

Chinese Permanent Residents in Japan
A Qualitative Study on Acculturation Strategies and Mental Health

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between mental health and acculturation strategies of Chinese who have Permanent Resident visas in Japan. In this study, we used Berry's Acculturation Strategies Model and conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 Chinese people who had Permanent Resident visas. This qualitative inquiry examined the acculturation strategies they preferred, how they get along with Chinese and Japanese friends, their familiarity with the two cultures, and their mental health conditions. Using the KJ method, we found that the same participants who exhibited "assimilationist" characteristics at the workplace also preferred "separationist" strategies in their private lives. This phenomenon, which is most likely unique to Japan, has been called "switching". It also exists when they are with Japanese or Chinese friends. In this study, we borrowed the concept of a "superordinate identity", an identity not constrained by a fixed ethnic or host identity, from a study on Zainichi Koreans living in Japan. We conclude that the "superordinate identity" also exists in Chinese permanent residents of Japan. However, from the explanations the participants gave, we found that their thoughts on their identity were different from Zainichi Koreans. The differences are discussed in the ways they deal with the two cultures. There was no clear relationship found between mental health conditions and acculturation strategies. The similarities between Chinese culture and Japanese culture most likely make it easier to adapt to Japanese society. Participants' extended time in Japan may have familiarized them with Japanese culture and social rules.

Keywords: Acculturation Strategies, Chinese, Japan, Permanent Resident, Mental Health

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Introduction

1.1 Background

As the number of foreigners in Japan has begun to increase, issues regarding their intercultural adaptation conditions have become increasingly pronounced, and thus these issues have become increasingly important to pay attention to.

Most of the research on intercultural adaptation has focused on international students (Tanaka, 1998; Tanaka & Fujiwara, 1992). Since long-term residents are apt to seem as though they have already adapted to Japanese society, there is little research on long-term residents of foreigners living in Japan, and the real condition of their adaptation situation still has not been investigated.

In 2006 the Japanese government revised the “Guidelines for Permission for Permanent Residence”. Before this revision, people living in Japan for at least 10 years were eligible to apply for a permanent resident visa. However, after the revision, some special cases were accepted to apply for a permanent resident visa, even though the applicants had not been living in Japan for 10 years. Due to this revision, it became easier for foreign residents to apply for a permanent resident visa. From 2006 to June 2019, the number of people increased by about 390,000 (Ministry of justice, 2020).

Chinese have been the largest ethnic group in Japan since 2007. As of June 2019, the Chinese population in Japan exceeded 780,000, and about 270,000 of them had permanent resident visas, which means that one third of Chinese in Japan could live in Japan for an extended period. However, most research on Chinese also focuses on international students. Although the number of long-term residents in Japan has been increasing, the vast majority of research on these residents has been based in sociology, not psychology.

1.2 Literature Review

Acculturation strategies can be considered as one factor that influences intercultural adaptation. Acculturation strategies are the methods people use to deal with acculturation. According to Berry (2019), acculturation is the process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members. It is considered that in the process of acculturation, acculturation strategies influence acculturative stress, behavioral shifts and adaptation to society.

Berry et. al. (1989) used two essential questions, “Is it considered to be of value to maintain cultural identity and characteristics?” and “Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with other groups?” to examine acculturation strategies. For conceptual purposes, “yes” or “no” were used as answers. A fourfold model was created by four types of combinations of the answers. The four options are assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization (Berry et. al., 1989).

Adaptation is a concept which refers to how well individuals succeed in daily life in their own group as well as in the larger society (Berry, 2019), many scholars pay

attention to the relationship between acculturation strategies and condition of adaptation. In most research on acculturation, the integration strategy has been found to lead to better adaptation than other strategies (Berry, 1997). Although considerable research has been done on the relationship between acculturation strategies and the condition of adaptation, Chinese in Japan are rarely investigated as subjects in acculturation research itself. Before finding out which acculturation strategy leads to better adaptation, it is necessary to clarify what an acculturation strategy is to Chinese long-term residents.

As a result of reviewing research focusing on acculturation strategies of Chinese overseas in other countries and their mental health, it was found that not all research which supports “integration” is connected to better mental health (Zhao & Tanaka, 2019). Only a small portion of research on acculturation strategies has been done on foreigners living in Japan.

