my understanding of the negative reports about Chinese that appeared on the newspaper were more discriminatory I felt from this country.* (Interviewee E)

## **New Zealand cultural understanding**

It is highly likely that how well respondents understood the media's coverage and media's slant was related to the respondents' English ability. Among 183 respondents, more than half students (121) thought that their English proficiency was OK, good or very good and 53 (28%) said it was poor or very poor. Of these, 76 (41.5%) respondents had an English language qualification such as International English Level Test System (IELTS) or Testing of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Four people missed this question.

Several students did not think their language was the main problem to understanding people, but some of students thought that English ability could make a difference to their life in New Zealand.

*There are no problems with language, my listening and speaking are good*

(Interviewee A)



*The higher position has higher requirements for which language is the big block in my way. So I will go back to China to develop my career.* (Interviewee C)

*The language barrier is not the main communication barrier, the main barrier is the lack of knowledge of culture.* (Interviewee E)

In this questionnaire, a total of ten questions were about New Zealand. These questions covered New Zealand culture, the political system and communities. The questions were aimed to check on whether respondents who claimed they understood New Zealand culture and society actually had a basic knowledge of some New Zealand icons.

Of the 183 respondents, nearly half of them thought they understood ‘a little’ local culture, 76 said they were ‘OK’, 8 said they understood it ‘quite a lot’, only 5 replied ‘not at all’ to understanding New Zealand culture. No one thought they understood New Zealand culture ‘very much’ and four students did not answer this question.

For most respondents 56 (30.6%) said they learned New Zealand culture from ‘friends and relatives’, 43 (23.5%) said they learned it from their own language media, 33 (18%) said they learned it from English school, 22 (12%) from mainstream media (that means from English media) and 13 (7.1%) from community or from all of the above.

There were also some sleeping questions in this questionnaire that checked on respondents’ responses to previous questions. For example, for some respondents who felt they understood New Zealand culture well, the sleeping questions were intended to find out how well and how much they knew about New Zealand.

The ‘All Blacks’ is the most well-known aspect of New Zealand culture identified by Asian international students. Of the 183 respondents, 131 (71.5%) respondents knew it was a New Zealand representative rugby team. Twenty seven (14.7%) students knew Che Fu was a singer, 22 (12%) respondents knew that ‘Once were warriors’ was a film whereas only 5 (2.7%) students knew that ‘Swandri’ is a New Zealand article of clothing.

*I’m not really interested in understanding their (Kiwis) culture, because I have no plan to stay longer in New Zealand.* (Interviewee C)

*I think I am very able to fit into this society because I am very active, and I’d like to learn different things from Kiwis.*

*After I watched the Maori shows, I think Maori culture quite attractive. They have beautiful songs, they have their own language, and they are protecting their culture very well.*

*I take every chance to visit different museums while I travel in New Zealand, it's good opportunity to learn and to understand local people. History is not only telling you what happened in the past, but also tells you what will happen in the future. (Interviewee E)*

The response to the questions on New Zealand politics also revealed a lack of knowledge regarding this aspect of New Zealand society. Of the 183 respondents, few knew which party is currently governing New Zealand. Only 12 (6.6%) students got the right answer for this question. Some students confused the Labour Party and Labour Party/United/Progressive Coalition and 60 (33%) identified the Labour Party. 14 (7.7%) students did not answer this question.

Surprisingly, 109 of respondents did not know who Winston Peters was, 10 (5.4%) said he was the Prime Minister of New Zealand and 6 (32%) said that he was a supporter of Asian migrants. Forty four (24%) of respondents' answers were correct. As well, the same numbers of respondents (109, 59.5%) did not know what Peters' ideas were, while only two people strongly agreed with him, 5 (2.7%) students agreed with some of his ideas and 30 (16.4%) of students disagreed with his ideas.

An interesting point here is that although 91 (49.3%) respondents plan to immigrate to New Zealand, they are ill informed politically on immigration issues. Only 12 (6.6%) people knew who governs this country and only 44 (24%) people knew who Winston Peters was and how Asian migrants were regarded.

Interviewee E was knowledgeable:

*I disagree with his ideas that people who come to New Zealand from different countries, should forget their own culture. It is impossible. What makes New Zealand more attractive, it's diversity, I think. So, when he said New Zealand did not need diversity, he wants uniformity, there is no fun. It is the main point that I disagree with him on. But some points that he said, like sometimes people like Asians brought something in (like cheating or making false documents when they apply for a Permanent Residence or Visa), it was not nice, and our government has to restrict or implement a stricter policy on that, I agree.*

Of the 183 respondents, 90 (49.2%) respondents thought Asian students' cultural value to New Zealand was positive. For 69 (38%) people, it was neutral. 126 (68.8%) respondents said that their economic value to New Zealand was positive and 107 (58.5%) people thought Asian students had a positive social influence on New Zealand society. The rates of negative belief were 15 (8%) for cultural influence, 9 (5%) for economic and 11 (6%) for social influence.

The survey results are discussed in Chapter Eight.

## **Chapter Eight:**

### **Comparing some survey results with media coverage**

In this chapter I consider some of the issues which media focused on, and relate them to the students' own perceptions and experience.

#### **Student behavior**

Media coverage of student behaviour contained no positive news items on this issue. The majority of reporting was of stories containing bad news. The coverage included Asian international students' high rate of school absence, too much financial power and freedom, as well as students driving fast cars, gambling and cases of kidnapping. Does the emphasis of this coverage represent the students' own experience?

All international students studying in New Zealand must hold a student visa. A requirement of this visa is that they have to attend 85 per cent of their classes. If they fail to meet this requirement the Immigration Office will not extend the visa for further study. Therefore student attendance at school is an important measure for not only the students' school performance but also their commitment to gaining qualifications.

Factors such as possession of vehicles and students financial control also may be linked with the question of school absence and will be considered.

The results show that all of the respondents who did not own a vehicle held a marginally better percentage of not missing class. They were either never absent from school or absent just a few times. All the students whose absence was serious enough to receive a warning letter from school, owned a sports vehicle.

Overall, less than 10 % of all students included in this survey were regularly absent from schools or classes. It is significant that people with sports cars tended to have more records of absence, while people with no car or a basic model car were the only ones in the group who never missed a class. Of the 183 respondents, 49 students had their own car, 13 of them owning a sports car. Twenty seven students had received traffic tickets from the Auckland

City Council including parking tickets and speeding tickets. This result showed that higher incidence of school absence was caused by a small group of students and most of Asian international students had a normal attendance record. Looking at the categories of students who said they never missed classes and missed classes only a few times, the responses were similar both for students who owned a car and those who did not. However under the category of often missed classes, only those students who owned a sports vehicle responded that they were frequently absent (12.2%), showing a correlation between the ownership of this type of vehicle and serious absence from class.

The variance of financial management over Asian students appears have to an impact on the frequency of school absence. The results show that there were more absences from the students who managed their own expenses or were supervised by parents from overseas. No respondents who had relatives or guardians to watch over their finances in New Zealand had ever received any warning letters from school.

Media reported that Asian international students have too much freedom, which has led to problems such as out of control spending. It is not plausible to conclude that all students have too much freedom financially. For example, many Chinese students in New Zealand come from rich families, otherwise they would not be able to meet the strict visa requirements. Under these requirements students must have enough money deposited in a bank account to support their living costs while in New Zealand. When applying for a student visa the immigration office requires evidence of family wealth of at least NZ\$100,000, and several thousand New Zealand dollars as living costs deposited in a New Zealand bank depending on length of study. These requirements are tougher than those for other groups including Japanese and Korean. The immigration office also requires that language students do not obtain work while studying in New Zealand which is another reason that students often have large cash deposits

Overall, the survey results show that 73 per cent of students had excellent attendance rates at school and only missed classes through sickness, accident or important appointments such as with the Immigration Office or sitting exams like IELTS. For the majority of students surveyed, study was their main reason to be in New Zealand. The results also revealed that only five students (2.7%) had purchased cars without their parent's knowledge. These

statistics do not support common impression put forward in the media of students having too much money, buying expensive cars and not attending class.

