HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM CHINA IN AMERICAN CLASSROOMS: MOTIVATION, TYPE T BEHAVIOR, MINDSET, FLOURISHING

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to explore the study-abroad experience of Chinese students in American high schools, from the perspectives of self-determination motivation, mindset, Type-T personality, and their relationships with flourishing. The number of Chinese students enrolled in American high schools is growing rapidly in recent years. However, research focusing on this group is limited, and much is unknown about these students. This study used a mixed-method design, including both quantitative and qualitative data, to gain a comprehensive understanding of teenage international Chinese students. Participants of this study enrolled in twenty-eight private high schools in the U.S., from grade nine to grade twelve. In total, eighty students completed four online questionnaires, and twelve of them participated in the follow-up semi-structured interviews. Factor analysis and multiple regression analysis revealed that students with higher levels of flourishing are males, with higher levels of Type-T and who use personal value and enjoyment as the reason for coming to the U.S. Analysis of the interview data showed that students encounter various challenges during their acculturation process, including language difficulties, academic stress, and socialization stress. Whether and how students respond to and cope with these challenges can enhance or impair their well-being. The findings of this study are expected to expand the understanding of Chinese international high school students and bring inspiration to American high schools in order to provide better support to them.

I dedicate this paper to my mother, father, and late grandmother,

Your love is my motivation to adventure the world.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Over centuries, Chinese culture has attached great value and importance to education. A famous quote that Chinese people are familiar with is: "Knowledge alters destiny." As the country with the largest population in the world, education opportunities and resources are comparatively scarce in China. According to statistics from 2019, the number of junior high schools in China is 52,415, the number of senior high schools is 13,964, and the number of universities is 2,688 (Textor, 2020). It is obvious that Chinese students are facing tremendous competitive pressure. The college entrance exam, "Gao Kao", is considered one of China's most important and demanding exams. The high school entrance exam, "Zhong Kao", is also highly competitive.

Unlike U.S. universities that may use a multi-faceted holistic review in the admission process, the admission decision of Chinese high schools and universities is based entirely on an exam score (Muthanna & Sang, 2015). This method of selection is developed to eliminate “unqualified” students and offer the education opportunity to the “best” students. To receive higher scores on the exam in order to enroll in prestigious universities, Chinese students spend all their time in the classroom and afterschool programs. In recent years, many drawbacks are identified in this exam-oriented educational system, which has caused problems for students’ well-being and hindered their overall development. (Austin & Shen, 2015). In the past decade, Chinese parents and students have started to look for ways to avoid the pressure of exams and receive better quality education. With the progress of the economy and also the smaller family size (Chao et al., 2017), more and more Chinese families are able to send their children to study abroad in Western countries.

The United States has been considered the top choice among all other English-speaking countries, owing to its acknowledged, high-quality education and comparatively inclusive society. Since 2004 (Valdez, 2015), China has held the highest portion of international students in the U.S., which is almost twice the number of the second-ranked country, India (Duffin, 2020). Studying abroad could be beneficial to both international students and the host country. Chinese students, for example, have the chance to receive a better education, experience different cultures, or develop comprehensively (Ching et al.,2017). For the host country, international students add cultural diversity. The educational institutions in the host country are benefited financially. For instance, in the academic year of 2018-2019, international students at U.S. higher education institutions contributed nearly $41 billion (NAFSA, 2019).

The importance of hosting international students is recognizable. Hence, it is crucial to understand this group of students to provide efficient support for their stay. Among different international groups, Chinese students might face significant challenges in adjusting to life in the U.S. due to the distinct differences in Eastern and Western culture and history. Throughout history, ancient China has had minimal yet unpleasant contact with Western culture, making Western culture even more remote. Other Asian cultures, for example, the country with the second-largest international student population, India, has more historical contact with Great Britain, and thus Indian international students might be relatively more familiar with the English language and Western culture (Rice et al., 2012). Therefore, it is here argued that researchers and educators should take a closer look at Chinese international students in American schools.

Phenomena of the Study

In recent years, a new trend among Chinese international students has been developing, which is the enrollment of Chinese students in U.S. high schools. From 2013 to 2016, Chinese

students represented 42% of international students who attended high school in the U.S. (Farrugia, 2017). Due to immigration regulations, 95% of the students attend private high schools (Farrugia, 2014). As reported, the primary motivation of those young students is to gain better chances for admissions to U.S. universities (Hensley-Clancy, 2017). As college admission becomes more competitive and selective (Jaschik, 2021), Chinese parents and students realize that those who graduate from a U.S. high school have a higher chance of being admitted to prestigious universities than those who finish high school in China (Farrugia, 2017). Hence, more Chinese students choose to start their studies in the U.S. earlier than college. Nonetheless, to date, few studies have focused on this unique group. The various motivations involved in their decision-making of coming to the U.S. at a young age, and their experience and development in U.S. schools, remain unclear.

For adult Chinese international students who study in the U.S., research has been conducted from a variety of perspectives, including their motivation and expectations (Chirkov,et al., 2007; Will, 2016; Wu, 2014), challenges and experiences (Heng, 2017; Su & Harrison, 2016; Valdez, 2015), and well-being (Chen et al.,, 2015; Han & Han, 2013; Tsai et al., 2017). The findings of those studies, however, cannot be entirely generalized to teenage Chinese international students. For example, adult Chinese students might study abroad because the foreign university offers more fields of study, and better research and career opportunities (Chao et al., 2017). Those motivational factors might not be considered by teen students who are about to enter high school. Despite the differences between adult and teenage Chinese students, there might be similarities in their experiences. Adult Chinese international students are frequently found to experience difficulties and challenges during their acculturation process, including academic concerns, psychological issues, and social isolation (Yan & Berliner, 2011). Those

challenges can lead to severe problems that damage students' well-being. In fact, mental health has become a pressing issue for Chinese international students (Lian & Wallace, 2020).

Adult and teenage Chinese international students share a common background and cultural customs; therefore, it is reasonable to speculate that they would encounter similar challenges. It is crucial to have a thorough understanding of teenage Chinese students in order to provide help and support. What are their motivations for coming here? How well do they adjust to the new life? Such questions need to be answered.

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed to investigate the motivations and well-being of Chinese students who study in American high schools. The number of this particular group of students continues to increase, yet they have not received enough attention from the academic field. This study may help understand this group of students better, and provide insights to educators, future students, and parents and guardians. The goal of this study was to find answers to a variety of questions regarding this group, such, as noted above, their motivation to come and continue studying in American high schools, their acculturation experiences, and their well-being.

The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What motivates Chinese students to study abroad in U.S. high schools?
2. How similar are the students in the sample to other groups in terms of Type T, Mindset, Motivation, and Flourishing?
3. How do the Type T Mindset and Motivation of those students correlate to their Flourishing?
4. What is the acculturation experience of those students and is it related to their motivation and flourishing?

Theoretical Framework

A general theoretical framework of this study is self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2016). SDT is a broad theory that attempts to explain the development of human behavior and motivation. Within SDT, three types of motivation are identified -- intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation. SDT consists of a meta-theory and six mini-theories, focusing on various motivational factors and aspects, analyzing motivation from the general context to a more specific situation-to-situation context. Moreover, SDT can be generalized to various cultures, including the collectivistic Chinese culture (Hagger et al., 2014).

One of the purposes of this study, as noted, was to understand what motivates Chinese students to come to the U.S. for high school. The decision-making of adolescents involves multiple factors, including both external and internal factors. Moving to a foreign country takes courage, especially for Chinese students who move to the U.S. due to the distinct eastern and western cultural differences. What encourages those students to come to high school at a young age? How do they perceive the study abroad experience? Individual differences and personality may be important factors. Hence, this study also adopts the concept of Type T Behavior and Type T Personality (Sarshar et al., 2019), as well as the concept of Mindset (Dweck, 2008) to help analyze the students' motivation and behavior.

Another purpose of this study was to learn about the proximal experience of Chinese students in U.S. high schools. In addition to their decision-making concerning study abroad, what is their motivation in current life and studies? How do they feel about their decision now that they are situated in an American high school? What factors may contribute to their well-being? For the abovementioned purpose, this study also examined students' acculturation experience, in order to understand its possible relationship to their flourishing.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) is an organismic and empirically based theory that attempts to explain the development of human behavior, personality, and motivation. Ryan and Deci (2016) identify three types of motivation in SDT: amotivation, intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation. The key to differentiating the types of motivation is the "autonomy-control continuum" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p.14). According to the degrees of self-determination, the three categories can be placed on a continuum, with amotivation representing the lowest level of motivation and intrinsic motivation representing the highest level.

Amotivation indicates the lack of intention or interest to act. An individual might conduct limited or no action in the state of amotivation. Ryan and Deci (2016) propose three reasons of amotivation. The first reason is the feeling of being unable to obtain a desirable outcome from the activity; the second reason is the lack of interest; and the third is the feeling of being incapable of completing the act.

Extrinsic motivation arises from the outside of an individual. It is driven by the hope of receiving rewards, avoiding punishment, or obtaining external outcomes. Extrinsic motivation is further divided into four forms: external regulation, introjection, identification, and integration (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The various forms of extrinsic motivation are arranged in an order according to the degrees of self-determination, with external regulation characterizing the most controlled behavior and integration characterizing the most autonomous behavior. In external regulation, the action or behavior is controlled entirely by external factors or forces, such as punishment or rewards. The next level of extrinsic motivation, introjection, is somewhat

external. The behavior of introjection aims at protecting or boosting self-esteem, ego, or receiving approval. In the state of identification, people accept the value of an activity. As they perform the activity, the external regulation is getting closer to be internal. The final state of extrinsic motivation is integration, which is when the external regulation is integrated with a person's values and ideas, meaning that the person begins to be driven by entirely internal causes (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

In contrast with extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation indicates acting or doing an activity out of interest, for innate satisfaction and enjoyment. Intrinsic motivation comes from people's natural interests, and it is an expression of one's true self (Deci & Ryan, 2010). For intrinsic motivation to flourish, three basic psychological needs have to be satisfied. Self-determination theory states that human beings inherently possess and pursue three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2016). Autonomy refers to the self-regulation of one's own experience and action. A person has the need to feel that their action is self-endorsed, or consistent with their values and interests. Competence concerns the need of feeling mastery and efficiency in the interaction with surroundings. Relatedness refers to the feeling of being socially connected, or a sense of belonging. The satisfaction of these three needs is necessary for the human body and mind's healthy functioning.

The satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs is crucial for motivation and well-being, and it can be promoted or thwarted by social contexts. Ryan and Deci (2017) specify three aspects of the social environment: autonomy supportive, reflectance supporting, and rationally supportive. An ideal social environment that provides appropriate support leads to a higher level of self-determination, which promotes resilience and well-being in the long term. Needs

satisfaction is especially important in schools, in that it has a profound role in students' confidence, self-esteem, and mental health (Ryan & Deci, 2020)

Six Mini-Theories

Self-determination theory is a broad framework that contains general and behavior-specific implications. Within SDT, Ryan and Deci have developed six mini-theories that attempt to explain specific motivational phenomena.

Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) focuses exclusively on intrinsic motivation. CET states that intrinsic motivation is an inherent human propensity that can only be enhanced or diminished by external factors or events in a social and interpersonal context, but not caused by them. External events that trigger internal locus of causality will cultivate autonomy and thus promote intrinsic motivation. In contrast, external factors that lead to an external locus of causality will weaken the feelings of autonomy and competence, which diminish intrinsic motivation. External events are derived not only from the outside environment but also the inside of a person. Ego involvement is an example of internal pressure that undermines intrinsic motivation. When people think others evaluate their behavior or performance, they could feel externally controlled and hence lose the feeling of autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) details extrinsic motivation, especially the internalization and integration of external motivational factors, and their relationships with autonomy and relatedness. OIT proposed that people naturally tend to internalize extrinsic motivation that comes from their particular others. People also internalize social information in order to feel more related to others, such as their families, peers, and cultures. A noteworthy concept here is self-infiltration, which refers to the situation when people mistakenly adopt the goal that others hold for them as their own (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Causality Orientation Theory (COT) explains the individual differences in motivation. According to Ryan and Deci (2019), people have different orientations towards the external environments and behave in various ways. Those who are autonomy oriented try to find meanings and develop an interest in events. They view external factors as opportunities and become self-determined when possible. People with autonomy orientations often have positive outcomes from their behavior. People who have the second type of orientation, controlled orientation, tend to focus on the controlling aspect of external events. They seek rewards and approval, which brings social pressure. The last orientation is impersonal orientation. People in this category usually believe the environments are uncontrollable and amotivational, which results in the most negative outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT) emphasizes the three basic psychological needs -- autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The satisfaction of the three needs is crucial to people's development and well-being, and frustration of the need causes ill-being. BPNT also emphasizes that the three needs are universal and applicable across cultures. Moreover, the satisfaction and frustration of the need change for a person in various contexts and over time. BPNT analyzes the changes from a general perspective to a situation-to-situation perspective (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Goal Contents Theory (GCT) focuses on the content of people's goals. GCT categorizes goals as intrinsic goals and extrinsic goals. Intrinsic goals refer to "what is inherently valued" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 275), such as personal growth, contributions, and relationships. Extrinsic goals refer to "instrumental outcomes" (p. 275), such as fame, wealth, and appearance. GCT states that people who prioritize intrinsic goals will have greater well-being, and those who focus more on extrinsic goals can result in ill-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Relationship Motivation Theory (RMT) concerns the need for relatedness. RMT explains that high-quality relationships require closeness and consistency and the autonomous motivation to devote to this relationship from each party. The autonomous devotion and support within a relationship bring a sense of security and boost the development of the partner. In contrast, the lack of quality relationships and a sense of relatedness will reduce the individual's motivation for further socialization, resulting in insecurity and ill-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Self-Determination Theory across Cultures

Autonomy, competence, and relatedness are the roots of self-determination theory. SDT states that the three needs are universal human needs and hence can be applied to various cultures. The statement was questioned by some researchers (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999; Hagger et al. 2014), in that each culture has different values that influence human behaviors and perceptions. In particular, some argued that certain eastern cultures that embrace collectivism do not value autonomy as important as western cultures, and hence the need for autonomy is not necessary for members of those cultures. However, various studies have provided supportive data to the generalization of autonomy to collectivistic cultures.

Vansteenkiste et al., (2005) conducted two studies in China to investigate the learning outcomes of autonomous and controlled motivation in school and family settings. Both studies indicate that autonomy supports from school and parents lead to better outcomes, including adaptive learning attitudes, better academic results, and personal well-being, while controlled learning is related to negative learning outcomes and a lack of well-being Similar results are found in other collectivistic cultures, for example, Korean culture. In Jang et al.s' (2009) research, they find that Korean students report satisfying learning experiences when they feel a senses of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which leads to productive and satisfying

learning outcomes. Psychological needs satisfaction is also essential for international students. Yang et al. (2018) investigated the relationships of self-determined motivation, cultural shock, and subjective well-being. The majority of their participants were Asian, in particular Chinese students studying in U.S. universities. The study results indicated that students who have self-determined motivation to study abroad experience less cultural shock and better well-being.

Type T Behavior/Type T Personality

Type T Behavior/Type T Personality, in which T stands for thrills (Farley, 1991), is an approach to risk-taking where it is argued that an important motive for taking risks is the thrill of it, the excitement of it. T Behavior involves a continuum of thrill-seeking/risk-taking (Big T to small t). People who show Big T Behavior/Personality tend to take risks, engage in uncertainty, and seek thrills, excitement, and stimulation. Small t individuals, on the contrary, tend to be risk averse, motivated by predictability, routine, and simplicity. Moreover, T Behaviors have both positive and negative aspects. The positive T Behaviors are constructive, and those acts lead to constructive outcomes such as creativity and innovation. In contrast, negative T Behaviors can involve destructive risk-taking and thrill-seeking with potentially dangerous consequences such as drug use, crime, and delinquency (Farley, 1991).

People with Big T and small t can think and act differently, reaching distinctive ends. In work by Knutson and Farley (1995), it was found that Big T versus small t students exhibited different cognitive processing styles, involving the adoption of distinct learning strategies. Big T learners were flexible in thinking and better at making connections in cognitive processing, utilizing high-level cognitive strategies to study, such as critical thinking and metacognitive strategies. Small t learners, on the other hand, were comparatively weaker in interrelating phenomena, tending to use lower-level simpler learning strategies.

T behaviors can incorporate various features, such as creativity, stress response, Mindset, and Flourishing (Sarshar et al., 2019). The inter-relationships can be complex because age, gender, and other status factors can come into play. In the study of Sarshar et al.(2019), for example, college students had a higher level of T behaviors, more Malleable Mindset but were more stressed than a comparison group of non-college respondents. The T Behaviors of non-college males were positively related to Flourishing. Compared to females, males exhibited more thrill-seeking and risk-taking behaviors. Social and contextual factors may also play a role in T Behaviors. In a positive constructive social environment, people with T Behaviors may pursue positive creative risk-taking. A destructive social environment may encourage more negative T Behaviors leading to potentially unfavorable results, as noted above, such as delinquent behavior and other forms of destructive risk-taking (Sarshar et al., 2019). Adolescents, for example, can be influenced by particular situations when making decisions about risks, "in the heat of passion, in the presence of peers, on the spur of the moment…" (Reyna & Farley, 2006, p. 1).

Growth Mindset

People have different views towards human capabilities, such as talent or intelligence. Some believe that one's capabilities stay the same through time and there is nothing much to do to change them. Those people have a "Fixed Mindset" (Dweck, 2008). Others, on the other hand, believe capabilities can be changed through efforts and experience. They have a "Growth Mindset", also referred to as "Malleable Mindset" in the literatures This dissertation will use Malleable mindset or Growth mindset interchangeably.

Mindset, it is argued, has the power to affect the way people learn, grow, and live, and people with different Mindsets will develop differently. First, Mindset can decide people's goal setting and goal operation (Burnette et al.,2013). People with a Fixed Mindset typically set

performance-oriented goals because they feel the urge to prove themselves (Dweck, 2008). Because they believe capabilities are fixed, they need to validate their abilities to others and themselves. In contrast, people who have a Growth Mindset generally set learning-oriented goals. As a consequence the former care more about whether they appear smart, while the latter try to hone their ability. Take intelligence as an example-- people have different implicit theories of it. Some think of intelligence as an unchangeable entity, so they have the view of entity theory (Blackwell et al., 2007). Those who believe intelligence can be changed and developed have an incremental theory. The implicit theory of intelligence shapes the way people view and manage challenges and difficulties. The entity theory makes people view challenge and setback as a measurement of their intelligence, so they try to avoid challenges or prioritize their attention to performance. They live in "a world of threats and defenses" (Yeager & Dweck, 2012, p. 304). In comparison, people who have an incremental mindset view setbacks as opportunities to learn, which help them to grow and improve,. Much like Big T individuals, people with a Growth Mindset look for challenges and thrive on them. Mindset relates to not only the view of oneself but also one's view of others. People with a Fixed Mindset are more likely to make judgments and form stereotypes towards both individuals and groups, such as racial groups or occupational groups (Dweck & Yeager, 2019).

Growth Mindset cultivates positive motivation, while Fixed Mindset reduces motivation. For instance, because people have contrary views, they consider effort differently. Growth Mindset individuals view effort as a tool that helps them learn and develop capabilities, so they would like to put in more effort, and in the long term, they develop higher levels of persistence and resilience (Dweck & Yeager, 2019). People with a Fixed Mindset may view effort

negatively, seeing effort as the demonstration of deficient ability. They may avoid making an effort, which may cause them to lose interest and motivation (Dweck & Yeager, 2019).

In the field of education, Mindset is significantly related to students' learning styles and learning outcomes. Hong et al. (1999) tested how students with different Mindsets responded to negative feedback. The results indicated that, comparatively, incremental students attributed an unsatisfying performance to effort. They had better coping strategies and undertook remedial actions. Blackwell et al. (2007) found that Mindset may predict students' learning outcomes. The participants in the study with Growth Mindset showed an upward trajectory in grades, whereas students with Fixed Mindset had a flatter trajectory. Mindset is especially important for adolescents and young students who are going through a challenging school transition, such as would be the case with international students. A Growth Mindset might help them adopt a more positive view towards difficulties, find more opportunities to learn, avoid feelings of helplessness, utilize "effort-based strategies" (Blackwell, Trzesniewski & Dweck, 2007, p. 258), recover better from stress, and demonstrate greater achievement.

The theory of Mindset shows generalization across cultures, to some extent. In the study of Zhang et al. (2019), middle school students from China and Finland were compared in terms of Mindsets. The results showed, despite the distinct Western and Eastern cultures, that students from both countries demonstrated a Growth Mindset attaching value to their efforts. In a study conducted in the U.S. and Norway, Mindset interventions were proven to be effective in both countries. However, when comparing Chinese students and Western students together, Chinese students have a more fixed mindset (Zhang et al., 2019).

Flourishing

Flourishing, also referred to as well-being (e.g., Keyes & Haidt, 2010; Hone et al., 2014; Seligman, 2018), is an essential human condition that helps define a meaningful life. Keyes and Haidt (2010) consider well-being the same as happiness, which means feeling good or functioning well. They define flourishing as "the achievement of a balanced life in which individuals feel good about lives in which they are functioning well" (p. 101)". Their study indicates fourteen facets of happiness under three categories: emotional well-being, social well-being, and psychological well-being. In their view, the presence of well-being indicates mental health. On the mental health continuum, flourishing is at one end, and at the opposite end is languishing. Moderate mental health is in the middle of the continuum. Fredriskcon and Losada (2005) state flourishing means to "live within an optimal range of human functioning" (p. 678).

Seligman (2018) identified five building blocks of flourishing and developed the model of PERMA. The name PERMA stands for Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment. Diener et al.,(2010) connected and enriched flourishing with other major concepts, including Ryan and Deci's (2016) human psychological needs, optimism, engagement and giving (Hone et al., 2014).

In education, flourishing is associated with achievement (Howell, 2009), where flourishing students were more likely to have higher levels of self-control and report higher grades. Among various student groups, international students face comparatively more challenges and difficulties. Those factors may hinder international students from achieving flourishing. Hence, it is crucial to investigate the relationships between their study abroad experiences and flourishing. Notably, in 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic made this group of students more vulnerable (Elemo et al.,2021). These researchers have reported a

negative correlation between the fear of COVID-19 and flourishing among international students.

Chinese Adult Students' Motivation for Studying in the U.S.

As noted earlier, the largest group of international students in the United States are Chinese students, mostly studying in universities for higher education degrees (Textor, 2021). There have been various studies conducted to understand their motivations, and some common reasons have been identified (Chao et al., 2017). In the decision-making to undertake study abroad, Chinese teenagers and adult students might share some common motivations.

Avoid the Chinese Education System. In China, two dominant school systems are public schools and international schools. International schools are in China, but adopt Western curriculum, including AP and IB courses. Students who attend traditional public schools have to take the Chinese college entrance exam, Gaokao, in order to enroll in college. Due to the large population and limited education alternatives, the exam is extremely competitive and stressful. Gaining a high score on the college entrance exam requires a tremendous amount of time and energy. Generally, high school students have to spend their entire senior year reviewing and practicing for the exam, and no new knowledge will be taught. Many students believe this pattern of study is a waste of time. It is not uncommon to hear students complaining about the Chinese education system, in which poor test scores might affect future development (Austin & Shen, 2016). An alternative path to avoid the pressure of Gaokao is to enroll in international schools in China, and start to study abroad after high school graduation.

High-Quality Education. For years, the U.S. has been the most popular choice as a study-abroad destination. The foremost reason is the high educational quality provided by U.S. universities. Chinese students are influenced by the fact that most of the highest-ranked

universities in the world are located in the U.S. (Chen, 2016). Moreover, unlike the situation in China, where educational resources are limited, students believe that the U.S. has the best educational resources and most advanced technology (Austin & Shen, 2016).

Career Development and Immigration. Some students take university enrollment as a starting point for their long-term life plans. In a study by Austin and Shen (2016), some Chinese students expressed their desire to emigrate for professional career development. In Hegarty et al.'s study (2013), participating students believed working in the U.S. can improve their professional and financial potentials. Studying in the U.S. gives students a chance to become proficient in English and connect with people from various cultures. These experiences are considered vital "cultural and social capital" (Wu, 2014, p. 438), and are beneficial to career development in China.

Personal Growth. Studying in a new country is challenging with much uncertainty and risk, but some people take this experience as an opportunity for personal growth. In addition to academic progress, some Chinese students thrive in their new life by developing critical thinking ability, social skills, and independence (Wu, 2014). Moreover, they are able to gain new insights about life through the new living environment and multicultural relationships (Hegarty et al.,2013). In some Chinese families, parents are in the dominant position, and children have to obey orders. Growing up in such an environment can be suffocating, and thus some children view study-abroad as an opportunity to be free and take control of their own future (Hegarty et al., 2013), which can, of course, involve uncertainty and risk.