According to a study on Chinese international students in Japan, among the four acculturation strategies, only marginalization was positively related to GHQ (Sun, 2013). This result suggests that marginalization may be more risky than the other three acculturation strategies. Besides this result, Sun (2013) also mentioned that marginalization was the second most preferred acculturation strategy after integration. In the other words, there are many Chinese international students in Japan who are classified as marginalizationist, the riskiest acculturation strategy. However, it is still unclear how long-term Chinese residents in Japan are classified to the 4 acculturation strategies, or which acculturation strategy is better to adapt to. More research should be conducted on this topic.

Several sociological studies found that Koreans in Japan want to eliminate fixed categories such as Japanese or Korean. They prefer to call themselves human beings, individuals, or cosmopolitans. Some studies on psychology found that the categories defined by Berry could not effectively categorize all of their subjects in their own study and included an additional categorization: “citizens of the earth”, referring to their superordinate identity (Lee & Tanaka, 2010; Lee & Tanaka, 2019). It has not been confirmed if this phenomenon is the same as diaspora in western countries. Most likely it is unique to Japanese society. Since the superordinate identity has not been confirmed among Chinese in Japan, the existence of this concept and how to explain this concept should be explored first. It is considered necessary to do more research in Japan on other ethnic groups. In order to explain superordinate identity, looking into how people connect to two cultures cannot be avoided, in other words, how well they are maintaining their cultural identity and characteristics, and how well they are maintaining their relationships with Japanese society.

Assuming that acculturation strategies are important factors that influence adaptation (Berry, 1992), the question of how acculturation strategies affect adaptation situations of long-term Chinese residents in Japan should be investigated. Using one item, “subjective happiness”, to test positive aspects and using another, “whether subjects feel stress due to cultural differences”, to test negative aspects seemed appropriate for a first step in research.

1.3 Research Plan

The goal of this study is to examine the present day acculturation strategies among Chinese long-term residents in Japan, as well as to confirm if a superordinate identity exists; that is, assuming that Chinese permanent residents may be classified into 4 categories. Furthermore, will explore how Chinese permanent residents express their superordinate identity, the extent to which they accept Japanese culture, and the extent to which they maintain Chinese culture. Last, in order to examine the relationship between acculturation strategies and mental health, questions about happiness and acculturative stress will be asked.

2. Purpose

The four research questions for this study are as follows: 1) How do long-term Chinese residents choose their identity category? 2) Can the superordinate identity be found among them? 3) How do their attitudes on the two cultures connect with their choice? 4) What is the relationship between their mental health and acculturation strategy?

3. Method

A semi-structured interview was chosen as the method for collecting data. 10 Chinese living in the Chubu region in Japan participated in this study. Two of the ten participants had permanent resident visas (P. R.). One had a business manager visa (B.M.), and one had a highly skilled professional visa (H.S.P.). The latter two kinds of visa are equivalent to permanent resident visa status, for all intensive purposes within this study, since they are allowed to live in Japan for an extended period. Interviews were conducted one-on-one with the first author of this study, between the dates of October 2019 and February of 2020. Interviews averaged 90 minutes in length. They were tape-recorded and then transcribed. The interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese and Japanese.

Anonymity was promised in order to ensure ethical conduct. Participants were told the goals of the study and ensured of their privacy. After obtaining their consent, basic information was asked. This information can be seen in table 1.

No.	NO.1	NO.2	NO.3	NO.4	NO.5	NO.6	NO.7	NO.8	NO.9	NO.10
Sex	F	F	F	F	F	F	M	M	F	M
Age	46	34	36	38	42	39	50	42	40	43
Years of staying in Japan	28	8	14	19	24	9	26	22	16	19
Visa	P. R.	P. R.	P. R.	P. R.	P. R.	P. R.	P. R.	P. R.	H.S.P.	B.M.
Occupation	Part-time lecturer	Language school lecture	College lecturer	Self-employed (travel agency)	Self-employed (Chinese restaurant)	Part-time company employee	Self-employed (construction company)	Self-employed (IT company)	College lecturer	Self-employed (travel agency)
Spouse	Japanese	Japanese	Chinese	Single	Japanese	Japanese	Naturalized Japanese	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese
Number of children	1	0	2	1	3	2	3	3	2	3

Table 1: Basic Information

After receiving participants' answers on the two questions designed by Berry et.al. (1989), the concept of integration was explained. In order to understand the participants' reasoning for their answers, 7 questions were prepared, as below. The answers can be seen on table 2. 1) Do you have more Japanese friends or Chinese friends? Do you experience any differences when you are with Japanese people as opposed to Chinese people? 2) Do you want to maintain your Chinese culture? 3) On a scale of 1 to 10 how Japanese or Chinese do you feel you are? 4) On a scale of 1 to 10 how integrationist do you feel you may be? 5) After explaining the superordinate identity participants were asked, "Do you want to be regarded as a citizen of the earth?" 6) which category (Chinese, Japanese, Integrationist and superordinate identity) do you believe you could fit in the best? Why do you think so? 7) Do you feel happy currently? 8) Do you experience any stress in your life due to the differences between the Chinese and Japanese cultures? The interview questions used were based upon a review of the literature (Lee & Tanaka, 2010, 2019; Li & Sano, 2009).