### **Culture shock**

Society and the media are supposedly non-judgmental in their representations of culture, however in reality people throughout the world often judge cultures regardless of the society or cultures involved. Often it is not until different cultural groups come into contact that people realize cultural difference can be a difficult thing to accept.

Cultural shock is another issue of significant media and public concern in New Zealand. The media frequently comment on New Zealand's diverse social and multicultural environment, which has created a good reputation for New Zealand globally and attracted migrants to settle here with their families in search of better opportunities. As interviewee E in this study says: "What makes New Zealand more attractive, it is diversity". Culture shock, therefore, was a significant issue for the students surveyed in this study.

Media representations of culture shock included stories of migrants and Asian international students and the difficulties they experienced in adjusting to their new country in terms of life concepts, lifestyle, language and even food. To find out whether Asian international students actually felt they had these same problems and if their own experiences matched with the media's reporting a section on culture shock was included in the survey.

It is interesting to note that respondents with some or few ideas about local culture reported many more experiences of communication barriers than the others who were less attuned to local culture. It is likely the former students had more local contact through joining clubs, living in homestays and meeting Kiwi friends, therefore had more opportunities for communication, better understanding of local culture and consequently more exposure to possible communication difficulties.

According to students' own perceptions, 60% believed they actively attempted to fit in with New Zealand society, 17.5% stated they were very keen to learn the local culture while 26.2% felt that they were only able to fit into the host society just a 'little'. Only 9.8% of students reported they were passive in their attempts to fit into New Zealand society. Perhaps these

figures can explain the positive view from 60% of students regarding their economic, social and cultural contributions to New Zealand.

The level of satisfaction with homestays, had a strong relation to communication difficulties. The results show that respondents who were very satisfied with their homestay appeared to solve problems of communication better. However, it can be seen that most respondents who felt only 'OK' about their homestay had greater difficulties with communication.

Regardless of whether Asian international students' social experiences come from their homestays, schools, communities such as student clubs, ethnic communities or public places, the study suggests a weak relationship between English ability and social satisfaction. In other words, whether Asian students were happy with their New Zealand life or not was not dependent on their English language ability. It is likely that students with positive responses but limited facility with language, did not recognise the communication barriers. The statistics reveal that while 41% of students had English qualifications, 73.7% thought they had communication barriers and 28.9% of students thought culture was the main barrier.

A previous study *Voices of Asian Youth* (1998) described New Zealand as a developing multicultural society which could learn a lot from countries that have a good record in achieving balance amongst diverse groups of people. Countries such as the United States, Canada and more recently Australia could provide New Zealand with examples in managing the increasing number of foreign students and potentially decrease negative experiences they may encounter. My study revealed that many Asian students in New Zealand still encounter prejudice and racial discrimination frequently. Nearly 70% of students reported that they had experienced discrimination, 32% experienced discrimination in a public place, 12% students experienced discrimination in the homestay and 6% reported that discrimination often happened in the media. The types of racial discrimination that occurred included passive neglect, different treatment, verbal abuse, and occasionally, physical harm. This result is similar to a study carried out by Burke (1997), who surveyed international students at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, and commented that students experienced lower levels of personal discrimination on campus, but were subjected to "some racial harassment of an impersonal and anonymous kind" off campus (cited in Ward, 2001).

Fortunately, not all the encounters experienced by Asian international students are negative. Most of them found the majority of the Kiwis to be friendly and approachable, teachers and school staff particularly. Although most Asian students had some negative experiences in New Zealand, some of them still think it is understandable. Interviewee D said that:

*I always think the key issue to get along with other people, no matter where you are, is to be tolerant and considerate. If you can always put your feet in others' shoes before you do something or make a decision, it would be much easier for you to build harmony with the people around you.*

*I have a Kiwi friend and an Australian friend. We are very good friends. If there was a problem in our friendship, I don't think it would be because of the difference of our ethnicity. Even in China, I may still have problems being with some people. So it really depends on the individual characteristics.*

In comparing the views of the students surveyed to the views expressed through the media, there are some obvious differences between the media representations and students own personal experiences regarding issues of culture shock and communication.

Planning to immigrate to New Zealand may have an impact on the social, cultural and economic values to New Zealand. Results of the survey questions seeking students' own views on their impact on New Zealand society, culture and economy provided interesting reading. Nearly 60% of students were positive about the influence of Asian overseas students on social values to New Zealand and only 6% of students felt the effect was negative. Over 68% of students thought their presence affected the New Zealand economy positively. As well, nearly half of the students surveyed were positive about their cultural influence, while less than 10% of students held negative ideas on this question.

The majority of students were positive about the influence of their economic value to New Zealand. Only about 5% of respondents opposed this. Interestingly, students who had not planned to stay longer held a marginally better percentage of being positive on this issue.

Finally when comparing the general impressions of media representation and students own perceptions of their economic, cultural and social contributions to New Zealand both



differences and similarities appear. Both students and media recognise the positive impact of students in terms of value to New Zealand's economy. The media were keen to represent this in news items and when surveyed students were also clear in their belief that they contributed positively to the economy. However there were differences between media representation and student perception regarding both cultural and social values to New Zealand society.

Media representation did not match with students own positive perceptions of their contributions to New Zealand culture and society. While students presented an optimistic attitude regarding these aspects, media representation was often focused on negative influences and headline grabbing stories such as kidnapping, bad driving and bad behaviour on Queen Street and the high level of Asian overseas students crowding downtown Auckland.

While students generally had positive views about their value, the findings from the survey questions did show that a small group of 10% of students did have negative perceptions of their cultural influence on New Zealand which were more in line with media representations in this area.

In sum, it is clear that similarities and differences exist between the media and Asian international students. Both had their own perspective arising from their own cultural positions, which is understandable. More research is needed to understand how media coverage might encourage or discourage stereotyping of ethnic minorities such as Asian international students. Further and more extensive study of media consumers would uncover a more comprehensive picture of the influence of media representation on them.

## **Chapter Nine: Conclusion**

### **Behind the headlines**

This study presented a comparison of media representations of Asian international students in New Zealand with the students' own perceptions of their experiences. The analysis of media coverage included related Asian immigrant issues in New Zealand. This chapter will highlight the findings from the study in order to provide a summary of the results, giving a clearer picture in terms of what was behind the headlines and the real world experiences of New Zealand's Asian international students.

There were a lot of headlines and stories in the news that involved Asian international students directly or indirectly. The research consisted of two parts; a media content analysis and a students' experience survey. A total of 69 stories involving Asian international students and Asian immigration were reported by *The New Zealand Herald* and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* during the period 18 February 2001 to 18 August 2002. *The New Zealand Herald* reported 45 stories and the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* 24 stories.

The content analysis of the stories found that 41 per cent of the reporting was positive, with 32 per cent negative and 27 per cent neutral reporting in both newspapers. The most positive reporting appeared in the categories of education, trade and Asian students' achievement. These positive stories focused on Asian students' economic value to New Zealand and reflected optimistic attitudes toward this influx of overseas students. An interesting finding from Asian students was that they also held a positive opinion about themselves matching with media representation in this area.