Parents and Peer Influences. Starting from the time of Confucius, Chinese culture has emphasized the importance of education as a vehicle for achievement (Austin & Shen, 2016). Chinese parents have been more than supportive in investing in their children's education. It is

common for Chinese families to use most of their resources for education. For international students, parents are the primary or sole financial providers. Thus, the decision-making for education is made not entirely by the students (Bodycott, 2009). Some Chinese parents view foreign degrees as proof of personal advancement and a guarantee for career development (Bodycott, 2009). Besides parents' influences, Chinese students may decide to study abroad simply because their peers are doing so. Especially when studying abroad becomes a common trend, students may follow the crowd without giving it rational consideration (Lin, 2020).

U.S. Cultural Influences. Over decades, media have spread the ideas of the American Dream and freedom throughout the world. The country on the other side of the ocean has aroused the curiosity of many young Chinese students. Some of them hope to experience this unique culture, and others may see it as a getaway from the pressure of Chinese education systems (Austin & Shen, 2016). With the popularity of the exchange student programs, many students have experienced overseas studies for a short time and would like to continue the experience (Lin, 2020).

Acculturation Experience and Flourishing

Adaptation Difficulties. Upon arrival in a foreign country, international students begin to go through the acculturation process. The psychological and sociocultural adaptation (Smith & Khawaja, 2011) happening in the process concerns the well-being of students, such as changes in behaviors, acculturative stress (Berry, 2005), and health status reduction (Zheng et al.,2004). Acculturation is defined as "the dual process of cultural and psychological change that occurs as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their members" (Berry, 2005, p. 698). In other words, facing a new and strange culture, international students inevitably make changes to themselves. Meanwhile, the host culture and members are changing accordingly as

well. Research has identified multiple features of the acculturation process experienced by international students. For instance, Yan and Berliner (2011) explain the cultural and social features, and personal concerns faced by Chinese international college students. They are found to struggle continuously between two cultures. Some of them may be forced to make changes, some may feel the need to change but are unable to do so, or some choose to stay unchanged due to their strong attachment to Chinese culture. As Berry (2005) concludes, an individual has a preference to maintain their own cultural heritage, or a preference to interact with and participate in other cultural groups. As a result, individual international Chinese students exhibit various acculturation processes and outcomes. In the study of Du and Wei (2015), they list several stages of the acculturation process: "acculturative experiences, appraisal of experiences, coping strategies/resources, immediate effects or outcomes, long-term outcomes" (p. 302). When international students encounter new cultural phenomena, they evaluate and comment on the phenomena and then decide whether or not, and how to respond, leading to immediate or long-term acculturative changes.

Compared to other international students, Chinese international students in the U.S. tend to face more difficulties during the acculturation process due to the distinct differences between Chinese and American cultures. One of the main differences is in educational systems, especially for students who study in Chinese public schools (Dixon, 2008). Chinese education is exam-oriented; under that circumstance, classes in Chinese public schools are more teacher-centered, whereas American classes are student-centered. Most Chinese students have trouble fitting into American classrooms, especially for newcomers, where it can be challenging to participate actively in classroom activities such as group discussions (Liao & Wei, 2014; Wang et al., 2012; Yan & Berliner, 2011).

Difficulties in acculturation frequently result in acculturative stress. Research has pointed out multiple acculturative stressors challenging international Chinese students. Li et al.'s study (2017) lists five stressors: language, social interactions, learning, living and working in the U.S., and psychological adjustment. Similarly, Hamamura and Laird (2014) mention three categories of acculturative stressors: acculturation/social custom, language proficiency, and perceived prejudice. American society greatly values social interaction. However, Chinese international students may find it challenging to fit in, particularly for those who just arrived in the U.S. for a short time and have lower-level English proficiency. Perceived prejudice is a noteworthy acculturative stressor. Nilsson et al. (2008) state that perceived prejudice refers to the unaccepted or unwelcomed feelings international students have. They may also feel being neglected by the host culture and its members. Nilsson et al. point out that international students who come from an ethnocultural majority are unprepared for the experience of discrimination. Consequently, international students from Asia perceive significant discrimination compared to Western country students (Smith & Khawaja, 2010). Stereotypes held by Western students towards international students' race/ethnic group intensifies the perceived prejudice (Ruble & Zhang, 2012). Perceived prejudice can lead to negative acculturation results and significantly increase international students' stress (Nilsson et al., 2008). The Anti-Asian racism incidents fueled by the Covid-19 pandemic may also affect Chinese students' decisions to come into the U.S. (BBC News, 2020).

Socialization Difficulties. Self-determination theory points out that the satisfaction of basic human needs is extremely important. For international students in a new culture, the need for relatedness can be challenging to satisfy. They may struggle to acquire a sense of belonging. When students enter a new country, many often lose their previous social connections. It can be

difficult for them to establish new social networks with native students due to cultural differences and language barriers. As a result, many feel social isolation and loneliness (Du & Wei, 2015). It is crucial to fully understand their social experience because socialization in adolescence has long-term influences. Research has pointed out that social stressors negatively impact academic performance and achievement (Hamamura & Laird, 2014). International students with a non-Western background often have social adjustment issues and receive insufficient support from family, friends, and schools. Thus, they face more obstacles that hinder them from focusing on academic life (Rienties et al.,2012). Moreover, negative social experience reduces students' sense of belonging to the new culture. Especially for Chinese students, who tend to withdraw or internalize the difficulties, the feeling of social isolation might lead to severe psychological issues (Bertram et al.,2014).

Research indicates that social interactions with American students are beneficial to the acculturation adjustment for international students (Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Those who spend time with native schoolmates adjust faster to the new culture and are more satisfied with their study abroad experience (Trice, 2004). However, Chinese students are less motivated to do so. Instead, they prefer to stay with their co-nation peers. Social decisions are made based on personal choice or the lack of opportunities to interact with native students. In Li and Collins's (2014) study, one participant expresses that she is too busy to find extra time and energy to socialize with people from other cultures as a doctoral student. Staying with Chinese peers is a convenient choice that satisfies her need for socialization, and more importantly, this type of relationship provides "cultural intimacy" (p. 43) as they share common customs and values. Yan and Berliner (2011) state that most Chinese students prefer to cling to their native culture and are socially isolated voluntarily. Besides personal choice, lack of opportunity is another factor that

keeps international students away from native students. Most schools provide various social events that help international students establish social connections, but such events might not be sufficient. For instance, in community colleges with commuter campuses, it could be difficult for international students to establish friendship with local students because students spend less time together when they do not live on campus (Trice, 2004).

Previous research has identified other predictors of social difficulty, including English proficiency, perceived prejudice, and social support sources. International students who have a lower level of English proficiency often experience more stress in communication, preventing them from initiating and continuing interactions with English speakers (Li et al., 2017). Likewise, international students who sense alienation or hostility from the dominant cultural group avoid making connections with the group members (Hamamura & Laird, 2014). When they encounter social difficulties, most Chinese international students refer to their parents in China or Chinese friends as sources of support (Bertram et al., 2014). However, due to the time differences, long-distance or cultural differences, they might not be able to receive appropriate support in time, which might further worsen the negative emotions brought by social difficulty.

Prior research has provided a variety of results and assumptions on the socialization of Chinese students. Nonetheless, most of the studies target adult Chinese international students. Findings from previous research might not be generalized or applicable to high school students because they have different conditions and are in different social contexts, and, of course, are younger. For example, doctoral students might feel obligated to establish formal social connections with native peers and faculty for future career development (Li & Collins, 2014). However, this type of networking might not be a concern for high school students.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Research Design and Methodology

The research was designed to gain a deeper understanding of participants' motivation, acculturation, and flourishing experiences. The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What motivates Chinese students to study abroad in U.S. high schools?
2. How similar are the students in the sample to other groups in terms of Type T, Mindset, Motivation and Flourishing?
3. How do the Type T, Mindset, Motivation of those students correlate to their Flourishing?
4. What is the acculturation experience of those students and is it related to their motivation and flourishing?

This study used a mixed-methods design, with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In the quantitative part, participants were asked to take four questionnaires. At the end of the questionnaires, they were invited to participate in the follow-up semi-structured interview.

Participants

Participants were recruited through research invitations, which included a detailed explanation of the purpose of this study in both Chinese and English. In order to gain more participants, the invitation was distributed through various organizations, including an educational counseling company that serves international students in American high schools and universities. Invitations were also sent to the international student's office of high schools, online forums, and online discussion groups of Chinese international students. Informed consent

signature was obtained from students and their parents or guardians. To ensure confidentiality, participants were asked to use pseudonyms in interviews. The questionnaires were distributed electronically using a Chinese survey platform, WenJuanXing. This platform was chosen because the survey link can be accessed easily through WeChat, the communication application that every Chinese uses.

A total of 96 students submitted the online questionnaires. There were 16 questionnaires that were incomplete, leaving a total of 80 effective responses. Participants were enrolled in 28 private high schools in the U.S., from grade nine to grade twelve.

Procedure

Questionnaires were delivered electronically to all participants. At the end of the survey, students were invited to participate in the follow-up interview. The interview was semi-structured with open-ended questions. It took approximately 30 minutes and was held online using Zoom for convenience. Interviews were recorded with students' consent.

The four questionnaires were written in both English and Chinese. Interviews were held in Mandarin Chinese or English, depending on the participant's preference. Using their preferred language can help participants express themselves freely and precisely. Interviews were recorded with students' consent and then I transcribed them. Interviews conducted in Mandarin Chinese were translated into English first. An external reader, who is a native Mandarin speaker and is seeking a doctorate degree in a U.S. university, examined the translation to ensure correctness.

Measures

Background Information. Participants' background information was obtained through questions regarding their age, gender, grade, and length of residence in the U.S..

***Study Abroad* (Appendix A)**. The reasons for studying abroad were measured with the Self-Regulation Questionnaire—Study Abroad (SRQ—SA) (Chirkov et al.,2007), to identify the primary motivation of participants' decision-making. SRQ-SA consists of four subscales, intending to measure the four types of motivational regulations of Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020). The subscale of external regulation includes four items with Cronbach's alpha of 0.66. The subscale of introjected regulation consists of eight items with Cronbach's alpha of .81. The third subscale, identified regulation, has four items with Cronbach's alpha of .81. The last subscale, intrinsic motivation, has five items with Cronbach's alpha of .77 (Chirkov et al., 2007)

***T Behavior/T Personality* (Appendix B)**. The second questionnaire was the 8-item Farley Type T Scale (Sarshar et al.,2019). This scale was used to identify participants' level of risk-taking/thrill-seeking using a 4-point Likert scale from 1 (does not apply at all) to 4 (applies very strongly). The items in the scale assess the mental, physical and general risk/thrill-seeking behaviors and thoughts of individuals. The reported Cronbach's alpha is .77 (Sarshar et al., 2019). Similarly, the study of Jennings (2012) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .81. These reliability estimates are considered acceptable.

***Mindset* (Appendix C)**. Mindset was tested using the Dweck Mindset Instrument (Dweck, 2008). This scale is a 16-item scale on a 6-point Likert scale, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This scale was designed to measure both Fixed mindset and Growth mindset. Items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 12 and 14 measure the Fixed mindset. Meanwhile, items 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15, and 16 measure the Growth mindset. The reported Cronbach's alpha is .74 (Sarshar et al., 2019). Similarly, Munika et al. (2022) reported Cronbach's alpha value of 0.88, with a reliability value of 0.99.

Flourishing **(Appendix D)**. Flourishing was tested with the Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2010). The Flourishing Scale is an 8-item scale that assesses various dimensions of well-being, including relationships, meaning and purpose, self-esteem and optimism (Hone at al.,2014). The Flourishing scale uses a 7-point Likert scale; answer choices range from 1 (strongly agree) to 7 (strongly disagree). The Flourishing scale has been tested on sample groups across cultures. Silva and Cartano (2011) used the Flourishing scale to measure the well-being of Portuguese full-time employees and undergraduate university students; Sumi's (2013) study measured the well-being of Japanese university students, with a reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.95. Hone et al. (2014) measured adults from New Zealand and reported Cronbach's alpha is .87 (Hone et al.,2014).