We analyzed how their attitudes on the two cultures connected to their choice of categories, using the KJ method (Kawakita, 1967). 446 cards were made in total, 45 cards per participant. 4 figures and 1 table were created by comparing these cards, by putting the similar cards together in groups, finally, groups were assigned titles. Details can be seen on figure 1, figure 2, figure 3, figure 4, and table 3.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Results of Acculturation Strategies

We asked our participants which category they believed they fit in best. Out of the 10 participants, 7 answered that they identified themselves as being Chinese, 2 identified themselves as being integrationist, 1 identified themselves as a citizen of the earth, and none identified themselves as being Japanese (Table 2).

Number Question	NO. 1	NO. 2	NO. 3	NO. 4	NO. 5	NO. 6	NO. 7	NO. 8	NO. 9	NO. 10
Number of friends	Currently, more Chinese friends	Currently, more Chinese friends	More Japanese friends	More Japanese friends	Doesn't have contact with Chinese people very often.	Have some Japanese friends from work and children's friends' parents.	Has 2 Japanese friends.	More Japanese friends. Doesn't have contact with Chinese people very often.	Got more support from Japanese than from Chinese	Have 5 or 6 Japanese friends.
Socialize differently	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Desire to maintain Chinese culture	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Feeling of being Chinese : Japanese	8:2	5.5:6.5	9:7	10:1	5:3	4:7	6:5	9:6.5	3:5	9:7.5
Feeling of being integrationist	10	7.5	8.5	Unable to understand	6	8	Unable to understand	Not being integration	8	8
Willingness to be regarded as superordinate	No	No	Yes, a citizen of the earth	No	No	Yes, cosmopolitans	No	Unconcerned with the title	Yes, a citizen of the earth	No
Category choice	integrationist	integrationist	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	A citizen of the earth	Chinese
Subjective happiness	Happy	Relatively happy	Not very happy but not unhappy	Not ideal life not miserable	Far from happy, but basically happy	Depends on children	Happier than living in China	Not unhappy	Relatively happy	Happy
Stress due to cultural difference	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Table 2: Answers of the 7 Prepared Questions

Participants who chose Chinese as their self-described category also included reasons for why. They attached the greatest importance to a person's lineage, they emphasized their early education in China, and they believed their roots were in China.

Participants who chose integrationist as their self-described category, believed that living in Japan for many years was a significant event in their life. They also felt confident in their ability to blend Chinese and Japanese cultures into one. For example:

I would like to describe myself as Chinese, but integrationist is more suitable for me. Integrationist refers to the person who has not only mastered Chinese culture and

Japanese culture, but also has the ability to blend multiple cultures into one or effectively finds a balance in different cultures. If everyone could have these kinds of abilities, the world would have no problems. (No.1)

If I had never lived abroad, I would have described myself as Chinese without any hesitation. I was born and brought up in China; however, I have been in Japan for a long while and I have a Japanese family. So, I cannot call myself one hundred percent Chinese now. (No.2)

One of the two participants who chose integrationist as their self-described category, showed a negative attitude towards superordinate identity.

People who want to be called citizens of the earth want to be called so because they have no sense of belonging. People who have a sense of belonging don't emphasize freedom. Because they have no place to belong to, they probably want to feel free of any categorizations. (No. 1)

The only participant who chose superordinate identity as her self-described category, called herself “a citizen of the earth”, in daily life. She did not want to be limited to only two cultures and used this self-described category as a tool to resolve problems. This participant stated:

At work or in daily life, I am sometimes regarded as or requested to behave as a foreigner or as Chinese, by Japanese people. When I face this kind of situation, I like to make jokes and tell them I am a citizen of the earth. Behaving in this kind of way, I can resolve some awkward situations. I like to refer to myself this way. Sometimes people disagree with each other because of their different nationalities. If that is true, why don't we avoid the risk in advance? (No. 9)

Participant 9 also gave comments on the integrationist identity.