The highest level of negative reporting was contained in the immigration and student behaviour categories. These negative stories revealed the media's concern over Asian student behaviour, cultural conflict and concern for the future. Asian international students were represented as "problem people," who either have problems or cause problems for society. These media reports ranged from concerns over student mismanagement of personal finances, non-attendance at classes and also more serious issues such as the high abortion rate for Asian

overseas students and the increasing numbers of students involved in crimes such as driving illegally, kidnapping and murder. In this area Asian students have different perceptions from the media accounts. The study found that 70% of Asian students took a different view from the media's perspectives of their cultural and social value to New Zealand society. It may well be the case that in this area of reporting the media placed little emphasis on covering stories on the positive cultural contributions in favour of more headline grabbing negative reports of crime and bad behaviour.

Media frequently presented a negative picture of Asian international students bringing bad influences to New Zealand society. The reasons for this bad behaviour were often simply stated as 'too much freedom' or 'cultural differences in a liberal society'. The media did not continue on to analyse questions such as, why these problems were happening in New Zealand now and if the same problems had happened elsewhere, why students were not interested enough to attend school or more generally what was the root cause of the behaviour.

Actually, their origins are not unique. Like many immigrants or "minority" groups before them, many Asians struggle to adapt to a new country, a new social environment with new norms, and new challenges of making a living. Often they do not have enough job skills or English fluency to find steady and meaningful work or to make their studies successful. Future research could investigate the pressures. Many Asian students and immigrants feel as they try to adjust to living in a new country this may lead to criminal activity.

From my observation as student advisor, explanations for the increase in criminal activity being committed on and by the Asian student community are complicated and involve both internal and external factors. Internal factors include the young age and inexperience of these students away from the guidance of their families. The combination of low self control and decreased behavioural boundaries resulting from poor supervision can lead some students into trouble. Externally many Asian students have significant financial power while studying in New Zealand. As mentioned previously (Chapter Eight) this may provide more chances and stronger external support to students allowing them to act independently and do as they please.

Coverage of Asian international students was much less than the level of immigration reporting in the New Zealand media. The media analysed the situation of Asian immigrants historically. Their difficulties of settlement were looked at systematically and in depth

although there were also a number of negative stories as well. On the other hand, stories on Asian international students appeared randomly selected and at times sensationalised in order to attract readers.

Not all media reporting on Asian international student consisted of bad news, and these stories were indeed factual and true. However, careful examination of the stories often reflects a certain amount of ethnic bias and stereotyping. For instance, media emphasis on images of expensive sports cars driven by young Asian males depicted stereotypes. This study's survey revealed that just over a quarter of students (27%) had a vehicle and that only 13 (7%) owned a sports car. Furthermore, the survey showed that only 2.7% (5) respondents reported that the stories which were covered by the media were similar to their own experiences. This suggests that perhaps the bad news items that gained so much media coverage were actually caused by a small group of students and most Asian international students lead normal students' lives.

Regarding the media consumption issue, the study found that Asian international students tend to read and understand English better than older migrants, according to the results of this survey and a recent study by Chou Limin (Chou, 2000). Her survey revealed that 33.3 per cent of Chinese immigrants aged 20 to 29 reported accessing English media daily (Chou, 2000: 79, 89-91). However three years later the results of this study reveal a 100 per cent increase in this figure for the same age group with 66.1 per cent reporting that they connect with English media on a daily basis. Younger Asian students now more frequently have stronger language ability which allows them the possibility of keeping informed about what is being said by the media and the public at large.

**Table 21: The comparison of the frequency of Asian links with English media in NZ**

	Age of respondents who access English media					
	17-20	20-29	30-39			
<b>2000</b>		33.3%	24.1%	14.8%	1.9%	3.7%
<b>2003</b>	27.3%	66.1%		39.3%	4.4%	31.1%

However, a significant result of the study was that media failed to effect Asian international students in terms of media's attitude and the reporting, because students did not consume significant amounts of news. The results revealed several trends. Firstly, 43.8% respondents chose English media as their primary source of information about what was happening in New Zealand and about one third of students chose *The New Zealand Herald* as their favourite newspaper, and over 42% respondents reported that the news as their favourite subject. However, their poor response on issues of political, policy and public opinions reflected that they were ignorant about what media said about them and public attitudes towards them. Secondly, the results showed about 70% students strongly believed that they would contribute to this country not only economically but also culturally and socially. Media representation did not match with students' own positive perceptions of their value. Students presented an optimistic attitude regarding these aspects while media representation was often focused on negative influences and headline grabbing stories.

It is likely the coverage affected students in another way. The general population is influenced by the news (see data on polls below) and those resultant attitudes towards Asian students would affect those Asian students. Once people know a person's ethnicity, they may make assumptions about the kinds of things that person is likely to be doing. In other words, information is likely to be selectively reinterpreted to conform to the existing construct systems (Porter and Wetherell, 1986). So media coverage affects Asian students indirectly as Monge's model of public opinion shows (see Chapter Two) in a process that is cyclical and happens every day.

Although the above findings suggest that most Asian international students did not pay much attention to the media coverage, the interviews revealed that a few students still picked up the negative stories from the media and were influenced directly. These were students who had been in New Zealand for several years and achieved higher level education such as Bachelor or Masters Degrees. This result comes out also by comparison of media coverage with age and education background as below.

**Table 22: Media story aware with Asian students' age and length of stay in NZ**

What's your age? How long have you been living NZ?	17-19	20-29	30-39	Over 40
Less than 1 year	2	4	1	
Two years	3	10	3	1
Three years		11		
More than four years		2		

There were 37 respondents who reported knowing of stories about Asian international students in the New Zealand media. The 20-29 year age group contained the majority of students that had picked up on those stories, most of these students had been in New Zealand for at least two years or longer. These results indicated that once students stay longer they acquire more of a sense for the local media and consequently are more influenced by the media coverage.

The findings suggested that despite attempts at impartiality, media are still governed by certain limitations in the cultural framework in which they work. This includes the cultural background and ideology of both journalists and their audience.

The media in its fourth estate role is open to the expression of different public voices yet it still maintains the power of agenda setting from which to generate this expression. Therefore the media has an interdependent relationship with its audience. In other words, although the media is apparently independent, it is embedded in its own social environment. This is demonstrated by the amount of coverage the New Zealand media provided on the opinions of several reactionary New Zealanders, most notably Winston Peters, regarding the cultural influence by both non-white and non-Maori ethnic groups, Asians in particular. Typically they argued that migrants wherever they come from ought to “leave their own culture at the airport (because they were) bringing the third world to New Zealand and dividing society” (*Sunday Star Times*, 10, November, 2002, A1).

Almost all of these stories expressed negative opinions towards Asian immigrants or students due to social problems and their impact on New Zealand culture. At the same time these same commentators were largely accepting of the economic benefits that these groups provided.

As discussed in Chapter Two, people's opinions are frequently formed from particular events and experiences in their day to day lives while others who have not had to deal with similar events personally may still experience the same event through media representations. When comparing the results from New Zealand polls 2000 and 2002 results, the 2002 results show 45 % New Zealanders thought "there are too many Asian immigrants" compared to 29% who thought so in 2000 before Peters election campaign. (<http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php>). Media coverage of his anti-Asian immigration rhetoric, increased Peters' popularity at the polls. Immigration was a major issue in the 2002 elections, when New Zealand First won 13 seats to become the third largest party in Parliament. During this period and later, Peters received widespread media coverage over his anti-Asian immigration views.

In conclusion, Asian international student news coverage should be regarded as a complex ethnic issue that is interwoven with the nationalist sentiments, cultural and ethnic conflicts. However, this complexity was largely simplified by the New Zealand media, not only because the media framed the news in terms of ethnic conflicts such as Winston Peters' opinions of anti-Asian immigration, but also by selecting to report on attention grabbing bad news and also largely overlooking students' own experiences and opinions. Even the Chinese newspaper did not pay close attention to students' own opinions. Overall, the media could not transcend the limitations of cultural background on its perspective nor the purpose of making a profit. Overall, coverage reflected a pakeha-dominated viewpoint with little recognition of an ethnic minority perspectives.