Acculturation Experience. The acculturation experiences of participants were evaluated through interviews **(Appendix E)**. Although participants share a common Chinese cultural background and thus have certain identifiable features, they study and live in various contexts. Certain factors other than culture can influence students' acculturation experiences, such as specific motivation, relationship with teachers, and the environment of learning (Gu & Schweisfurth, 2006). Considering the context of each participant, qualitative methods were used because it allowed for a better understanding and correct interpretation of the participants' thoughts, ideas, motivations, and feelings (Vyas & Yu, 2018).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Chapter 4 is presented in four sections. Section 1 (Descriptive Data on the Respondents) presents descriptive data on the students who completed the survey. Section 2 (Analyses for the Research Questions) includes the data used to answer three of the four research questions. Section 3 (Additional Analyses) includes some additional analyses to extend and elaborate the analyses to assist in interpreting the results. Finally, Section 4 (Interview Data and Results) contains the interview data that were collected to answer the fourth research question.

Descriptive Data on the Respondents

A total of 80 students completed the survey. Data on grade level, gender and age are presented in Tables 4.1 to 4.3.

Table 4.1 Grade Level of Respondents

Grade Level	Frequency	Percent of Sample
9th	12	15.0%
10th	19	23.8%
11th	28	35.0%
12th	21	26.3%

Table 4.2 Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent of Sample
15	16	20.0%
16	22	27.5%
17	23	28.7%
18	15	18.8%
19	4	5.0%
Mean = 16.61		

Table 4.3 Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent of Sample
Female	39	48.8%
Male	41	51.2%

As shown above, the respondents are distributed across all four high school grades with slightly more students in the upper grades. The sample is approximately evenly split between males and females.

Analyses for the Research Questions

There are four questions that this dissertation was designed to answer. Each of these is presented below along with the relevant analyses.

Research Question # 1: What motivates Chinese students to study abroad in U.S. high schools?

To answer this question, the high school students were asked to respond to 21 possible reasons why they had decided to study abroad. Each of the reasons was rated on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = Not at all because of this reason; 3 = Somewhat because of this reason; and 5 = Completely because of this reason. The means for each of these questions in rank order are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Rank Order of Reasons for Moving to the U.S.

Reason: I Moved to the U.S. because….	**Mean**
I would be criticized for not doing so	1.50
I wanted to avoid he shame and guilt of not doing this	1.55
I felt that I was forced to do so	1.84
I would have gotten into trouble if I did not	1.91
Others (relatives and friends) forced me to do this	2.01
So that other people would be proud of me	2.56
So that other people would approve of me	2,72
That's what I was expected to do	2.80
I expected to get respect and recognition from others for doing so	2.87
It is a prestigious thing to do	2.89
It was one of my life goals	2.95
This is what I really want to do with my life	3.09
Others (parents, friends, etc.) were pushing me to do this	3.22
Other people (relatives and friends) expected me to do this	3.36
I thought it would be fun and interesting	3.44
It was personally important to me	3.64
I thought I would enjoy it	3.68

Table 4.4 (Continued)

I was highly interested in doing this	3.75
It was an opportunity that I highly valued	3.76
It was of great personal value to me	3.77
I thought it would be an exciting thing to do	3.81

As shown in Table 4.4, reasons that emphasize personal value and enjoyment were rated higher by participants. In comparison, negative reasons such as being forced or to avoid punishment were rated lower. The data indicated that more students were motivated by intrinsic goals rather than extrinsic goals. Intrinsic goals are driven by pure interest and enjoyment, hence are fully autonomous. Similar to intrinsic motivation, extrinsic goals can be highly autonomous if an individual identifies and accepts the value of the goal. Participants of this study showed that the decisions for Chinese students to study in U.S. high schools were mostly made autonomously, as they believed they would enjoy this experience, and/or they identified the value and worth of this experience.

Factor Analysis of the Reasons

Since the reasons that students indicated why they moved to the U.S. are used to answer the third research question, it was decided to see if these reasons could be grouped to facilitate that analysis. To do this, a principal components analysis followed by a varimax rotation was conducted on the 21 questions. This analysis produced four factors with eigenvalues over one which accounted for 67.8% of the variance. A listing of the questions for each factor is presented in Table 4.5. The table includes a name that has been created for each factor.

Table 4.5 Factor Matrix

Personal Value and Enjoyment

Reason for Moving to the U.S.	**Factor Loading**
It was of great personal value to me	.825
It was an opportunity that I highly valued	.788
I was highly interested in doing this	.757
I thought it would be an exciting thing to do	.738
It was one of my life goals	.683
This is what I really want to do with my life	.667
I thought I would enjoy it	.623
I thought it would be fun and interesting	.575
It was personally important to me	.503

Prestige and Approval from Others

Reason for Moving to the U.S.	**Factor Loading**
It is a prestigious thing to do	.759
So that other people would be proud of me	.737
I expected to get respect and recognition from others for doing so	.731
So that other people would approve of me	.530

Meeting Others' Expectations

Reason for Moving to the U.S.	**Factor Loading**
Other people (relatives and friends) expected me to do this	.864
Others (parents, friends, etc.) were pushing me to do this	.780
Others (relatives and friends) forced me to do this	.584
That's what I was expected to do	.503
I felt that I was forced to do so	501

Avoidance of Negative Consequences

Reason for Moving to the U.S.	**Factor Loading**
I wanted to avoid he shame and guilt of not doing this	.801
I would be criticized for not doing so	.797
I would have gotten into trouble if I did not	.656

Factor scores were computed for each factor and were then converted to T scores (mean of 50 with a standard deviation of 10) to facilitate interpretation.

Research Question # 2: How similar are the students in the sample to other groups in terms of Type T, Mindset, Motivation and Flourishing?

To answer the second research question, the mean score for the 80 students that completed the survey were compared to other groups that have been reported in the literature (Sarshar et al., 2019). The source of the data is fully described in the article of Sarshar et al. (2019). The reason for choosing that study is because her study focused on Type T, Mindset, and Flourishing. Her sample consisted of college male and female students, as well as non-college male and female participants. There are few other studies covering similar research topics and participants. The sample mean was compared to the other means by one-sample t-tests. These results are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Comparison of the Sample to Other Groups

Type T

Group	Mean	Results of One-Sample t-test
Students from the current study	23.54	
Male College Students	18.51	.001
Female College Students	16.20	.001
Male Non-College Students	20.00	.001
Female Non-College Students	19.20	.001

Malleable Mindset

Group	Mean	Results of One-Sample t-test
Students from the current study	24.38	
Male College Students	30.25	.001
Female College Students	32.54	.001
Male Non-College Students	35.24	.001
Female Non-College Students	33.34	.001

Fixed Mindset

Group	Mean	Results of One-Sample t-test
Students from the current study	28.03	
Male College Students	24.37	.001
Female College Students	21.70	.001

Table 4.6 (Fixed Mindset Continued)

Male Non-College Students	22.30	.001
Female Non-College Students	21.23	.001

Flourishing

Group	Mean	Results of One-Sample t-test
Students from the current study	43.59	
Male College Students	43.32	NS
Female College Students	43.85	NS
Male Non-College Students	39.50	.021
Female Non-College Students	43.09	NS

As shown in Table 4.6, the high school students in the current sample have significantly higher levels of Type T and significantly higher levels of Fixed Mindset. Their mean for Malleable Mindset is significantly lower. There are essentially no meaningful differences in Flourishing.

Research Question # 3: How do the Type T, Mindset, Motivation of those students correlate to their Flourishing?

To answer the third research question two analyses were conducted. First, Type T, Fixed Mindset, Malleable Mindset, and the four factors derived from the factor analysis were correlated with Flourishing. In addition, grade, gender, and age were included in these correlations. Second, these variables were used as predictors in an ordinary least squares multiple regression.

Table 4.7 Pearson Correlations with Flourishing

Variable	Pearson Correlation
Grade in School	-.021
Age	-.005
Gender (a)	.247**
Type T	.504**
Malleable Mindset	.083
Fixed Mindset	.067
Personal Value and Enjoyment	.397**
Prestige and Approval from Others	.077

Table 4.7 (Continued)

Meeting Others' Expectations	-.115
Avoidance of Negative Consequences	-.140

(a) **p< .01; Female = 1; Male = 2

As shown in Table 4.7, students with higher levels of Flourishing are males, with higher levels of Type T, and who use personal value and enjoyment as the reason for coming to the U.S.

The results of the multiple regression are contained in Table 4.8. The multiple R = .685 with an adjusted R2 of .393.

Table 4.8 Multiple Regression Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	12.050	12.630		.954	.343
Grade	-.898	1.461	-.108	-.614	.541
Age	.616	1.284	.084	.480	.633
Gender	3.163	1.725	.188	1.834	.071
Type T	.781	.159	.508	4.895	<.001
Malleable Mindset	.126	.102	.150	1.238	.220
Fixed Mindset	.168	.106	.201	1.581	.119
Personal Value and Enjoyment	1.864	.809	.220	2.303	.024
Prestige and Approval from Others	-.458	.823	-.054	-.557	.580
Meeting Others' Expectations	-2.135	.796	-.252	-2.680	.009
Avoidance of Negative Consequences	-1.642	.777	-.194	-2.112	.038

There are both similarities and differences between the correlations and the multiple regression. The most obvious similarity is that Type T is the strongest predictor in both analyses. Grade, age, Malleable Mindset, and Fixed Mindset are not significant in either analysis. Gender was significant as a Pearson correlation but is no longer significant in the multiple regression.

The most notable difference is that Meeting Other's Expectations, and Avoidance of Negative Consequences are significant in the multiple correlation, both with negative beta weights. A summary of the multiple regression is that Chinese high school students with higher levels of flourishing are risk takers, who chose to come to the U.S. because of the personal value and enjoyment this provided, but who were not motivated by meeting others' expectations or to avoid the negative consequences of not moving to the U.S.

Additional Analyses

Analyses using the Demographic Variables

The analyses presented in Section B focused on Flourishing. To explore whether the three demographic variables contained in the data set (grade, age, and gender) are related to the other constructs used in the research each demographic variable was analyzed. The variables used were Type T, Fixed Mindset, Malleable Mindset, and the four factors derived from the factor analysis.

Grade Level

There was one significant result for grade level—Personal Value and Enjoyment. The means and standard deviations are presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Means and Standard Deviations for Personal Value and Enjoyment by Grade Level

Grade Level	Mean	Standard Deviation
9	55.79	10.78
10	47.58	7.92
11	46.50	10.07
12	53.55	9.04

For the data in Table 4.9, $F = 4.189$, $p = .008$, partial eta squared = .142. The post hoc Tukey test indicated that Grade 9 did not differ from Grade 12, but both were significantly

higher as compared to Grades 10 and 11. A possible explanation for the non- linear trend might be that students in Grades 9 and 12 are comparatively less stressed in their studies. When they first arrive in the U.S. and their new school, especially if they are motivated by intrinsic goals, they will feel the excitement and thrill of the new environment. As they enter Grades 10 and 11, the curriculum becomes more challenging, and the stress of college application starts. In Grade 12, the college application process ends in the first semester, and as the predominant stressor disappears, students can take time to enjoy their studies and life again and can focus on the development of personal values.

Age

There were no significant correlations with age. This would be expected since grade level and age are highly related and the only significant result for grade level was not a linear relationship.

Factor Analyses of the Scales

Principal components factor analysis followed by a varimax rotation were conducted on the three tests used in the research: the Type T Scale, the Dweck Mindset Inventory, and the Flourishing Scale. Each of these is presented below.

Type T

The factor analysis of the Type T Scale produced two factors with eigenvalues over one. The two factors accounted for 69.96 percent of the variance. The rotated factor matrix is presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Rotated Factor Matrix for the Type T Scale

	1	2
2. I am an excitement-seeking/thrill seeker.	.890	.079
4. I am a risk taker.	.880	.094
3. My friends would call me a thrill seeker.	.870	.068
5. I enjoy taking mental changes or risks (e.g., I share a new idea when I am not sure how other people will take it).	.807	.226
6. I enjoy taking physical changes or risks.	.755	-.240
1. I would like to have as many exciting experiences in my life as possible.	.654	-.250
7. I like to have discussions with people who have ideas that are different or opposite to mine.	.652	-.408
8. I often act impulsively.	.077	.913

Previous research with the Type T scale has found that there are typically two factors: Physical Risk Taking (questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8) and Mental Risk Taking (questions 5 and 7). This factor structure is not the same for this group of high school students. As shown in Table 4.10, the second factor contains one item: often act impulsively. Since factors with one item are generally not interpretable, the conclusion is that Type T behavior is a unitary construct for this groups of Chinese students.