I think citizens of the earth are on a higher level than integrationists. Integrationists probably think that they have no business with me. They may think that I'm outside of the situation, I don't need to be concerned with the situation. However, “citizen of the earth” is different. One needs to be involved in the situation. (No. 9)

She emphasized that one must first become an integrationist before becoming “a citizen of the earth”.

4.2 The Explanation of the Superordinate and Integrationist Identity

One of the purposes of this study was to find out if the superordinate identity could be found among Chinese in Japan. Because three out of the ten participants showed positive attitudes towards a superordinate identity (No.3, No.6, No.9), and just one of them (No.9) chose a superordinate identity as her self-described identification, it can be concluded that superordinate identities exist among Chinese.

All of us are members of the earth, I like to pay more attention to the common traits all of us have. The feeling that I come from the earth, just as the feeling that I come

*from China or that I come from ** province... Everyone is a person on the earth. (No.3)*

I'd like to call myself "cosmopolitan". I think "either Japanese, or Chinese" is not a good way to think...If I were a cosmopolitan, I don't need to worry about my children's identities in the future. (No.6)

The explanations from No.3, No.6 and No.9 were categorized as positive, negative, and neutral attitudes. Participants' attitudes and behaviors towards superordinate identity can be seen in figure 1.

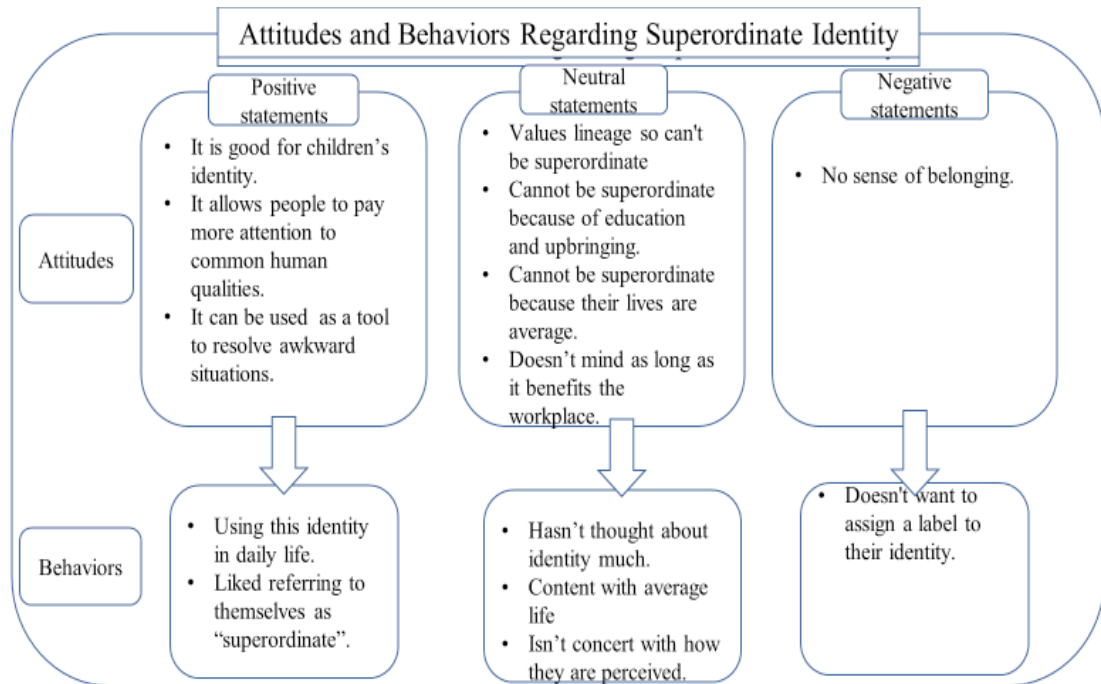


Figure 1: Attitudes and Behaviors Regarding Superordinate Identity

Besides the superordinate identity, a few participants showed they could not understand the concept of integrationist.

Being honest, I don't understand the meaning of integrationist. I don't like to identify others or myself using this word. I can understand "Chinese overseas" though. (No.4)

Since I haven't heard this word before, I can't understand. I can't understand what I should integrate. As myself, I think I separate the two cultures. I don't think I can treat Chinese people in the same way I treat Japanese people. I must change my mannerisms when I am with Chinese people or Japanese people. (No.8)

One of the participants did not answer how much he feels about being an integrationist.