During this study, the New Zealand immigration policy made a significant change from a points system to an invitation system. The international education trade went down rapidly. It would be useful to investigate how these changes in immigration have matched the issues raised in the media particularly by Peters, and to what extent are affected by media publicity and the Government fear of losing electoral support from the public. Further research on the export education issue, could look at how the negative media stories influenced overseas Asians especially after several overseas media bought New Zealand television programmes and published them. For example, Hong Kong Start-TV bought "60 Minutes" from TV One

and showed it in Hong Kong, China and Taiwan. There was also print media attention in China on the involvement of overseas Chinese students in crime. For example, *Southern Weekend* ran a story “Young students face harsh punishments overseas” (*Southern Weekend*, 30 May 2003, A2). The coverage shares some similarities with media representations from New Zealand, and could affect attitudes towards New Zealand as a favourable destination for Chinese students.

To obtain a more comprehensive picture of the influence of media representation, future study needs to incorporate empirical measurement of readers’ reactions with textual analysis. Much more research is needed to understand how media coverage might encourage or discourage stereotyping of ethnic minorities such as Asian international students. Further research in this area needs also to deal with the influence of media coverage upon government policy in particular both immigration and education policy in New Zealand.



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16/11/01 p3 " Immigrants change the world "

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p3 " The great age of intellectuals returning to china"

24/01/02 p7 "Chinese Students study in New Zealand"

p3 "The experience of foreign students has changed Taiwan"



p12 “Don’t leave your bad habits overseas to damage Chinese image ”

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p7 “What is good about New Zealand”

04/04/02 p10 “New migrants at loss”

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19/07/02 p3 “Think about Winston Peters’ words”

20/07/02 p3 “Eliminate prejudice, then you can blend water and milk together”

16/08/02 p8 “Are the Chinese overseas students dragons or worms?”

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## **Appendices**

## **Summary of Interview with Asian International Students**

**Interview A:** Ms. V 31 May 2003 12:00 26 years old Edenz Colleges

Q: How long have you been living in a homestay? Do you think there are any communication barriers between you and your homestay family? If so, what are they?

A: There are not any problems with language, my listening and speaking are good but we have many cultural differences. For instance, my first homestay was from South Africa, she a 31 year-old single mother with a three year-old daughter. Before I arrived here I had prepared a lot of little presents for homestay and teachers which is our Chinese culture and I gave lots of gifts to my homestay mother. Sometimes when she went out at night, she asked me to look after her daughter, I never thought to ask her to pay me. However when my friends called me and we chatted by phone, my homestay mother was not happy about me using the phone this way, although she sometimes used the phone for three hours at a time. She also gave me a limitation of only 10 minutes to take a shower. I was surprised about her attitude, I wanted to be her friend, unfortunately I found it was hard to really get close to my first homestay family. I am not sure if it was because of culture differences or something else.

I paid NZ\$185 per week for the homestay accommodation. The contract showed that it included two meals, breakfast and dinner. But my homestay didn't often cook the dinner, the dinners usually were fast food which you just put into the microwave, that's it. Only once she brought a box of Sushi for me, it made me really happy. In contrast, I quite often bought some Chinese food for her and her daughter. But I think it really depends on luck. My current homestay is very kind to me and I am very satisfied with this one.

Q: Do you have any Kiwi friends now? if you have, how well do you communicate with them?

A: This question is very interesting. I want to tell you what happened to me.

When I just came to New Zealand, I was interested to meet people and to try to find friends, English speakers in particular, but I was quite disappointed with my experience. Let me tell you two stories.

First one, whether in school or somewhere else, I found that people have two faces to offer to me. For example, in school, the teachers are very good and kind to everyone, but after school, it is impossible if you want to get help from them. It made me feel that they are warm in the working time but after that they are cold to you and treat you as a different person. This was hard for me to accept.

The church people are the same. When I arrived here, my teacher introduced me to church, she said you can find friends easily there. I go to church every Sunday night and I am a Christian now, they are so warm and kind, they give me hugs and ask me what I need. However, when the church meetings finish at 9 o'clock their kindness has gone too. It seems like a job, my work is finished at 9:00, we can talk tomorrow if you have any questions. This is hard for me to understand if it is a cultural difference or something, I don't know.

Q: What is your main reason for studying in New Zealand? What are your further plans after you finish your study?

A: I came to New Zealand for my parents and myself. They pushed me to study abroad really hard. There are two main reasons, the first reason is: they do not like my current boyfriend, he likes gambling and takes drugs. So my parents pushed me to leave him. The second reason is for my future. I gained a diploma of travel and tourism in China and I am still interested in this, I'm going to study this subject in New Zealand after I pass the English test. I think it's easier to find a job if I have experience and New Zealand qualifications. I also plan to immigrate to New Zealand.

I see a lot of people want to get PR (Permanent Resident), I think it must be an advantage for my life, therefore, I want to get it too. The benefits such as the tuition fee will be much cheaper than overseas students.

Q: What did you do in China? Who will support you to study financially?

A: I had a good job in China as a tour guide for a Tourism Company with a good income for two years. I had to stop this job and used all my savings to come to New Zealand for further study. My parents paid one third my expenses, the rest of the fees I paid by myself. But it was still not enough, both of my parents work in a University, we are just normal family and not very rich. If I study for over two years I must think about the costs.

Q: Why do you read English language newspapers and TV? Did you find any stories about Asian students? If so, do you have any comments about that?

A: I do not read the newspaper every day, maybe a few times a week, but I watch the TV news nearly everyday. The main purpose for me is to improve my English. The news is my main interest. There were quite a few news stories about Asian and Chinese students' events recently such as the Chinese student who killed that young girl with his car and the 17 year-old Japanese student killed by his classmates and so on. Generally speaking, the media's reporting was objective but sometimes I still feel that they look down on Asians especially Chinese, from the words, tone and meaning when I read the news. Sometimes my homestays and school teachers asked me why Chinese this... why Chinese do that etc etc ...this made me feel uncomfortable.

Q: Do you think you will stay in New Zealand for longer? Do you have any problems living and/or studying in New Zealand now?

A: I like studying in New Zealand but it is too quiet and I have not many friends here so I have felt alone and homesick. Also I miss my parents and friends and I call them everyday. After talking to them I feel better. But I am not very happy at all. Why don't I go back to China? My parents will not allow me to leave and I know they are doing it for me and the current pain will bring me a good future. I hope I can stay for two years until I finish my study.

**Interview B:** Mr. A    01 June 2003    12:00    17 years old

Onehunga High school form 12

Q: How did you find out about studying in New Zealand and why did you decide to study here?

A: I like city life in a big city. Unfortunately, when my agent showed me the pictures of New Zealand, the pictures were of Sky Tower and Auckland city center, it looked like a modern city with blue sky and sea, those pictures made me feel that Auckland was similar to Sydney, Australia, so I came to here. I never expected New Zealand was a farming country with so many sheep and cows. I do not like New Zealand at all. During the first three months I was interested in a lot of new things but now I am bored and I miss my grandparents and friends. I have been here for four months now. I study at Onehunga High school. Although I do not like New Zealand very much I found the New Zealand quality of life and environment is better than China's. For example, New Zealand's population is much less than China, the quality of life is higher and the fresh air is very good.

Q: What is your plan for study in New Zealand? Do you have any other plans after you finish studying?

A: I'm only 17 years old, I will finish my high school at the end of this year and after that I want to study a 1-2 years diploma for Hotel management in New Zealand. Then I hope I can work in this field in New Zealand or in China. Also I want to immigrate to New Zealand.

Q: Do you understand the significance of immigration and how it might affect your life?