Mindset

The principal components analysis for the Dweck Mindset scale produced two factors with eigenvalues over. The two factors accounted for 75.05 percent of the variance. The rotated matrix is presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Rotated Factor Matrix for the Mindset Scale

15. No matter how much talent you have, you can always change it quite a bit.	.872	-.250
13. No matter who you are, you can significantly change your level of talent.	.865	-.307
14. You can always substantially change how much talent you have.	.863	-.360
16. You can change even your basic level of talent considerably.	.847	-.345
12. You can change even your basic intelligence level considerably.	.844	-.374
9. No matter who you are, you can significantly change your intelligence level.	.778	-.295
11. No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it quite a bit.	.767	-.196
10. You can always substantially change how intelligent you are.	.765	-.367
3. To be honest, you can't really change how intelligent you are.	-.172	.856
4. You can learn new things, but you can't really change your basic intelligence.	-.250	.819
2. Your intelligence is something about you that you can't change very much.	-.283	.814
6. Your talent in an area is something about you that you can't change very much.	-.359	.812
1.You have a certain amount of intelligence and you really can't do much to change it.	-.255	.806
5. You have a certain amount of talent, and you can't really do much to change it.	-.396	.751
7. To be honest, you can't really change how much talent you have.	-.392	.733
8. You can learn new things, but you can't really change your basic level of talent.	-.363	.676

As shown in Table 4.11 the Dweck Mindset scale divides into the two factors that are supposed to exist in the scale: Factor 1 is Fixed Mindset and Factor 2 is Malleable Mindset.

Flourishing

The factor analysis of the Flourishing Scale produced one factor.

Summary of the Factor Analyses

In general, the factor analyses of the scales used in the research indicated that their structures are very similar to what the authors proposed. As another way to demonstrate this, Cronbach Alpha coefficients were computed for each scale. These results are presented in Table 4.12. As shown in Table 4.12, all of the scales meet the .8 standard that is typically set for alpha.

Table 4.12 Alpha Coefficients for the Scales Used in the Research

Type T	.852
Fixed Mindset	.941
Malleable Mindset	.959
Flourishing	.913

Interview Data and Results

At the end of the survey, students were invited to participate in the follow-up interview. Students were asked the question: *Would you like to participate in a follow-up Zoom interview?"* with answer choices of *Yes, No, Maybe*. Thirty-four students chose *Maybe,* and seventeen chose *Yes*. In total, twelve students completed the interview. Participants' information (age, grade, gender) is presented in Table 4.13. Names are pseudonyms chosen by the students themselves. Their Type T score and Flourishing score were included for consideration in the interpretation process.

Table 4.13 Interview Participants Demographics

Name (pseudonym)	Gender	Grade	Age	T Score (out of 32)	F Score (out of 56)
Black	M	11	16	29	56
Isabella	F	10	15	25	42
Tiana	F	12	17	29	40
Will	M	12	19	29	53
Milly	F	12	18	22	54
Justin	M	11	16	22	49
William	M	10	17	26	55
Leo	M	11	17	31	49
Nala	F	9	15	12	17
Shimly	F	9	15	30	37
Angel	F	12	19	24	41
HT	M	12	19	13	24

Research Question # 4: What is the acculturation experience of those students and is it related to their motivation and flourishing?

The interview data were analyzed using the Grounded Theory approach proposed by Creswell (Creswell, 2013). Data analysis started with a review cycle of the transcriptions and notes from the recorded semi-structured interviews. Initial data review involved open coding to create categories and organize the highlighted clusters of data. A secondary review of data used axial coding to develop connections between the code categories. Based on the categories and connections found, four themes are identified, namely, decision-making and goal-setting, socialization, stress, and seeking help.

Decision-Making and Goal-Setting

All 12 interview participants mentioned their parents when making the decision to attend high school in the U.S. The idea was initiated by their parents and was welcomed by most of the participants. Two participants stated that they did not want to come at first because they enjoyed

life and had friends at home. Tiana stated: *"My parents made the decision. I didn't want to leave my friends."* Black shared:

> "I was not interested in that idea. I never thought about something like that. But my dad told me that going to the U.S. for high school is a prestigious thing to do. Not every family can afford that. It depends on the socio-economic status of the family. So, I started to think about and started to like the idea."

The primary reason for Chinese parents to send their children overseas is to give them an advantage in the application process for U.S. universities (Tu, 2022). Most participants mentioned that their parents have planned to send them abroad for undergraduate school. However, college applications are becoming increasingly competitive. Some parents learned that Chinese students who attend high school in the U.S. have a better chance of being admitted to top-ranking universities. Hence, they decided to send their children out earlier.

Five participants shared that they decided to come because of the more flexible educational system of the U.S. They said that in China, the curriculum was too rigid and limited, with a focus on only several core courses, such as mathematics, physics, politics, history, and English. Students felt they did not have the freedom to pursue their academic interests but were forced to study to pass endless tests. Shimly stated: *"I don't like the exam-oriented education. Everything I do is for the exams. But in the U.S., I will have more opportunities to do things outside of school."* Milly expressed a similar opinion:*"The exam-oriented education doesn't suit me. I have a lot of hobbies, such as dancing and singing. I can't, well, I don't have time, to pursue my hobbies in my school in China."* Shimly also mentioned that she was not suitable for the Chinese educational system, because "*I am more open-minded. I have good critical thinking ability*."

As previously mentioned, parents sent their children abroad for high school hoping to gain an advantage in college admission. Naturally, the goal set by parents for the participants

was to be admitted to prestigious U.S. universities. Among the 12 participants, 10 mentioned their parents wanted them to apply to the top 30 ranking or Ivy League universities. Two participants' parents requested that their children have good scores at school. Isabella was expected to receive an "A" for all her courses. Three participants said after they graduate from universities, they were expected to have a decent job. Shimly stated her parents want her to become a doctor. Although she did not have a particular interest in that profession, she *"tends to follow the opinions of parents."* Nonetheless, three participants shared that their parents also wanted them to enjoy high school. Shimly said:

> My father could be demanding. But he also told me that as long as I keep a good score, I can enjoy as much as I want. When it is time to study, then study. When it is time to play, then play.

Participants identified with the goals of their parents and some of them set personal goals. For instance, Will planned to utilize school resources and explore various extra-curricular activities. Milly wished to enhance her time-management skills and become more self-disciplined. She also intended to join student organizations at school and eventually gain a leadership position. Isabella said that although she wanted to attend a prestigious university, like her parents expected, she was "*not as strict with herself as her parents"*. Because studying in the U.S. by herself was already *"not easy".*

Socialization

When asked about friendship and socialization in school, six participants said that they have more Chinese friends or international friends than local American friends. Two participants shared that they have more native friends because there were only a few Chinese students in school. It is worth noting that all participants shared that they have closer and stronger relationships with Chinese friends. Milly expressed:

> I have friends from both sides [Chinese and local]. Maybe I have more native friends. I probably only have several Chinese friends, and two of them have left my school. But our connections are deeper…like, better quality.

Cultural and language differences are the two reasons for having and feeling stronger connections with Chinese friends. Participants explained that English was a barrier to smooth communication. The cultural references and connotations nested in conversations hinder understanding. Participants felt unable to express themselves appropriately or precisely when chatting with English-speaking friends. One participant mentioned that she was afraid others could not understand her English even if she tried to join a conversation. The common cultural background allows Chinese students to build mutual and deeper understanding. Milly explained:

> We [Chinese international students] share the same experience, so it is easier for us to have bonding moments. Some struggles, things that bother us, American students may not have, or know what it feels like. So they can't understand, or be as empathetic.

Black described his thoughts on the cultural differences as:

> Till now I can't say I entirely fit in. Culture and language are too different. It's like two lines, you can't make them intersect, you can only make them closer, slowly.

Without close friends, some students felt lonely, especially at the beginning of their journey. Four participants felt isolated when they first arrived at the school. Two of the four mentioned they were upset when they had to eat alone in the dining hall. Will said he only felt lonely when he encountered setbacks and had no accompaniment. Meanwhile, two participants stated that they enjoyed quality alone time. William explained:

> I like being alone, I enjoy the process. I won't be upset because I'm alone. For example, I get up at 6:00 in the morning, and I run alone on the hill around our school, and then row a boat or something, I think it's pretty good.

An effective way to make friends, either Chinese or friends from other cultural backgrounds, is to participate in extra-curricular activities, as half of the participants mentioned in the interview. Activities involving group efforts, such as football, dancing, and chorus, provided opportunities for participants to bond with others and develop friendships. Tiana enjoyed her dance team experience and later started to advise newly enrolled Chinese students in her school to participate in school activities in order to make friends. Leo said:

> The first thing I do when I get to school is go to the basketball court, and then I met a bunch of friends. Although you may not be very good at talking at first, if you don't know how to chat and your language is not particularly good, you want to play ball, and then they [American peers] will take the initiative to chat with you.

Two participants pointed out that they kept themselves busy to avoid feeling lonely. Black planned his week ahead, filling his spare time with study or activity tasks and using Sunday to rest and make reflections. Justin said: *"You wouldn't be 'too free to feel lonely' when you have a passion."*

Stress

Stress is a common topic for Chinese international students. Participants mentioned three stressors: English, GPA, and peer pressure. English may be the first stressor encountered by international students. Four participants disclosed that they could barely understand anything when they first arrived in the U.S. They could communicate with neither teachers nor native students. As they stayed longer, their English started to progress, and hence this stressor became less predominant but did not disappear. Nala stated that she found academic subjects, such as history, exceptionally challenging because she did not read and write well in English.

GPA stressed out participants because it is directly related to college application, which concerns students and their parents. Three participants stated they were worried or even anxious

about their GPA. One of the three, Tiana explained that she was strict with herself, and she tended to overthink. Two participants felt high expectations from their parents in terms of college application results. Angel shared that she wanted to make her parents proud because she *"knew that it was not easy for them to send her here [the U.S.]"*. Shimly expressed the concern of disappointing his parents.

> I think I'm under pressure of my studies, or of future expectations. It may be that the expectations given by my parents are relatively high. I'm afraid that I can't get into a great college, which will disappoint my parents. I'm afraid of things like that.

The third stressor, peer pressure, exclusively refers to the pressure from other Chinese international students. Four participants talked about this situation, and two of them used a trending Chinese internet catchword "内卷" (nèi juǎn, involution). This word is used to describe the competition within one's group (sometimes unnecessary competition). Leo said that his Chinese schoolmates were all good at mathematics, and they competed with each other fiercely, which made him stressed. HT said his Chinese peers spoke better English than him and "involuted" a lot. Milly shared a story about getting a B+ in two courses:

> In my class, there are a lot of Chinese students who study ahead, much ahead of the syllabus. I'm in the soccer team so I have to practice during the day, which is exhausting. And after that I need to stay up late to do my homework. Last semester, I got two B+. One of my American classmates said 'Oh, that's ok. Not bad.' But I was devastated. I put in all my efforts and couldn't even get A-. Then in our Chinese student group, I was labeled as someone who is not smart and doesn't work hard, and that's why I can't get an A.

Seeking Help

Participants exhibited various attitudes in terms of seeking help from teachers and/or counselors. Four participants stated that they would not seek help from a psychological counselor at school, because they cannot express themselves precisely in English, or they did not feel

comfortable sharing private information. In comparison, Milly expressed her appreciation to the counselor. In her 10th grade, she met with the school counselor frequently, whenever she felt that she *"is covered by dark clouds and feel so down"*.

Three participants mentioned that when they encounter academic difficulties, they would want to seek help from the teachers. But it was not always the case, because some teachers were not around after class, but others were there waiting to support you. Black liked to ask for help from teachers, especially male teachers, because they were in good relationships, "*like bros*." Two participants said they would rather not ask for help because they preferred to solve problems independently. As Will concluded:

> If you reach out to people right [the right people], they will support you. So, I do feel like, I am generally supported in school. But I think it's… to be supported or not, it depends on your attitude of reaching out to people.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to increase the understanding of Chinese international students studying in U.S. high schools, focusing on their motivation, Type T personality and mindset, investigating the impact and correlations of these aspects on students' well-being and flourishing, and gaining insights into their study abroad experience.

Research Question # 1: What motivates Chinese students to study abroad in U.S. high schools?