Since I have already been in Japan for a long time, I must adapt to Japan. However, from the point of view of my work, it's true that I don't get along well with Japanese. I think they are more or less exclusive. (No. 7)

Participants who could understand integrationist also mentioned several of what they thought the qualities of being an integrationist were. It seems as though people need these kinds of abilities in order to be an integrationist. In figure 2, the reasons for not understanding the concept of integrationist or alternative ideas from the participants, the explanations of integrationist, and necessary qualifications of being integrationist can be seen.

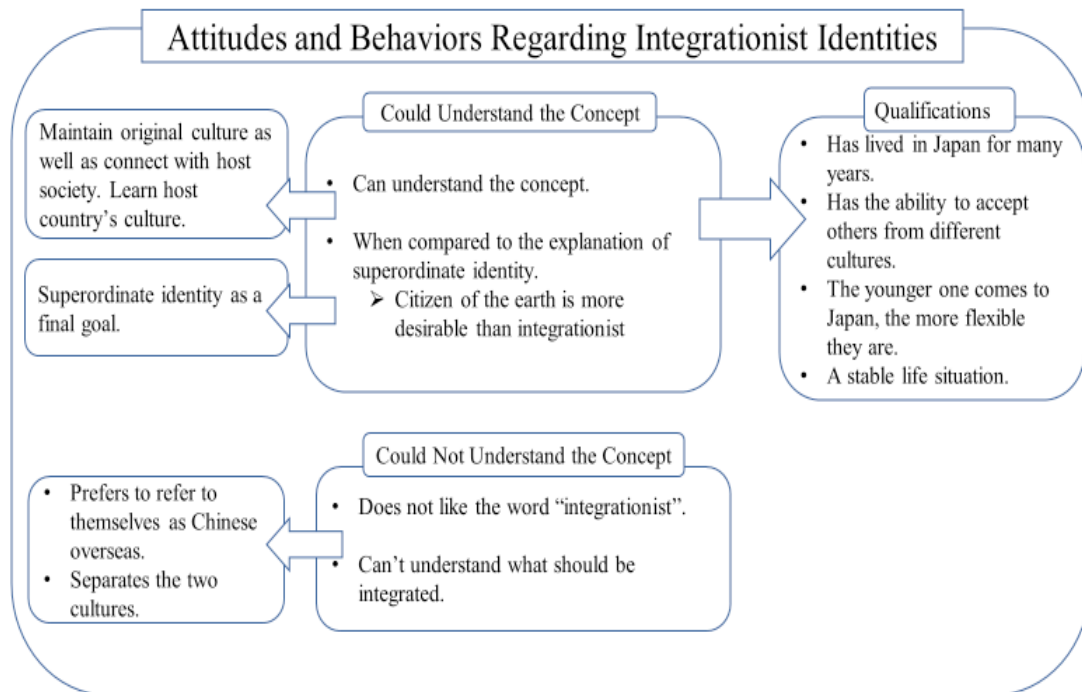


Figure 2: Attitudes and Behaviors Regarding Integrationist Identities

4.3 Reasons for Choosing a Superordinate or Integrationist Identity

In this study, the reason for choosing the superordinate or integrationist identity will be examined from a cultural perspective.

4.3.1 Relations to Two Cultures

The participants were asked, “On a scale of 1 to 10 how Japanese or Chinese do you feel you are?” Two participants identified with the integrationist identity. While one participant rated her degree of feeling Chinese higher than her feeling of being Japanese, the other rated her feeling of being Japanese higher than her feeling of being Chinese. The participant that identified herself as a citizen of the earth, rated her feeling of being Japanese higher than her feeling of being Chinese. Even in those who identified themselves as Chinese, one rated their degree of feeling Japanese higher than their feeling of being Chinese.

Although some of the participants did not agree with Chinese culture, all ten participants answered that they would like to maintain their Chinese culture (figure 3). However, feeling distant to Chinese culture when going back to China was also mentioned.