A: Actually I came to New Zealand to make my parents' dreams come true rather than make my dream come true. My parents wanted to study and live abroad when they were young but they failed, therefore I am now doing that for them.

Q: How long have you been living in a homestay? What do you think about your homestay experience?

A: Since I arrived in New Zealand I have lived in a homestay. So far I have changed homestays three times. The first homestay was not kind to me but I was really happy with my second homestay and my current one is good too. The first homestay was a Singaporean family, I paid \$200 NZ dollars per week which included breakfast and dinner. They never asked other international students and me to have dinner with the family members together, and the food we had was different from the family's food also. They ate good cooked food and we were not happy that our food was different. We also were not allowed to have fruit and dessert but their children could have it anytime they wanted. Only once they gave us an ice cream and said that actually you guys should not have it, you're getting it because today we are happy.

I don't think I have big communication barriers with my homestay, maybe the language is one of the barriers, but the cultural difference is the main obstacle.

Q: How about in school, do you think teachers and classmates understand your culture?

A: Teachers are all right, I think they are friendly and understood me well but not my Kiwi friends in school. For example, they often ask me why I spent lots of money to get a New Zealand education. In their eyes we are (international students) foolish. They think we could use this money to do things that are more interesting than get an education in New Zealand. In my high school most students are Kiwi and Maori. Some people are really big. I don't think they look down on me but sometimes they push and kick me although I don't think they are serious but it makes me feel not very well.

Also I have some friends of other nationalities from Korea, Japan and Thailand. Compared with Chinese, there are some differences. For example, Japanese want everything to be perfect and best, the Korean students usually study hard and step by step, unlike Chinese students who always want to find the shortcut, they want to jump from language to diploma.

Q: How often do you read English newspapers or watch English TV programs in NZ?

A: I do not often read newspapers but I watch English TV programs several times a week. Usually, I watch the news at 6:00 clock. The main purpose is to find out how much I can understand from the news, I think it can help me to improve my English.



Q: Did you find any stories about Asian students and if so do you have any comment about these stories?

A: I remember some stories on television about some Asian students who drive fast cars without a drivers license, the Chinese criminal who got an 8 years sentence for kidnapping and so on. I think most of these stories were objective and it matched with my impression.

Q: You are only 17 years old, who controls your expenditure in New Zealand?

A: Myself. My parents gave me freedom to control this money. I have had no experience in managing money before. But I think I am quite good and always try to save some money.

Q: What do you think about this kind of financial freedom for young people like yourself?

A: I think some young people have too much freedom compared with before they came to New Zealand. In China their parents would tell them how to manage money but after they come to New Zealand it is far too far for away their parents to manage their children. For example, the young people would buy a sports car if they can and I do not think their parents can stop them.

I think New Zealand's cars are so cheap, I want to buy my own car too, but I just want to buy a small TOYOTA car for transport and I won't buy it before I get my drivers license. I am not sure whether my parents will agree or not.

Q: How well do you think you accept New Zealand culture and how well do you think you are accepted by New Zealand mainstream society.

A: I think both are good. I can accept New Zealand culture very easily and I felt they can accept me too. For example, all my homestays think I am a good student and a good boy. They never discriminated against me in my homestay, school or public places, only my first homestay treated me differently by giving me different food.

**Interview C:** Ms. C 25 years old 5 June 03 11:00 AUT Arts

Q: How long have you been in NZ? What's your major? Do you think there are any difficulties in your study or life here in New Zealand?

A: I have been studying in New Zealand for two and half years so far, I am studying multimedia at AUT. It was a little bit hard for me due to my English not being good enough during the first year. Basically the teachers and my classmates are quite friendly which made me feel it was not that difficult.

I had a few part time jobs in New Zealand in the past two years, I found that the difficulties or differences in work places were more than in my study place. For example, I used to work for Vodafone in customer service and sales and I had a lot of time to connect with different people, most of them Kiwis. Maybe due to different cultural backgrounds and ways of communicating I often experienced misunderstandings with customers, sometimes they were rude. It really got me down.

I don't have many Kiwi friends, only one good Australian friend who was my classmate, we did not have any problems with language when we communicated but we both knew we had cultural differences but it did not affect our friendship. We both tried to learn how to accept our differences. He is interested in my culture and I also tried to understand his culture too. I never felt uncomfortable.

Q: In your view, how well you can accept New Zealand culture and how much Kiwis can accept yours?

A: In fact, most of my friends or workmates in New Zealand all knew something about China. Often when they heard stories about China or Chinese people they asked me if it was true or not. For instance, one of my bosses asked me do Chinese prefer to do their business over lunch or dinner? I answered him that some people do it in China, that's true. Also I tried to explain to him the Chinese custom of GuanXi (relationships) is very important in China and that people spend lots of time and money on it. My boss understood how important this

concept is to Chinese but if I spent lots time and money on my clients he still would not be happy that I do it.

Q: How important is the English media to you?

A: Actually I do not really like the English media. The main source for me to get information about what happened in New Zealand is through the local Chinese newspaper. I do not often watch English news or read English newspaper. If I turn the TV on at the news time, I will watch it, usually it just for enjoyment. Because I have no long-term plan to stay in New Zealand, I'm more interested in what is happening in China. The purpose I contact with English media is to know more about policies such as immigration policy or the stories about Chinese in New Zealand. Also I am interested in how New Zealand media represent Chinese.

Q: Can you tell me what you think of NZ media's representation of Chinese students?

A: I think media's attitude has changed a little if compared with two years ago. Two years ago New Zealand immigration policy was more open than now and the New Zealand government encouraged people come to New Zealand to live and study at that time. Also people's attitudes to migrants were better and most of the stories in New Zealand mainstream media were positive such as how Chinese worked hard and made some valued achievements. In contrast today, there are more stories about Chinese criminal activity, Asian students driving fast cars without a license, Asian international students having too much freedom and being out of control and so on. Obviously, the numbers of negative stories outnumber the positive coverage in New Zealand mainstream media today. I am not sure if the reality is like this or the media are just starting to focus more on negative reporting. I do not have evidence to prove my point of view but I have the impression from the media recently that media's tendency is towards negative representation of Asian international students.

Q: Is the media's representation of Asian students experiences similar to you or your friends' experiences?

A: I do not think so. Most of my friends are new immigrants aged in their 30s, they are working or studying, they have long term plans to live in New Zealand. For these people the purpose of living in New Zealand is to improve their quality of life. They think of how to find

a good job, how to create good opportunities for their children to get the best education and how to be successful in their new home. They are definitely different with young students. They don't want to make any trouble for themselves. But I heard some bad things from people that some young students do things like drive fast cars over speed, kidnapping and other crimes. These experiences are not similar to mine or my friends' experiences in New Zealand.

Q: What do you think of the NZ employment environment for Asians? Do you have any plans to stay longer in NZ after you finish your study?

A: It really depends on people's purpose in finding work? If it is just for survival, New Zealand is not a difficult place to find job for this goal. For students a part-time job is good enough, but the job situation is more difficult for those wanting to develop a career.

For me, I do not have a long term plan to stay in New Zealand after my study finishes. I think there are two main barriers in this part. Firstly, my age, English is my second language, I can't expect that I can speak as well as a native speaker so this is a weakness for my career. On one hand, I have a Masters degree and I want to get into high level business management, I don't want to do physical work, and I'm also not interested in working for someone forever. On the other hand the higher position has higher requirements for which language is a barrice for me. Cultural difference is another difficult thing to accept with New Zealanders. I came to New Zealand for education, to learn Western culture and to gain some work experience if I can. So I will go back to China to development my career.

Q: Some young Asian international students have limited supervision and experience a lot of freedom after arriving in New Zealand. They no longer have their families to look over them and manage their finances, what impact do you think this freedom has on these students?