Chinese students were motivated by various reasons to study abroad in American high schools, and factor analysis produced four categories for the reasons, namely, Personal Value and Enjoyment, Prestige and Approval from Others, Meeting Others' Expectations, and Avoidance of Negative Consequences. Participants were asked to complete the Self-Regulation Questionnaire—Study Abroad (SRQ—SA) (Chirkov et al., 2007). The SRQ—SA scale was designed based on the Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017), which categorizes motivation on a continuum according to the level of autonomy. The results of this study indicated that the reasons for students to study in American high schools were generally positive and autonomous. For instance, students made the decision because they believed the experience would be exciting, valuable, important, and interesting. On the contrary, some students stated that they felt the expectations and forces from their particular others (parents, friends, and relatives) to do so. Those were the top two external and less autonomous reasons. According to the SRQ—SA, the motivation category of each question is shown in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1 Rank from the Most Possible Reason to the Least

Reason: I Moved to the U.S. because….	Motivation Category
I thought it would be an exciting thing to do	Intrinsic motivation
It was of great personal value to me	Identified regulation
It was an opportunity that I highly valued	Identified regulation
I was highly interested in doing this	Intrinsic motivation
I thought I would enjoy it	Intrinsic motivation
It was personally important to me	Identified regulation
I thought it would be fun and interesting	Intrinsic motivation
Other people (relatives and friends) expected me to do this	Introjected regulation
Others (parents, friends, etc.) were pushing me to do this	External regulation
This is what I really want to do with my life	Identified regulation
It was one of my life goals	Identified regulation
It is a prestigious thing to do	Introjected regulation
I expected to get respect and recognition from others for doing so	Introjected regulation
That's what I was expected to do	Introjected regulation
So that other people would approve of me	Introjected regulation
So that other people would be proud of me	Introjected regulation
Others (relatives and friends) forced me to do this	External regulation
I would have gotten into trouble if I did not	External regulation
I felt that I was forced to do so	External regulation
I wanted to avoid he shame and guilt of not doing this	Introjected regulation
I would be criticized for not doing so	Introjected regulation

As shown above, the top two categories of motivation are Intrinsic Motivation and Identified Regulation. Intrinsically motivated behaviors are driven by pure interest and enjoyment and, hence, are fully autonomous. In contrast with intrinsic motivation, identified regulation is a type of extrinsic motivation. But similar to intrinsic motivation, identified regulation is highly autonomous in that an individual identifies and accepts the value of a behavior (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Participants of this study showed that the common reasons for Chinese students to study in U.S. high schools are made autonomously. They believed they would enjoy this experience, and/or they identified with the value and worth of this experience.

Questionnaire items that represent the other two types of extrinsic motivation, introjected regulation and external regulation, are comparatively less chosen as the study abroad reasons. External regulation indicates that an individual's act is entirely controlled or forced by external powers. If the individual somewhat accepts but is not fully controlled by the external forces, then the act is introjected (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The top two extrinsic motivations for participants in this study are the expectation and perceived force from their close ones including parents, relatives, and friends. This result is in accordance with what was revealed from the follow-up interviews. In total, 12 participants were interviewed and all of the 12 mentioned their parents regarding the decision to study abroad. Although two participants [Tiana and Black] mentioned that they were reluctant to come in the beginning, they accepted that this experience was an exceptional and prestigious opportunity.

The main motivation for parents sending their children abroad for high school is to give students an advantage when applying to American universities. Some participants stated that their parents had considered sending them later for college, but the college admission process has become increasingly competitive. Upon learning that Chinese students attending American high

schools have an increased likelihood of being accepted into elite higher education institutions, parents made the decision to send their children out earlier.

Research Question # 2: How similar are the students in the sample to other groups in terms of Type T, Mindset, Motivation and Flourishing?

Analysis of the quantitative data showed that the participants have significantly higher levels of Type T and significantly higher levels of Fixed Mindset. Their mean for the Malleable Mindset is significantly lower. There are essentially no meaningful differences in Flourishing. The Type T, Mindset, and Flourishing of the students in this study are compared to the participants of the study by Sashar et al. (2019). The reason for choosing Sashar's study is that the focus of her study includes Type T, mindset, and flourishing. Also, her sample consists of college male and female students, as well as non-college male and female participants. There are few other studies covering similar research topics and participants. In terms of motivation, it is compared to previous research targeted on adult Chinese international students, because research on Chinese international students in high schools is very limited.

Type T

Participants of this study show significantly higher levels of Type T. This result provides support to the Type T theory and its generalization across cultures and contexts. Farley (2001) proposes that immigrants who leave home and look for new opportunities in a new and foreign country fall into the Big T category. The participants of this study leave home alone to study in the U.S. in adolescence. They face extreme uncertainty, novelty, and unpredictability, yet they are motivated to come. Those students manifested the Big T behavior, even if they grew up in a comparatively conservative small t Chinese culture. Participants of this study have proved the generalization of Type T theory. Farley (1986) categorizes T behavior into T-mental, T-physical,

and T-balanced. What is noteworthy to point out is that due to the nature of this study, the examination of T behavior falls into the T-mental category. Participants were asked questions regarding their academic and social experiences, and physical thrill was not examined in detail.

Knutson and Farley (1995) discovered that students of Big T and Small t exhibit different cognitive processing styles. Big T learners are flexible in thinking and good at utilizing high-level cognitive strategies, and they tend to be more creative and innovative. According to the participants, one of the common motivational factors to move to the U.S. is the more flexible and creative educational system, in comparison to the rigid, limited and exam-oriented Chinese educational style. Big Ts are considered to be more autonomous and independent in thinking, which are suitable for U.S. education.

Malleable and Fixed Mindset

Participants of this study have significantly higher levels of fixed mindset and lower levels of malleable mindset. These results are consistent with some of the previous studies that focused on Chinese students' mindsets. In comparison to their Western peers, especially those who are in a "Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD)" (Sun et al., 2021, p.1) context, Chinese and other East Asian students tend to hold a fixed mindset regarding intelligence. Moreover, when asked to define intelligence, Chinese students emphasized fluid abilities while Western students focused more on crystallized abilities.

Dweck (2019) proposed that a Growth mindset cultivates positive motivation, which contributes to flourishing. Those with a Fixed mindset may avoid making an effort, which leads to a decrease in interest and motivation. However, the results of this study were unable to support this statement. Although participants showed significantly higher levels of Fixed mindset, there are essentially no meaningful differences in Flourishing. Recent studies (e.g., Dong & Kang,

2022; Sun et al., 2021) have pointed out that Chinese culture's emphasis on effort mediates the impact of fixed mindset. Chinese culture attaches great value to diligence, hard work, and effort. For example, a four-letter idiom taught to every Chinese child is 勤能补拙 (qín néng bǔ zhuó), meaning diligence can compensate for lack of talent. Chinese parents and teachers tend to emphasize the importance of diligence to children repeatedly. For Chinese students, whether innate talent and intelligence are Malleable or Fixed, is comparatively less important because efforts take priority. The results of this study provide proof that theories regarding the Fixed and Growth mindsets cannot be generalized entirely to Chinese students.

Flourishing

In comparison with other male/female and college/non-college groups, the group of students in the current study shows no meaningful difference in Flourishing, despite significantly higher levels of Type T. This result indicates that international students' well-being is influenced by various factors and cannot be easily predicted by simply examining their Type T personality and/or mindset. For instance, as mentioned in Chapter 2, international students face various difficulties, one of the most common struggles is the language barrier. Unsuccessful communication caused by the language barrier can lead to frustration and hesitation, which could impair international students' motivation to try to thrive in a new culture, despite their personality traits. According to the Relationship Motivation Theory of the Self-Determination Theory, high-quality relationships require closeness and consistency and the autonomous motivation to devote to this relationship from each party (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Students who have the Big T personality are comparatively less afraid to seek out social interactions with native peers; however, failed, or challenging communication can cause negative experiences and feelings for both parties, which may lead to participation withdrawal. The lack of consistent and

autonomous devotion in social relationships may lead to a weakened sense of belonging, which is crucial for the healthy development of an individual.

Motivation

To examine the motivation for studying in the U.S. for high school, students in this study are compared to adult Chinese students who study in U.S. higher education institutions. The reason is that there is limited research focused on teen Chinese international students. As described in Chapter 2, adult Chinese students come to the U.S. to avoid the Chinese education system, and U.S. education is considered to have higher quality. They also come here to pursue personal growth, better career development and/or immigration opportunities. Some of them make the decision under the influence of their parents and/or peers, and the American culture. Analysis of the interview data revealed that the motivation of students in this study is similar to adult Chinese students.

First, similar to adult Chinese international students, high school students choose to study in America for better educational qualities and opportunities while avoiding the Chinese education system. Interviewees in this study mentioned that Chinese education is too rigid and exam-oriented, especially the college entrance exam *Gaokao*. The American education system, on the other hand, promotes developmental skills such as critical thinking and creativity. Meanwhile, schools in the U.S. provide more academic freedom and supportive resources, which allow students to pursue personal interests in a less competitive environment. Moreover, living and studying alone in a new country forces students to be independent and exercise autonomy. Hence, both adult and teenage Chinese students view studying abroad as a chance for personal growth. However, unlike adult students, interviewees in this study did not mention immigration opportunities as a reason for studying in the U.S. It is reasonable in that interviewees are at a

young age and are less concerned with major life decisions. Career development is also less important in the minds of teenage students because their main focus is on being admitted to prestigious U.S. colleges.

Second, compared to adult Chinese international students, parents play a more essential role in decision-making, which is expected considering their young age and financial dependency. Unlike adult Chinese international students, high school teenagers have to rely on their parents for permission and financial support to study abroad, because they are not qualified to apply for financial aid. Moreover, Chinese students who are not green card holders or U.S. citizens cannot enroll in a public high school for more than one year (Homeland Security, 2024), hence they have to enroll in private schools, where students and their families are responsible for tuition and other expenses. Peer influence is not a prominent predictor in the decision-making process. A possible explanation is that studying abroad during high school is not as prevalent as during college and graduate school. Studying abroad for high school places high financial demands on families, and not every family can afford it. Moreover, high school is a sensitive period for teenagers, so living and studying alone in a strange country is a huge challenge for both the students and their parents. Students who are toward the Big T personality are more likely to take risks and challenges, but perhaps their parents need to have high levels of Big T as well to permit and support such decisions.

Research Question # 3: How do the Type T, Mindset, Motivation of those students correlate to their Flourishing?

Data analysis results in Chapter 4 showed that the international Chinese high school students in the current study who have higher levels of Flourishing are males, with higher levels of Type T, and who use personal value and enjoyment as the reason for coming to the U.S.

In this study, male participants exhibit higher levels of Type T. This result is consistent with previous research that there is a gender difference in Type T, that males tend to exhibit more thrill-seeking and risk-taking characteristics (Sarshar et al., 2019). The different learning styles of Big T also contribute to flourishing. As described in the Literature Review chapter, Big T learners were flexible in thinking and better at making connections in cognitive processing, utilizing high-level cognitive strategies to study, such as critical thinking and metacognitive strategies. Those skills are valued and encouraged in U.S. education and society, which suits Big T students and enables them to flourish more easily than small t students.

As previously discussed, mindset is not an efficient predictor for the Flourishing of Chinese students. Chinese culture values diligence and students are taught to work hard. There are numerous idioms in Chinese emphasizing the importance of diligence, such as "*勤学苦练*" (qín xué kǔ liàn; study diligently and train hard), "*笨鸟先飞*" (bèn niǎo xiān fēi; clumsy birds have to start flying early). Chinese children also grow up learning idiom stories such as "*凿壁偷光*" (záo bì tōu guāng), which tells the story about a boy who is too poor to afford candles, so he bore a hole on the wall in order to get some light from the neighbors. Growing up in this type of cultural background, Chinese students may give less thought to whether talent is fixed or malleable, which diminishes the possible effect of mindset on flourishing.

In terms of the motivation to study in American high schools, students in this study indicate that those who seek personal value and enjoyment tend to flourish. The multiple regression result is consistent with the interview analysis results. These results can be explained with the Goal Contents Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017). GCT categorizes goals as intrinsic and extrinsic aspirations, and people who prioritize intrinsic goals have a better chance to flourish. Personal value and enjoyment are intrinsic goals because they focus on the growth of individuals

and their experience and are inherently valued. Students who are motivated by meeting others' expectations or to avoid the negative consequences of not moving to the U.S. may not achieve Flourishing as easily. To accommodate others' will and to avoid punishment are external aspirations, and as GCT suggests, "the more an individual values or prioritizes extrinsic goals relative to intrinsic goals, the lower will be his or her well-being" (p. 275). This relation is rooted in the satisfaction and frustration of the three basic human psychological needs discussed in Chapter 2. The more intrinsic the goal is, the more autonomy individuals feel and the better their wellness outcomes. In comparison, being motivated by external goals diminishes autonomy because individuals can have a feeling of being controlled. In conclusion, students who are motivated to study abroad by intrinsic goals have a higher chance to achieve Flourishing.