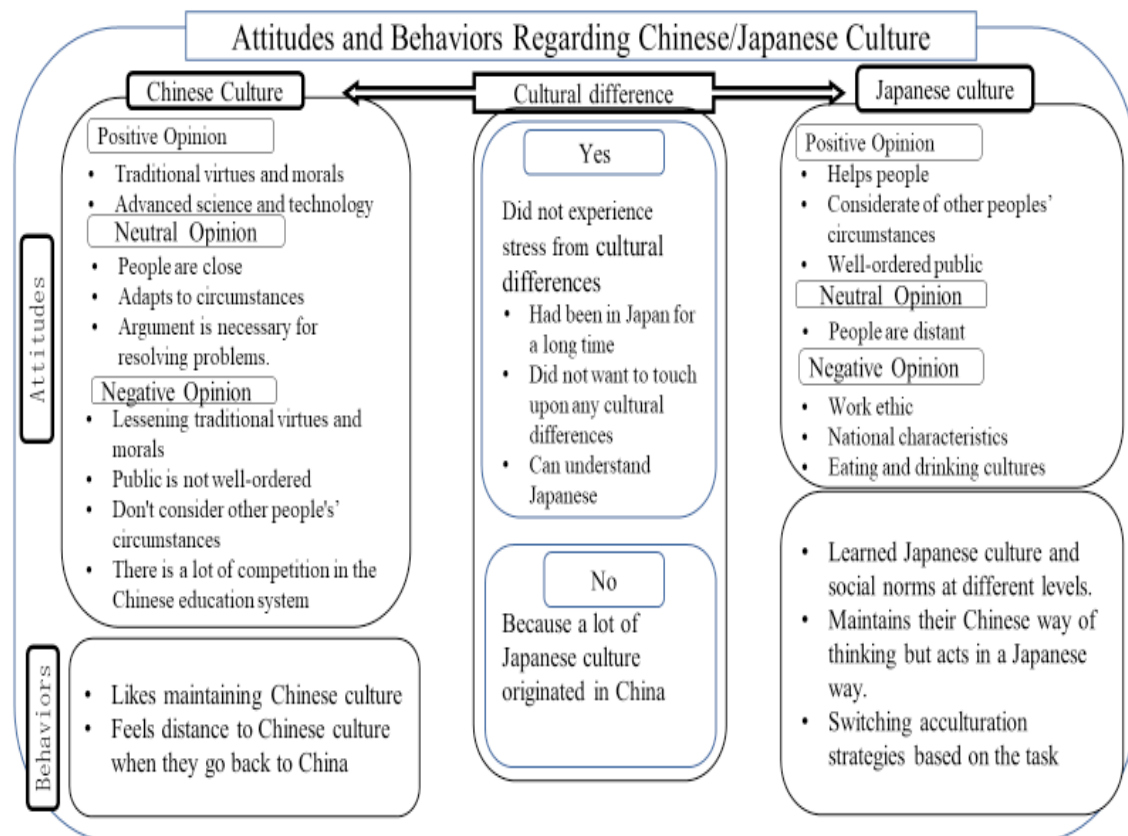


Figure 3: Attitudes and Behaviors Regarding Chinese/ Japanese Culture

Although the participants did not always have the same views of Japanese culture, they mentioned that they learned Japanese culture and social norms at different levels. For example, on an outer layer, imitating facial expressions and gestures of Japanese may protect oneself from being excluded.

For example, always bow, keep bowing when you exit a room. Angling my head in such a way made me appear more Japanese to my Chinese friends... If you can behave like this, you may merge into the host society, you won't be separated out. (No.4)

As a result of staying in Japan for an extended period, participants began to understand Japanese mannerisms and began to acquire their social rules.

I agree with the saying "when in Rome, do as the Romans do". For example, when I go outside, I like to make sure my manners and etiquette appear Japanese. (No.2)

I think I have already gotten used to Japanese customs... I grew up in China, I still maintain a Chinese way of thinking. But, since I often deal with Japanese, I can understand the way they are talking and the way they are thinking. Sometimes I copy their way when I do my job... it is necessary to follow their way if you stay in Japan for a long time. (No.7)

Furthermore, some participants reported that they had learned some values from Japanese.

When I had been living in Japan for a long time, I realized that I should be attentive to others. For example, when I want to take a day off, I need to ask other colleges whether they want to have a rest on the same day or not... In China it is very normal to ask parents to take care of one's children. I think I've been influenced by Japanese and I'm relatively independent. I began to consider situations from others' positions.

Even though they learned some Japanese values, sometimes they still thought in a Chinese way., Nonetheless they took actions in a Japanese way.

I obey the social rules but sometimes I don't think it should be that serious. For example, I put garbage in the bags specified by the city, but I don't think it is necessary. All we need to do is to put out the garbage at the trash station on a specified day. This kind of thinking is still different from the Japanese way of thinking. I respect the social rules, I understand them, however, in some places in my heart, I wish they could be more flexible.