A: Now more and more young people are studying abroad, lots are teenagers like we see in New Zealand. In my opinion there is big difference for these young people have compared to life in their home country. For instance, they have parents to rely on, maybe their parents arrange everything for them, they have friends who speak their own language in the environment which they grew up in. But in New Zealand they have no friends or parents to rely on and they must communicate in another language in a new environment. They have to

learn how to understand other cultures, how to make decision for their future, how to use money and how to manage their time and everything without their parents. Of course, it's a big difference and a challenge. I think if parents can give them the chance to get into this stage step by step before they go overseas, they will find the experience easier. Because they are young, they lack life experience and are easily influenced by negative forces which sometimes leads to mistakes. Also they have power to control money and arrange their life with less experience and an immature value system. The freedom is too much, it's not a good thing for them.

Q: What gives you the most pressure studying and living in New Zealand?

A: Firstly, life style is different, I did not easily adapt to it. Also I felt quite lonely. Secondly, it was hard to find the right place for myself, I mean to develop my career overseas. There are three main barriers here: culture, language and thought. It's like a circle, if you stay out of this hole, you will feel comfortable, but if you get into the hole, the difficulties will come with you and the barriers will get bigger and bigger when you get into it deeper and deeper. It makes me feel anxious and pressured.

**Interview D:** Mr. L 22 June 2003 10:00 26 years old Auckland University

Q: How long have you been living in New Zealand?

A: nearly 4 years

Q: Did you feel any communication barriers while you were in school, homestay or with friends in New Zealand?

A: At the beginning, there were some barriers, which were mainly due to my unfamiliarity with the living environment in New Zealand. For example, how you should behave having dinner with New Zealanders, when you can cross the pedestrian lines, what is the New Zealand common life style and how you adapt yourself into it, and other New Zealand conventions you need to understand. However, after a period of time when I was getting familiar with these basic rules of living in New Zealand, it is fine with me staying in New Zealand. I always think the key issue to get along with other people, no matter where you are, is to be tolerant and considerate. If you can always put your feet in others' shoes before you do something or make a decision, it would be much easier for you to build harmony with the people around you.

Q: According to what you said, you seem having a good understanding of the western culture and lifestyle and having fit in well yourself. On the other side, how what you think of New Zealand people's understanding of Chinese culture and your life style?

A: Generally speaking, I think educated people may be more accepting of the cultural differences. If people have the chance to be exposed to them, they would know more, understand more and become more tolerant. It would be hard to get well with someone who is self centered and unwilling to accept the differences.

Q: Do you have foreign friends? Do you have any problems staying with them?

A: Yes, I have a Kiwi friend and an Australian friend. We are very good friends. If there was a problem in our friendship, I don't think it is because of the difference of our ethnicity. Even

in China, I may still have problems to be with some people. So it is really dependent on individual characteristics.

Q: During these four years, how often have you looked at the media in New Zealand, such as TV, newspaper and etc..?

A: Not much, even Chinese TV I seldom watched. When I look up for some information, I prefer to do in a fast way. So my mother tongue is still my first choice.

Only when I couldn't find the information through Chinese media, I would turn to English media.

Q: What do you think about the New Zealand media's representations of Asian students in New Zealand?

A: I have been a student consultant in a New Zealand school, so I had a lot of chances to meet these Asian students. The stories in New Zealand's media, I think, are based on the facts, but the media showed more interest in reporting bad things about these Asia students and focused on bad examples of these students. That is understandable. Since people mostly pay more attention to some negative news instead of normal life, the media need to find something special to report to satisfy their commercial purpose. The normal life of Asia students wouldn't be worth reporting, however, the bad things seem more valuable from the news reporter's perspective.

Q: Among these news reports, which nationality of the Asian students do you think has been mentioned more often?

A: In the last a few years, Chinese students' lives have been reported more often than Korean and Japanese. One of the reasons is because in the past a few years the numbers of Chinese students has dramatically increased. Another reason is Chinese students in New Zealand mostly come from rich families; otherwise they would not be able to meet the visa requirement. Therefore, compared with Korean and Japanese students, Chinese students have been granted more economic power and they have more opportunities to try New Zealand social life. Without the supervision of their parents, they can very easily get involved with

some bad behaviors, such as gambling and erotic services. If these Chinese students lack self-control, their lives can be easily ruined by these social activities.

Q: How about the students from rich families in China? Would there be any difference from the students in New Zealand? Do you think it is the generation problem or merely a problem for these rich family students?

A: Students in China and in New Zealand have several differences, which are not the students' difference but the living environment difference. Firstly, most overseas students in New Zealand haven't been sufficiently supervised due to the absence of their parents. Secondly, unlike western society, gambling and erotic service are prohibited in China, which make such kinds of social activities largely inaccessible.

Q: What is the major difficulty for your life in New Zealand?

A: The major difficulty for me are the financial problems. I arrived in New Zealand at the age of 24 and I know how to manage my life. Self-discipline is not an issue for me.

Q: How do you think about the job market in New Zealand?

A: In general, the job market is not good for people who come from overseas. Working in a foreign country is not always easy. Most foreigners in China, if they are not expatriated by the overseas companies, also don't have a lot of choices in finding a job. Most foreigners in China are engaged in language teaching. Compared with China, New Zealand doesn't have a lot of big companies and the market is relatively smaller. Even Kiwis still have difficulties in finding a job.

Q: Do you feel any discrimination in finding a job because you are not native English speaker and are from China?

A: It is hard to define what kind of behavior is discriminatory. Few people will judge a person just because of the difference of race. However, there would be huge possibility for people to take something for granted. For example, if an applicant is from China, the recruiter may easily conclude, before the interview with this applicant that this Chinese applicant's English ability, education background and working experience wouldn't fit this job.



Q: After completing of your study in New Zealand, you applied for New Zealand residence. Did you have a clear plan to become a New Zealand resident before you arrived in New Zealand?

A: A residence permit is more like a destination point for some people's overseas study life. I don't think being a resident would bring a great change to people's life although this permit obviously makes it more convenient for me living in New Zealand. However, I don't think it will help it achieving my career goal and reaching my life expectations. Some people may take the permit for New Zealand residence as a kind of achievement of their study in New Zealand.

**Interview E:** Ms. J 26 June 2003 10:00 26 years old

Auckland Institute of Studies (AIS)

Q: How long have you been in New Zealand? What's your subject? Do you think there are any communication barriers when you communicate with your Kiwi friends?

A: I have been in New Zealand nearly four years, and have got my masters degree of business from a local school. The language barrier is not the main communication barrier, the main barrier is the lack of knowledge of culture.

Q: According to your words, you believe that culture is the main problem in your communication, could you give me an example?

A: One of my Kiwi friends mentioned something about local events, I found that I couldn't go further with him on this topic. Some local names like the person's name or location, little by little I could pick it up but sometimes I find that I have no idea about what he is talking about. This is one of the examples. Of course when you stay longer, you can more easily fit into this society. This is just one part. If we talk more about political ideas or policy with Kiwis, I don't think my talk can be that long because I found I have limited knowledge of this society.

Q: You have got a job in a language school, that means you have a lot of chances to interact with Asian international students. Do you think they accept your work style or your thinking style or do you experience misunderstanding with people sometimes when working?

A: I am very confident in what I'm doing. I think my work is very helpful for both sides. I always encourage Chinese students to adjust to this culture and join all the programmes teachers have designed for them. Also from the school point of view, I think that I am also supporting teachers more than I am supporting students.

Q: After four years you have got a lot of opportunities to experience to know the local culture and to learn more about the local culture. Do you think you were accepted by the host society very well and how well do you think that you can fit into this society?