Although the content of a goal decides its intrinsic or extrinsic aspirations, the ways that the goal is framed and perceived by an individual can be different. An individual can frame an extrinsic goal in a comparatively more intrinsic manner, and become more likely to "produce sustained engagement, and ultimately, wellness" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p.287). Moreover, as the Organismic Integration Theory proposes, people naturally tend to internalize extrinsic motivation that comes from their particular others. For example, one participant of the interviews in this study, Black, mentioned that it was his parents' idea to let him enroll in an American high school. Initially, he was not interested in this plan, but his father explained to him that this type of plan is not affordable to every family and shows prestige. It was also a valuable and rare opportunity for him to explore the world and broaden his horizons. Black mentioned that, without a doubt, his parents' intention was to send him to the U.S. high school so that he could be admitted by elite universities. However, the way his father reasoned the goal made him consider

and eventually internalize the goal. Black agreed that he should seize and utilize the opportunity, to "*explore the world*".

Even though the nature of a motivational goal can be a predictor of future well-being, various factors come into play during the goal-achieving process. For teenagers, high school can be a complex and dynamic environment in which to build and shape their worldviews. Especially for young international students who travel to the U.S. alone, the challenges and difficulties can constantly improve or impair their well-being. Their acculturation process and experience lead to the discussion of the fourth research question.

Research Question # 4: What is the acculturation experience of those students and is it related to their Motivation and Flourishing?

The current study proposed that Chinese international students' motivation and flourishing can be dynamic, in that the various events happening during their time in the U.S. can constantly thwart or enhance their motivation and flourishing. Analysis of the data supported the hypothesis and is consistent with previous research discussed in Chapter 2. Students in this study, the same as adult Chinese international students, encounter a variety of events during their time of study abroad. They experience setbacks and also successes, coping with academic and social stressors continually, trying to thrive in a new country by themselves.

The first challenge international students encounter is usually the language barrier. Students are motivated by various goals before their trip, even those who are motivated by intrinsic goals and are looking forward to this journey might feel discouraged as soon as they arrive. Their high motivation may be thwarted due to communication difficulties. Four interview participants mentioned that they could communicate with neither their teacher nor peers because they could not understand anything. The oral and daily English sounded differently than the

English they learned from textbooks in China. Academic subjects that are heavily literature-related, such as history and social science, are extremely challenging for international students who are not proficient in English. The English unproficiency can hinder students' academic performance, causing undesirable GPA results. Chinese students and their parents attach great importance to GPA because of its decisive role in college application. One of the interview participants, Milly, stated that she was "*devastated*" when she received two B+'s, even though her American classmates told her "*B+ is not that bad*". When Chinese students receive lower grades due to the language barrier, it is highly possible that they feel less competent, which undermines their strong motivation to study and leads to psychological ill-being. On the other hand, a desirable grade can boost students' confidence and motivate them to make efforts to maintain good performance. If their efforts are rewarded with a pleasing GPA, they will feel competent, as well as a sense of autonomous control of their study. The satisfaction of the two basic human psychological needs, competence, and autonomy, leads to well-being.

Another basic psychological need for the flourishing of an individual is relatedness. This need for belongingness could be the most difficult to satisfy for Chinese international students. They travel thousands of miles away from home, leaving family and friends behind, starting a new life with nothing familiar. At the beginning of their journey, finding a sense of belonging can be impossible. As they spend more time in school, their English improves, and they start to make friends. However, because of the huge differences between Eastern and Western cultures, students may still struggle to find their place. As an interview participant stated, "*till now I can't say I entirely fit in. Culture and language are too different. It's like two lines, you can't make them intersect, you can only make them closer, slowly [Leo].*" As stated in Chapter 2, international students are found to struggle frequently between local culture and home culture.

Some of them try to maintain their cultural heritage, and some may try to embrace the new culture but are unable to fit in.

Among the interview participants, ten out of twelve study in boarding schools, and the remaning two students stay with their host families. Although in school and inside their dormitory, students have ample chances to interact with native American students, not all social interactions can satisfy the needs of relatedness. According to the Relationships Motivation Theory (RMT) (Ryan & Deci, 2017), deep and meaningful connections that involve "acceptance and support of the self (p. 296)" can support a sense of belongingness. Interviewees in this study all stated that they have deeper and stronger connections with other Chinese international students. A few of them pointed out that even though they have more native American friends than Chinese friends, they feel more attached to Chinese friends. Because they come from similar cultural backgrounds, they have common topics to chat about, they understand the cultural references behind the Chinese language they speak, and they can relate to and empathize with each other better. Milly said that two of her Chinese friends had graduated and left her school, yet they remain friends because "*our connections are deeper…like, better quality."* The RMT stated that a meaningful connection that satisfies the need for relatedness does not require individuals to stay close physically for a long period of time. It is possible that an encounter with strangers creates a more profound connection than a superficial communication with family members.

The higher level of Type T contributes to Flourishing because Big Ts are thrill-seekers and the social environment can be a source of excitement. They are more willing to initiate communications, participate in social activities, and are not afraid of being rejected. For instance, one interviewee of this study, Tiana (Type T Score 29 out of 32), mentioned that she joined the

school dance team to make friends. She enjoyed her experience and later suggested newly enrolled Chinese students in her school do the same. Another interviewee, Leo (Type T Score 31 out of 32), said that the first thing he did after he arrived at school was to play basketball. Although his English was far from fluent at that time, he still tried to talk with American peers and successfully made friends on the basketball court. Previous research discussed in Chapter 2 pointed out that international students who spend time with native schoolmates adjust faster to the new culture and are more satisfied with their study abroad experience (Trice, 2004). However, negative social experience reduces students' sense of belonging to the new culture. Especially for Chinese students, who tend to withdraw or internalize difficulties, the feeling of social isolation can lead to ill-being (Bertram et al.,2014). In terms of seeking help, interview participants of this study exhibit different patterns. Four participants stated that they would not seek help from a psychological counselor at school, because they cannot express themselves precisely in English, or they did not feel comfortable sharing private information. In comparison, other participants mentioned that they talked with teachers and school counselors regularly, and they received useful help.

International students may encounter various meaningful or unique events during their studies, and how they respond to the events can be essential to their well-being. In 2020, the breakout of covid-19 pandemic brought tremendous challenges and tragedies to the world. Schools were closed and students were forced to stay home and take online classes. Surprisingly, only two interview participants mentioned the pandemic, and their opinions were distinctly different. Staying at home with few opportunities to communicate with peers made HT feel isolated. The lack of interaction also hindered his English development. For about a year, he felt less motivated to learn and progress. On the contrary, Justin mentioned that personally, he took

the online class as a chance to advance in academics, because he had more “freedom” and could study at his own pace, which improved his learning outcomes. The individual differences in motivation might be explained by the Causality Orientation Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017). According to COT, individuals have different orientations toward external events and behave differently. Those who are autonomy-oriented view external factors as opportunities and become self-determined when possible. Individuals who are control-orientated tend to focus on the controlling aspect of external events. They seek rewards and approval, which brings social pressure. The last orientation is impersonal-orientation. People in this category usually believe the environments are uncontrollable and amotivational, which results in the most negative outcomes. Hence, although international Chinese students face common difficulties in their studies, how they view and cope with the stressors depends on their personality traits and can either diminish or enhance their motivation and flourishing.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to increase the understanding of Chinese international students attending high schools in the United States. In recent years, the number of this group has increased dramatically, but what is known about them is limited. This study ainly focused on the motivation of these students, Mindset, and Type T behavior, and exploresdthe relationship between these factors and Flourishing. At the same time, this study also focused on students' acculturation process, in order to paint a more comprehensive picture of their studying abroad experience. By analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, this study explored why Chinese students decided to study in American high schools and helped to increase the understanding of factors associated with their decision-making and Flourishing.

The reasons why the students in this study came to the United States were primarily autonomous and thus intrinsic. The most frequently chosen reason in the questionnaire was that coming to the U.S. for high school was an exciting thing to do or something valuable to oneself. In contrast, fewer students come for negative reasons, such as being forced to go or to avoid criticism or punishment. The Factor Analysis produced four factors: personal value and enjoyment, prestige and approval from others, meeting others' expectations, and avoidance of negative consequences.

In the follow-up interview, all twelve participants mentioned that their parents supported them, and some even initially came up with the idea of enrolling in American high schools. Motivated by parents was an expected reason because, as discussed in Chapter 5, studying in the U.S. for high school can be extremely expensive. Without financial support from parents, it is almost impossible for teenage students to study abroad in private high schools. Moreover,

without parents' permission, students cannot obtain approval for a student visa. It is worth noting that even if parents first proposed the idea of attending high school in the U.S., students in this study all accepted and internalized the value of this idea. Hence, their motivations were still highly intrinsic. This result is coherent with the Type T behavior analysis. Compared to other groups, students in the current study have significantly higher levels of Type T. They are thrill-seekers, not afraid of challenges, and are willing to embrace uncertainty. They were eager to take this trip with hope and excitement.

Students in this study have significantly higher levels of fixed mindset. According to the mindset theory, the Growth mindset cultivates positive motivation. People with a growth mindset are more willing to work hard and are more motivated because they believe that their talents and skills can be improved through effort. However, this theory cannot be generalized to the Chinese student population. As discussed in Chapter 5, Chinese culture places great emphasis on diligence, and students are taught from an early age that they should study and work hard. Therefore, the mindset type does not impact Chinese students much. This statement does not suggest that most Chinese students have a Fixed mindset. Previous studies have revealed that Chinese students have a growth mindset; however, when compared to other student groups, such as students from Western cultures, Chinese students show comparatively high levels of Fixed mindset. The data from this study support these previous findings. Although students in this study had a higher level of Fixed mindset, there were no significant differences in Flourishing.

The quantitative data revealed that various factors come into play during the acculturation process, which constantly enhance and/or impair students' Flourishing. Teenage Chinese international students who study in American high schools encounter challenges similar to those of adult Chinese students who study in American higher education institutions. The first and

foremost difficulty is English proficiency. The daily and academic vocabulary, expression, and terminology hinder students' communication with teachers and peers. Difficulties in comprehending class materials can result in undesirable grades, leading to stress and possibly ill-being in the long run. Chinese students and their parents pay heavy attention to GPA, which is a vital element in college application. Admission to prestigious U.S. universities is the most important reason for parents to send their children abroad for high school, according to the interviewees of this study, and the majority of students accept and internalize this goal as their own. Another aspect of the language barrier is the connotations and cultural references rooted in English, which are difficult for Chinese international students to comprehend. Students of this study indicated that they could feel isolated and unable to fit in in their new life. Self-determination theory states that relatedness is vital to well-being, and hence, the lack of a sense of belongingness of international students can greatly impair their flourishing. The interviewees of this study stated that they feel emotionally closer to other Chinese students than their native American peers and/or schoolmates from other countries. The shared cultural background and study-abroad experience allow Chinese students to bond and build deeper and more meaningful relationships. These reveals are consistent with previous research on adult Chinese students.

Participating in school activities, such as student clubs and sports, is a common strategy for making friends and finding relatedness. Students in this study had successful experiences making friends in these activities, and they recommended that their Chinese peers do the same. Another effective stress-coping strategy is to seek help from teachers and school counselors. A few students in this study expressed gratitude to their teachers and counselors for supporting and helping. However, half of the interviewees in this study, similar to adult Chinese students, are oftentimes reluctant to utilize this resource. The most common reason is that students are

concerned that they cannot express themselves well to English-speaking counselors. Moreover, some of them are afraid that counselors cannot relate to what they are going through as international students.

Another takeaway from this study's findings is that they support the generalization of Self-Determination Theory and Type T Behavior theory to Chinese international students who study in American high schools. This study suggests that Big T is a predictor of flourishing, and intrinsic/extrinsic motivation is associated with the psychological well-being of Chinese international students through the mediators of the acculturation process.

These results may shed light on the understanding of Chinese students who study abroad in American high schools. Before making the decision, it is worthwhile to consider the Type T personality of students. Students who have higher levels of small t may face greater challenges during the acculturation process, including physical and mental adjustment and socialization in a new environment. High schools that have Chinese international students enrolled can encourage them to join school activities and clubs and host cultural events that optimize the opportunities for students from various cultures to bond. Moreover, high schools may encourage Chinese students to seek help when needed, utilize resources, including counseling services, and consider hiring counselors who speak Chinese and/or have study-abroad experiences.