From the statement above, it can be supposed that sometimes participants' behavior and their thinking are different. They obeyed the social rules and behaved in a Japanese way, however much they kept their Chinese way of thinking (No.3, No.4, No.5, No.7, No.9). Participants who identified themselves as integrationist or superordinate, were often told by the Japanese people in their lives that they are remarkably similar to Japanese people. If unable to adapt to the host society, it is increasingly difficult to develop identities like citizens of the earth or integrationist identities.

4.3.2 Switching Acculturation Strategies

In consideration of the findings of this study thus far, different acculturation strategies were given to participants based on the activity they were engaged in. On the job, assimilation strategies often prevailed, while activities involving food often fostered more separationist strategies.

No matter how long I've been in Japan, I can't accept their habit of drinking cold water. I like normal room temperature water or hot water as before. (No.3)

These kinds of changes of acculturation strategies based on task, not only showed in daily life but also in how they made friends.

4.3.3 Differences in Socialization Based on Cultural Background

All the participants mentioned they socialize differently depending on whether they were socializing with Japanese or Chinese people. Differences in time until friendships were made, frequency of meeting, degree of emotional distance, mutual understanding of how money is used, and conversation topics were some of the traits that the participants identified they had to change depending on the cultural background of the person they were socializing with. The details can be seen on table 3.

Aspects of Socialization	Socializing with Chinese	Socializing with Japanese
Number of friends	many	many (No.3, No.4, No.8, No.10)
Place of acquaintance	workplace, school	workplace, gym, neighborhood
Time until friendship	short	long
Frequency of meeting	often	2 or 3 times a year
Nature of speech	relaxed, does not need to be attentive when talking	needs to pay attention to speech uses euphemistic speech does not express one's opinion.
Degree of emotional distance	close	far
Understanding of how money is used	common to pay for each other	common to pay for themselves
Conversation topics	can express true feelings, topics are deeper	topics are limited, topics are surface level

Table 3: Differences in Socialization Based on Cultural Background

According to their statements, it seems that they socialized differently when they were with Japanese or Chinese people, and some mentioned that it was easier to be with Chinese than to be with Japanese.

4.4 Different Results Due to Different Measurements

In this study, before asking participants 7 prepared questions, the two questions designed by Berry et.al. (1989) were asked. All participants answered affirmatively to both questions, which suggests that they are all integrationists. When asked to select a particular category, only 2 identified themselves as integrationist, which suggests that different results can be obtained from different measurements.

4.5 Self-Scored Cultural Degree and Self-Described Identity

For question 3, participants evaluated how well they learned Japanese culture and how well they maintained Chinese culture. A fourfold model was created by using the mean score, based on a study conducted by Berry et. al. (1989). Details can be seen in figure 4.

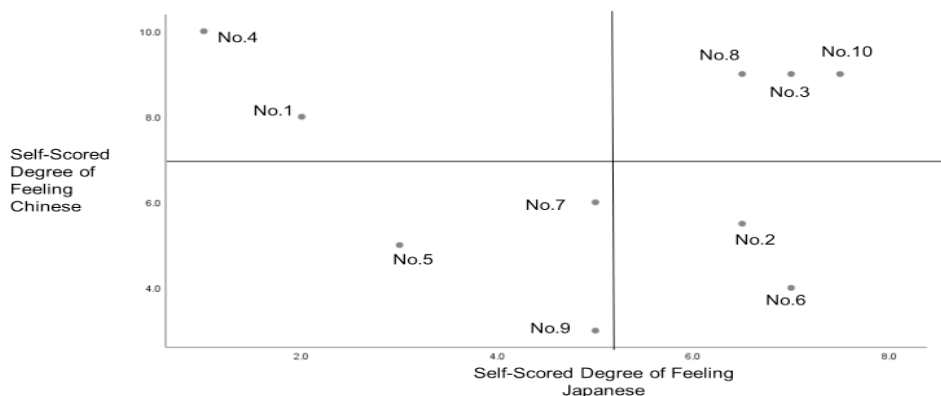


Figure 4: A Fourfold Model by Self-Scored Cultural Degree

Applying Berry's model, individuals who rated both self-scored cultural degrees higher are integrationist (upper right cell); individuals who rated both self-scored cultural degrees lower are marginalizationist (lower left cell); individuals who only rated their original culture highly are separationist (upper left cell); and individuals who rated only the host culture highly are assimilationist (lower right cell).