A: I think I am very able to fit into this society because I am very active, I'm keen to know everything happening here and I am keen to read newspapers and listen to the radio. But on the other hand, I am not active in joining any community organizations. I only joined the sports club recently. I cannot say I have already made many Kiwi friends, actually, I felt when we meet together, we don't have any serious talk, and we are just trying to relax each other.

Q: You have mentioned that you are very keen to learn about New Zealand culture, please tell me how often you read newspapers or watch TV.

A: I read the local newspaper the *New Zealand Herald*, the biggest newspaper of New Zealand every day. I watch the One news every day, I like the music programs on the radio. When I drive I always listen to a music program.

Q: Can you tell me any stories that were reported by media which involved Asian international students' experiences. Do you have any comments about that?

A: Yes, sometimes when I read newspapers I noted that some stories were about Chinese students. Like lately, one Chinese student killed a 4 year-old girl with his car; another Chinese student has been sentenced to jail.

Q: what do you think about the media's tendency to report these stories, what is your judgment about that?

A: I think the media is reporting the facts, whatever they are report, they write about the facts. They make some comments, but in my eyes there is no discrimination there, if it was me, I would make a comment like that.

Q: If you compare the facts and the way the media reports them, do you think there are more positive or more negative stories?

A: Lately more and more stories about Chinese students were not positive. I think the negative stories are more numerous than positive ones. Actually, in the *New Zealand Herald* for example, if they are reporting the news, all basically stick to the facts, but in one paper (I can't remember which page), there were three comments there, some comments are came

from local people or New Zealanders, it's not like China, in China, we have to censor some comments, we can't criticize the government. But the media here (NZ), they put the pro side and the contra side together.

Q: I have read through your answers to your questionnaire, you said that you think discrimination exists and has often happened in public places and in the media. Could you please explain what you mean by in the media?

A: I did answer about the discrimination in the media. For me that means my understanding of the negative reports about Chinese that appeared on the newspaper is more discriminatory I felt from this country.

Q: Do you have any personal experience with that?

A: I had one person to person experience in a parking area. A woman parked her car into the back of my car. I had to stop, because someone took my car parking. Then I went to upstairs and tried to sort it out. When we were talking she didn't put her window down, it was very rude, I could not hear anything. Then I think she couldn't hear me either.

Q: Why did you choose New Zealand and why have you decided to stay here longer?

A: I chose New Zealand because of the cost (lower than other countries). The reasons I chose to stay in New Zealand longer are, firstly, I want to finance my losses, and I want to find a job in New Zealand. Secondly, it's a quiet and peaceful country, lovely environment. The life is so different (if compared with China). In China I had already have better life, suddenly I want to change to have a quiet life. In this state, I think I will not stay longer. New Zealand is a good place for people who have a lot of money or people who want to retire.

Q: Do you think it's easy to find a job in New Zealand according to your experience?

A: Not easy. Actually, even though your English is fluent, your English is still not good enough to reach native speaker standard. They still can recognize you are not a native speaker from your surname. It makes it very hard to get a good job. So, for my first job which was a

physical job, I had to do some physical stuff. Of course I made some progress in my job, actually it's not a job that I am able to do. I can do a lot of things more advanced than this job.

Q: From your answers of the questionnaire, you said that, you agreed with some ideas of Winston Peters. Could you give me some example about that?

A: I disagree with his ideas that people who come to New Zealand from different countries, they should forget their own culture, that is impossible. Actually, New Zealand is an immigrant country, no matter who ever you are, whether you are European earlier settlers or you are the latecomers like Asian migrants. What makes New Zealand more attractive, it's diversity, I think. So, when he said New Zealand did not need diversity, he wants uniformity, there is no fun, it is the main point I disagree with him. But some points that he said, like sometimes people like Asians brought something in (like cheating or make unreal documents when they apply PR or Visa), it was not nice, and our government has to restrict or implement a stricter policy on that, I agree.

Q: As you said on this point, people brought in something not great, do you think it's because of cultural difference or just not right?

A: Not cultural difference, it's not right. It's the way to do things, it's not accepted in other countries.

Q: Your job provides a lot of chances to communicate with students, one thing I want to know, what do you think of the freedom the students have, including the power to control their money and time? Do you think it will give some benefits to students or have a bad effect on them?

A: Freedom has two sides. They (students) suddenly have freedom. I say suddenly, it's because when they were in China, they have no chance of controlling a lot of money by themselves, they had less chance to stay with their classmates or friends by themselves or stay with their girlfriends very frequently. Any control is from their parents. I said suddenly, because someone told me (one student) that he really enjoyed it here, they have this freedom all of a sudden, they are very happy to have that. I think the freedom, if they can use it correctly, I mean they are well educated and they have the brains to know how to deal with

these freedoms, and then the freedom can make them more mature and grown up. But if they are just using it without any reasoned thoughts, it can make them go to jail as well.

## Asian International Students' Experience in NZ Survey Form 2003

### Part A: Present Situation in NZ

Please circle the appropriate number or word for the right answer:

1. What subjects are you studying? Please state your schools' name

\_\_\_\_\_;

2. How long have you been living NZ? \_\_\_\_\_ Years; \_\_\_\_\_ Months

3. Whom do you live with now?

a. My family              b. Live alone              c. Kiwi Homestay

Flatmate of the same nationality

e. Flatmate of a different nationality, please specify their nationality:

-----; -----; -----.

f. Other (specify)

4. What is your English proficiency?

a. Very poor              b. Poor              c. OK

d. Good              e. Very good

5. Do you have English language qualifications?

a. Yes                      b. No

If yes, state the qualification and level (e.g. IELTS 6.0) \_\_\_\_\_

6. How often have you been absent from school?

a. Never absent              b. A few times              c. Quite often

d. Have warning letter from school

If yes, why?

- a. Sick   b. Don't like school   c. Accident (to yourself or your family)
- d. Something important (like going to Immigration to extend your visa)
- e. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Who controls your spending and manages your finance in NZ?

- a. Parents   b. My relatives or guardian   c. Myself

**Part B: Why the NZ Decision?**

8. How did you get information about study in NZ before you came to NZ?

- a. Agents   b. Advertising   c. Internet
- d. Friends or relatives   e. Education exhibition   f. Other (specify)

9. How did you make contact with your school before you came to NZ?

- a. Agents   b. Advertising   c. Internet
- d. Friends or relatives   e. Education exhibition   f. Other (specify)

10. Why did you choose NZ to study? Please rate how important each item was for your NZ decision?



	Very important	Important	Not at all important
Have friends or relatives in NZ			
Easy to get visa			
Cheaper than other countries such as U.S.A. and UK			
New Zealand allows immigration			
Beautiful environment such as fresh air			
Stable political system (e.g. democratic, welfare state)			
Education quality and program			

11. Had you applied to other countries before coming to NZ?

- a. Yes                      b. No

12. If yes, state which country or countries you applied to. \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_

13. Have you studied or are currently studying in a language school?

- a. Yes                      b. No

If yes, state which language school. \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_

### Part C: Likely Future Plans in NZ

14. Approximately how many years do you intend to study in NZ?

- a. Less than 1 year      b. 1 – 2 years      c. 2 years      d. 3 years  
e. 4 years      f. More than 4 years      g. Not sure

15. What is the main subject you are studying?

My subject is: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Why did you choose the subject for your study? Please indicate how important each of following were for your decision?

- a. Parents' wish  
b. Interested  
c. Easy to find job  
d. Popular (many of your friends study it)  
e. Just for the qualification  
f. Can get immigration points  
g. Other (specify)

Very important	Important	Not at all important

17. Do you have any plans to stay longer in NZ after your study?

- a. Yes      b. No      c. Not sure yet

18. Do you have plans to do business in NZ if you are allowed?

- a. Yes      b. No

Do you plan to immigrate?

- a. Yes      b. No

#### **Part D: Homestay Experience in NZ**

20. Do you have any experience of living in a homestay?

- a. Yes                      b. No

If yes, for how long?