Limitations and Future Directions

The most significant limitation of this study is the small sample size, especially for the follow-up interview. The purpose of the follow-up interview was to gain a deeper understanding of students' acculturation experience, exploring and discussing aspects that are not covered in the questionnaire. However, only a small number of students accepted the interview invitation. Moreover, several students were not as open and expressive as hoped during the interview,

which made the interviews less fruitful than hoped. Second, this study did not take students' academic performance into consideration. Academic performance is crucial to students and plays an essential role in flourishing. One reason for omitting it was the lack of a unified academic performance indicator for comparison. Students of this study enroll in high schools in different states in the U.S., and each school has various rigorousness for GPA. Moreover, students are in different grade levels and are taking courses at various difficulty levels. A comparison of their GPA cannot represent the actual academic performance of students. Other standardized tests, including SAT and ACT, cannot be used for comparison because not all students have taken them. Another reason for not including academic performance was the concern of self-reporting. Students might not feel comfortable disclosing their grades and/or choose not to disclose them honestly.

Future studies may consider a longitudinal design that tracks students for four years of their high school life in order to explore in depth their acculturation experience, for example, whether and how their goals, motivations, and personalities change and develop. Future studies can add more variables into consideration, including academic records and even college application results, to have a more comprehensive picture of students' performance. To date, research on Chinese international high school students is still limited, and there are many directions worthy of research.

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APPENDIX A

SELF-REGULATION QUESTIONNAIRE – STUDY ABROAD (SRQ—SA)

自律问卷 – 出国留学

There might have been different reasons why you were motivated to move to the U.S. to study and live for high school. Please indicate to what extent each of the following reasons to move to the U.S. applied to you. Some statements may seem very similar to each other, but despite this, please rate all of them. Use the following scale:
可能有很多原因促使你到美国高中就读。请说明以下每个移居美国的原因在多大程度上适用于你。有些陈述可能看起来彼此非常相似，但尽管如此，请对所有陈述进行评分。请使用以下分数：

Not at all because of this reason		*Somewhat because of this reason*		*Completely because of this reason*
完全不是出于这个原因		*有一些出于这个原因*		*完全出于这个原因*
1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*

1. I moved to the U.S. because I thought it would be fun and interesting.
   我来到美国是因为我觉得那会很有趣。
2. I moved to the U.S. because it was personally important to me.
   我来到美国是因为这对我个人来说很重要。
3. I moved to the U.S. because other people (relatives and friends) expected me to do this.
   我来到美国是因为其他人（亲戚和朋友）希望我这样做。
4. I moved to the U.S. so that other people would be proud of me.
   我来到美国是为了让其他人以我为荣。
5. I moved to the U.S. because I wanted to avoid the shame and guilt of not doing this.
   我搬到美国是因为如果不这样做，我会对此感到羞耻和内疚。
6. I moved to the U.S. because I thought I would enjoy it.
   我来到美国是因为我以为我会喜欢。
7. I moved to the U.S. because this is what I really want to do with my life.
   我来到美国是因为这是我一生中真正想做的事情。
8. I moved to the U.S. because others (parents, friends etc.) were pushing me to do this.
   我来到美国是因为其他人（父母、朋友等）促使我这样做。

9. I moved to the U.S. because I expected to get respect and recognition from others for doing so.
   我来到美国是因为我希望这样做会得到别人的尊重和认可。
10. I moved to the U.S. because it is a prestigious thing to do.
    我来到美国是因为这是一件光荣的事情。
11. I moved to the U.S. so that other people would approve of me.
    我来到美国是为了让其他人认可我。
12. I moved to the U.S. because I thought it would be an exciting thing to do.
    我来到美国是因为我认为这将是一件令人兴奋的事情。
13. I moved to the U.S. because others (relatives and friends) forced me to do this.
    我来到美国是因为其他人（亲戚和朋友）强迫我这样做。
14. I moved to the U.S. because it was one of my life goals.
    我来到美国是因为这是我的人生目标之一。
15. I moved to the U.S. because I would be criticized for not doing so.
    我来到美国是因为如果不这样做，我会受到指责。
16. I moved to the U.S. because it was of great personal value to me.
    我来到美国是因为这对我个人来说很有价值。
17. I moved to the U.S. because I would have gotten into trouble if I did not.
    我来到美国是因为如果我不这样做我会陷入困境。
18. I moved to the U.S. because it was an opportunity that I highly valued.
    我来到美国是因为这是一个我高度重视的机会。
19. I moved to the U.S. because I was highly interested in doing this.
    我来到美国是因为我对此非常感兴趣。
20. I moved to the U.S. because that’s what I was expected to do.
    我来到美国是因为这是我应该做的。
21. I moved to the U.S. because I felt that I was forced to do so.
    我来到美国是因为我觉得我是被迫这样做的。

APPENDIX B

FARLEY TYPE T SCALE

Farley T 型量表

Below are 8 statements that may or may not apply to you.
Using the 1- 4 scale below, rate the following statements by placing the appropriate number on the line.
你同意或者不同意以下 8 个陈述。
使用下面的 1- 4 等级，在横线上标注数字来评价以下陈述。

1 = Does not apply　　1 = 不适用
2 = Applies slightly　　2 = 略微适用
3 = Applies somewhat　　3 = 比较适用
4 = Applies very strongly　　4 = 非常适用

	1 = Does not apply 1 = 不适用	2 = Applies slightly 2 = 略微适用	3 = Applies somewhat 3 = 比较适用	4 = Applies very strongly 4 = 非常适用
I would like to have as many exciting experiences in my life as possible. 我想在生活中拥有尽可能多的激动人心的经历。				
I am an excitement-seeking/thrill seeker. 我是一个寻求兴奋/寻求刺激的人。				
My friends would call me a thrill seeker. 我的朋友同意我是一个寻求刺激的人。				
I am a risk taker. 我是一个冒险者。				
I enjoy taking mental changes or risks (e.g., I share a new idea when I am not sure how other people will take it).				

我喜欢接受心理上的改变或冒险（例如，我会分享一个新想法，尽管我不确定其他人会如何接受）。				
I enjoy taking physical changes or risks. 我喜欢接受身体上的改变或冒险。				
I like to have discussions with people who have ideas that are different or opposite to mine. 我喜欢和与我想法不同或相反的人交流。				

APPENDIX C

DWECK MINDSET INSTRUMENT

Dweck 心态量表

Below are 16 statements that you may agree or disagree with.
Using the 1-6 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line.
你同意或者不同意以下 16 个陈述。
使用以下 1-6 等级，在横线上标注数字来评价以下陈述。

1 = Strongly Disagree	1 = 非常不同意
2 = Disagree	2 = 不同意
3 = Mostly Disagree	3 = 基本不同意
4 = Mostly Agree	4 = 基本同意
5 = Agree	5 = 同意
6 = Strongly Agree	6 = 非常同意

	1 = Strongly Disagree 非常不同意	2 = Disagree 不同意	3 = Mostly Disagree 基本不同意	4 = Mostly Agree 基本同意	5 = Agree 同意	6 = Strongly Agree 非常同意
1. You have a certain amount of intelligence and you really can't do much to change it. 你的智力程度是一定的，你真的无法改变它。						
2. Your intelligence is something about you that you can't change very much. 对于你的智力，你无法改变太多。						
3. To be honest, you can't really change how intelligent you are.						

实话实说，你真的不能改变你的智力						
4. You can learn new things, but you can't really change your basic intelligence. 你可以学习新的东西，但你真的不能改变你的基本智力。						
5. You have a certain amount of talent, and you can't really do much to change it. 你有一定的天赋，你真的无法改变它。						
6. Your talent in an area is something about you that you can't change very much. 你在某个领域有天赋，但你无法改变太多。						
7. To be honest, you can't really change how much talent you have. 实话实说，你无法真正改变你有多少天赋。						
8. You can learn new things, but you can't really change your basic level of talent. 你可以学习新的东西，但你真的不能改变你的基本天赋水平。						
9. No matter who you are, you can significantly change your intelligence level. 无论你是谁，你都可以显著改变你的智力水平。						
10. You can always substantially change						

how intelligent you are. 你总是可以从根本上改变你的智力。						
11. No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it quite a bit. 不管你的智力是多少，你总是可以做相当多的改变。						
12. You can change even your basic intelligence level considerably. 你甚至可以极大程度上的改变你的基本智力水平。						
13. No matter who you are, you can significantly change your level of talent. 无论你是谁，你都可以显着改变你的天赋水平。						
14. You can always substantially change how much talent you have. 你总是可以从根本上改变你有多少天赋。						
15. No matter how much talent you have, you can always change it quite a bit. 不管你有多少天赋，你总能极大程度上的改变它。						
16. You can change even your basic level of talent considerably. 你甚至可以极大程度上的改变你的基本天赋水平。						

APPENDIX D

THE FLOURISHING SCALE

心盛量表

Below are 8 statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line. Please be open and honest in your responding.
你同意或者不同意以下 8 个陈述。
使用以下 1-7 等级，在横线上标注数字来评价以下陈述。
请诚实的回答。

1 = Strongly disagree	1 = 非常不同意
2 = Disagree	2 = 不同意
3 = Slightly disagree	3 = 略微不同意
4 = Neither agree nor disagree	4 = 既不同意也不反对
5 = Slightly agree	5 = 略微同意
6 = Agree	6 = 同意
7 = Strongly agree	7 = 非常同意

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I lead a purposeful and meaningful life. 我过着有目的和有意义的生活。							
2. My social relationships are supportive and rewarding. 我的社会关系是对我有帮助且有益的。							
3. I am engaged and interested in my daily activities. 我对我的日常活动很投入并感兴趣。							
4. I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others. 我积极为他人的快乐和幸福感做出贡献。							
5. I am competent and capable in the activities that are important to me. 我能胜任并且有能力从事对我很重要的活动。							
6. I am a good person and live a good life. 我是一个好人，有着好的生活。							
7. I am optimistic about my future. 我对自己的未来感到乐观。							
8. People respect me. 人们尊重我。							

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

访谈问题

Decision-making 决策

1. Why did you come to the U.S. for high school instead of college?
   你为什么来美国读高中而不是大学?
2. Why did you choose your current school?
   你为什么选择现在的学校?
3. What do you think of the trend of studying abroad in Chinese society?
   如何看待中国社会的留学趋势?

Goals 目标

4. What was your goal of studying in U.S. high schools when you made the decision?
   当你决定去美国高中学习时，你的目标是什么?
5. Why did you have those goals? Where did the goals come from?
   你为什么有这些目标？目标从哪里来?
6. What was your parents' goal before you came here? And now?
   在你来之前，你父母的目标是什么？现在呢?
7. What are your goals now? Why do they change?
   你现在的目标是什么？为什么会改变目标?

Acculturation Process 文化适应过程

8. Do you enjoy your study and life at school?
   你喜欢在学校的学习和生活吗?
9. What are some of the difficulties that you encounter?
   你遇到过哪些困难?
10. Do you feel stressed, anxious, or even depressed? What factors do you think caused that?
    你是否感到压力、焦虑，甚至抑郁？你认为是什么因素造成的?
11. What were your thoughts when you first arrived?
    你刚来的时候有什么想法?
12. Are your thoughts about studying in the U.S. different now? If so, in what way it is different?
    你现在对美国留学的想法有什么不同吗？如果有，有什么不同?
13. How do you describe your experience of leaving home and studying here?
    你如何形容离开家来到这里学习的经历?
14. What were some of the most memorable moments in your experience? How does those moments influence you?
    在你的经历中，最难忘的时刻是什么？这些时刻对你有何影响?

Socialization 社交

15. Talk about your friends here! Are more of them native students or Chinese students?

聊聊你的朋友吧！你有更多的本地朋友还是中国朋友？

16. Do you feel lonely here?
    你在这里感到孤单吗？
17. How do you think of your school's culture? Do you feel that you fit in?
    你如何看待你学校的文化？你觉得适合自己吗？
18. How about American culture? Do you like it?
    美国文化怎么样？你喜欢吗？
19. Talk about your teachers and school! Are you close with your teachers? Why and why not?
    谈谈你的老师和学校吧！你和老师的关系亲密吗？为什么，或者为什么不呢？
20. Do you like your school? Do you feel supported there?
    你喜欢你的学校吗？你感觉能得到学校的支持吗？
21. Would you like to add anything else? Do you have any other comments to make?
    你还想补充什么吗？或者有其他意见吗？