In this study, two participants who identified themselves as integrationist, No.1 and No. 2 were categorized as separationist and assimilationist respectively by their scores. Participant No. 9, who chose the superordinate identity as her identity, was categorized as marginalizationist. Not all the seven participants who identified themselves as Chinese were categorized into the same groups. One was classified as assimilationist, one was classified as separationist, three were classified as integrationist, and two were classified as marginalizationist. A corresponding relationship could not be found between self-scored cultural degrees and self-described identifications. None of the three participants (No. 3, No. 8, No. 10) who were classified as integrationist based on their scores identified themselves as integrationist. On the other hand, those who called themselves integrationists (No. 1, No. 2) could not be classified into the integrationist category cell.

4.6 Self-Described Identity and Mental Health

4.6.1 Subjective Happiness

No big differences in subjective happiness could be found among different self-described identities. As this is a qualitative study, the differences among explanations on happiness were made apparent. Some of the participants answered directly they were happy, however some of the participants gave their answers indirectly. For example, they stated that they do not ordinarily experience unfortunate events, that they were happy. Thus all participants responded that they were happy.

4.6.2 Cultural stress

Even though differences between the Chinese and Japanese cultures were recognized, all of the participants answered that they did not feel stress due to the cultural differences. The reasons can be seen in figure 3.

One of the participant's answers was particularly interesting as it claimed that there were no cultural differences between China and Japan.

A lot of Japanese culture originated in China. I don't think there is a big difference between the two cultures. It seems that there is some difference between the two cultures because Chinese people were unable to maintain their own traditional cultural values while Japan was able to maintain these original cultural values which originated in China. (No.1)

One, out of the ten participants, as stated above, responded that there is no difference between the two cultures.

5. General Discussion

5.1 Regarding Superordinate Identity

In this study, we assume that the concept of superordinate identity also exists for Chinese living in Japan, since there were participants who identified themselves as citizens of the earth. However, according to the different explanations about superordinate identity given in figure 1, those explanations differ from the research on Zainichi Koreans (Korean residents living in Japan), which had a relatively consistent explanation about the superordinate identity, such as “cosmopolitans”(Harajiri, 1989) or “individuals” (Kim, 1999). The different explanations of the superordinate identity from Zainichi Koreans and Chinese suggests that the concept of the superordinate identity is changeable among Chinese living in Japan. This study found that permanent Chinese residents interpreted the concept of superordinate identity as “above integrationist”. The permanent Chinese residents’ new interpretations of the superordinate identity is different from previous research (Lee & Tanaka, 2010), which states that the superordinate identity comes from wanting to be free from Korean culture or Japanese culture.

5.2 Regarding Self-Described Category

Since there was no clear corresponding relationship between the self-scored cultural degree and self-described category, the standard for Chinese permanent residents identifying themselves seems doubtful. According to Guo (1999), Chinese people value their lineage highly. It can be suggested that when they asked to choose a category to describe themselves, they did not choose it by how well they connect to both cultures. The self-described category probably is only what they desire. Since in this study the meaning of the score depends on the participant, a more refined scale should be used in future studies.

5.3 Regarding Relationship with Two Culture

In this study, participants reported they prefer using Japanese mannerisms when they are at work. However, international students may feel stress when they try to learn a lot of social norms in a short period (Anderson & Guan, 2018). Compared to international students, it can be presumed that Chinese permanent residents who have adapted well to living in Japan, have also learned Japanese culture and social norms. Furthermore, the participants mentioned that they switch acculturation strategies based on task, this phenomenon of switching socialization mannerisms was also reported in the research of Koreans in Japan (Fukuoka, 1993; Lee & Tanaka, 2017). If the phenomenon of switching is unique in Japan, it should be studied more.

5.4 Regarding Mental Health

Since this study is a first step study on acculturation strategies for Chinese in Japan, only two items were used to test mental health. Clear relationships could not be found between acculturation strategies and mental health; a bias in sampling can be considered as a reason. Moreover, all participants answered that they did not feel stress due to the cultural differences. Zhu (2003) states that in aspects of race, religion, culture, there are no big differences between Japan and China, which may

help Chinese assimilate better in Japan. The presence of this attitude suggests that the cultural distance is close between China and Japan. Consequently, the reasons why participants did not feel stress from cultural differences could be due to this cultural proximity.

5.5 Limitation and Further Studies

In this study, all the participants had completed some degree of higher education, and many worked in the field of education. In the future, the sample should be expanded to include subjects with a wider variety of educational level and a wider occupational variety. Studies with more refined examinations of the relationships between acculturation strategies and mental health should be conducted in the future.

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