- a. Less than three months      b. Six months      c. One year      d. more than one year

21. Have you changed your homestay? If yes, how many times have you changed ?

- a. Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ (number of times)                      b. No

22. Are there some aspects of homestay which you don't like. Please give some examples:

a.

b.

c.

23. Are you satisfied with your homestay experience?

- a. Never satisfied                      b. OK                      c. Satisfied                      d. Very satisfied

## Part E: Joining Organizations and Communication Difficulties

Have you joined any of the following Chinese groups?

(Circle the ones you have joined)

- a. General community group   b. Sports clubs   c. Religion group  
d. Business group   e. Political group   f. Youth/Student group  
g. Gang group   h. Other (specify)   i. None

25. Have you joined any of the following non-Chinese groups?

- a. General community group   b. Sports clubs   c. Religion group  
d. Business group   e. Political group   f. Youth/Student group  
g. Gang group   h. Other (specify)   i. None

26. Do you think there are communication barriers between you and school people such as teachers and other school staff?

- a. Yes   b. No

If yes, are there barriers because of;

Please rate how strong each of the following were in communication:

- a. Language  
b. Culture  
c. Discrimination  
d. Other (specify)

Very strong	Strong	Not at all strong

27. Do you think there are communication barriers between you and homestay members

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, are there barriers because of;

Please rate how strong each of the following were in communication:

a. Language

b. Culture

c. Discrimination

d. Other (specify)

Very strong	Strong	Not at all strong

28. Do you think there are communication barriers between you and Kiwi friends or classmates who come from different countries?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, are there barriers because of;

Please rate how strong each of the following were in communication:

a. Language

b. Culture

c. Discrimination

d. Other (specify)

Very strong	Strong	Not at all strong

29. Have you ever encountered discrimination by host residents?

- a. Never      b. Seldom      c. Sometimes      d. Often      e. Always

30. If so, where did it happen?

- a. Official organizations (e.g. immigration office, NZQA, work & income)
- b. Business organizations (e.g. Bank, school, shopping centre)
- c. Public place / locations (e.g. Park, road, bar, cinema)
- d. Media (e.g. newspaper, TV, radio, book, magazine)
- e. Other (e.g. homestay, please specify)

31. How well do you fit in with the local culture? (How well you can accept NZ culture?)

- a. Not at all      b. A little      c. OK
- d. Well      e. Very well

32. Have you made a lot of effort in trying to adjust to the host society?

- a. Very passive      b. Passive      c. Some
- d. Assertive      e. Very Assertive

33. What degree of acceptance did you feel the host residents have?

- a. Not at all      b. A little      c. OK
- d. Accept      e. Fully accept      f. Other (specify)

34. In your opinion, what is the value of international students to NZ society?

- a. Positive      b. Negative      c. Neutral

35. In your opinion, what is the cultural value of international students to NZ?

- a. Positive      b. Negative      c. Neutral

36. In your opinion, what is the value of international students to NZ's economy?

- a. Positive      b. Negative      c. Neutral

## Part F: Vehicles

37. How do you get to classes?

- a. Bus                      b. Walk                      c. Drive car by myself  
d. Take friends' car together      e. Train      f. Bike      g. Other (specify)

38. Do you have vehicle?

- a. Yes                      b. No

If yes, how many vehicles? (circle)

- a. one                      b. two                      c. more than three

What type of car do you have? (circle)

- a. sports                      b. expensive (e.g. BMW)      c. basic

Have you got any traffic tickets (e.g. parking ticket) from police or other authorities in NZ?

If yes, how many tickets you have got?

- a. Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ times                      b. No

How much have you paid in fines? \_\_\_\_\_.

40. Do your parents or guardian agree that you can own a car? (circle)

- a. Yes                      b. No                      c. They don't know

## Part G: Media Consumption

41. Which media is your main source of information about NZ and what is happening in NZ? Please rank the following answers (e.g. put 1 beside the type of media that is your main source, put 2 beside your next main source, and so on. If you do not use a media, do not put a number beside the answer).

- a. English TV programmes
- b. English radio programmes
- c. English newspapers
- d. Local own language TV programmes (Chinese TV, Korean TV)
- e. Local own language radio programmes
- f. Local own language newspapers
- g. Internet in English version
- h. Internet in own language version

42. How often do you watch English TV programmes?

- a. Daily
- b. Several times a week
- c. Several times a month
- d. Monthly
- e. Never

43. Name your favourite English TV programmes. \_\_\_\_\_.

44. How often do you listen to English radio programmes?

- a. Daily
- b. Several times a week
- c. Several times a month
- d. Monthly
- e. Never

45. Name your favourite English radio programmes. \_\_\_\_\_.

46. How often do you read English newspapers?

- a. Daily
- b. Several times a week



- c. Several times a month      d. Monthly      e. Never

47. Name your favourite English newspapers. \_\_\_\_\_.

48. What issues interest you in English media? (Rank in order of preference)

- a. News      b. Sports      c. Service information  
d. Advertisings      e. Financial      f. Political  
g. Policy (e.g. immigration policy)      h. Nothing at all

49. What is your main purpose in following English media and please rate how strong they were in your media consumption.

	Very strong	Strong	Not at all strong
a. Improve English			
b. Find information I need			
c. Enjoyment			
d. Spend time			
e. Other leisure			

50. Are you aware of any English media coverage of Asian international students?

If yes, what were the stories about? (write what you remember of the content of stories)

Yes

No

Story1:

Story2:

Story 3:

51. Were these stories different from your own experience?

a. Yes      b. No      c. Not sure

If yes, how are they different?

## Part H: NZ Culture

52. How much do you understand the local culture?

- a. Not at all      b. A little      c. OK      d. Quite a lot      e. Very much

53. Where did you learn NZ culture and rate how strong each of following were:

	Very strong	Strong	Not at all strong
a. Friends, relatives or homestay			
b. My own language media (newspaper, TV)			
c. Community (church, club)			
d. Mainstream media			
e. English school			
f. Others (specify)			

54. Is *Once Were Warriors* a

- a. Song      b. Sports team      c. Film      d. I don't know

55. What is a 'Haka'?

- a. Maori greenstone      b. A traditional Maori war dance  
c. A type of Maori boat      d. I don't know

56. Is Che Fu a

- a. Singer      b. Martial arts expert      c. A film star      d. I don't know

57. Is a *swandri* a

- a. Type of native bird      b. Article of clothing      c. Clothes drier

58. The All Blacks are

- a. A New Zealand representative rugby team      b. Black leisure shoes  
c. A type of 4 wheel drive vehicle      d. I don't know

59. Do you know which Party is currently governing New Zealand?

- a. ACT Party      b. Green Party      c. New Zealand First Party  
d. Labour Party      e. Labour Party /United/Progressive Coalition      f. I don't know

60. Do you know who Winston Peters is?

- a. The leader of the NZ First Party      b. Prime Minister of NZ  
c. Supporter of Asian migrants      d. NZ sport star      e. I don't know

61. Do you agree with Winston Peters' ideas on immigration?

- a. Agree      b. Disagree      c. Agree some of his ideas  
d. I don't know what his ideas are.

## **Part I Background**

Gender:      Male      Female

What's your age?

From 17 – 19

From 20 -29

From 30 – 39

Over 40

Which country did you come from? \_\_\_\_\_

What was your occupation in your home country?

Student

Owner / shareholder

Manager

Employee

Unemployed

What is your educational background?

High school

Diploma

Bachelor

Master

Other (specify)

**Note:** We need 6 students to take part in face-to-face interviews to talk about their experiences in NZ. If you are interested, please contact:

May Qin: Ph: 09 8200 806 or 021 124 55

**Thank you for your response.**