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# ABSTRACT

This research explored the relationship between peer mentorship and international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan. Questionnaires were drafted and sent to participants via email, and physically. The hypotheses explored the relationship between peer mentorship and international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan; informal peer mentorship vs. higher mentorship functions/satisfaction; and Taiwanese peer mentors vs. higher mentorship functions/satisfaction. Independent samples Tests were used to test the hypotheses. However, the test results did not accept any of the proposed hypotheses. Perhaps peer mentorship is not positively related to international adjustment, or perhaps the research is missing something.
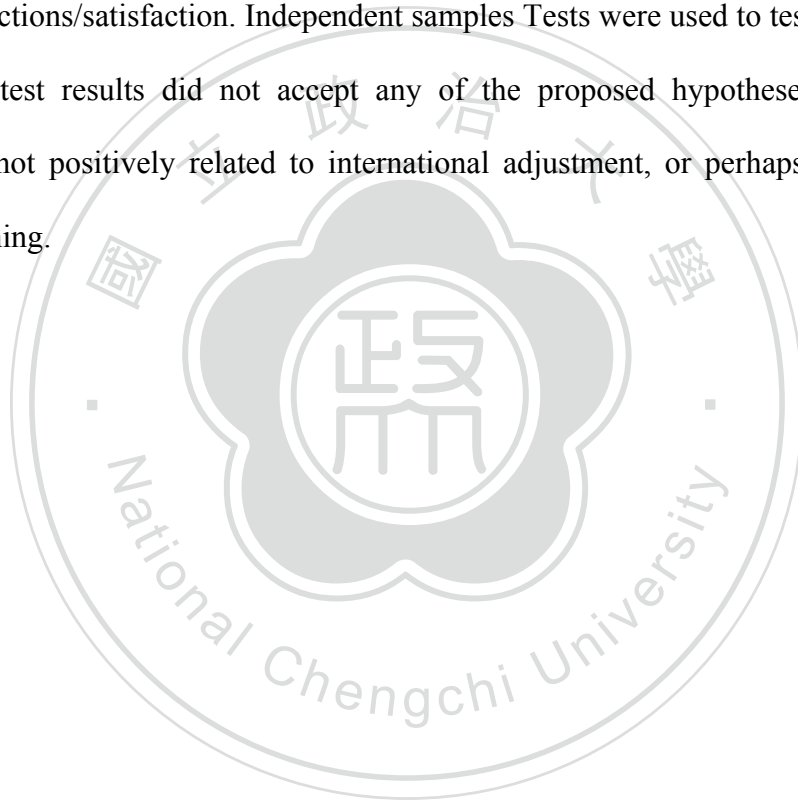
# CHAPTER 1.INTRODUCTION

## Research Background

Taiwan has seen, and continues to see, a large influx of international students in recent years. This increase in the number of international students can be explained partly due to the global desire to learn Mandarin Chinese, partly due to the cooperation between the Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs of Taiwan, and Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) with those of certain developing countries in Africa, Latin and Central America, and Eastern Europe. States having diplomatic relationship with Taiwan have their young people sent over, on scholarship (mostly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan and ICDF) to take degree programs. Students who come to learn Chinese, on the other hand, come mostly from countries without diplomatic ties with Taiwan. This group is mostly from the neighbouring countries (for instance Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia), and the United States, while a smaller number comes from Europe and other parts of the world. They, too, enjoy a scholarship to a large extent, from the Ministry of Education of Taiwan and other scholarship bodies. Hence, the number of foreign students in the country continues to rise. According to the Taipei Times report on the 12th February, 2008, in their article entitled "International students in Taiwan at an all time high," the 2007 Statistics showed there were up to 17, 742 international students in Taiwan, from 117 countries. Again in 2009 the Ministry of Education reported that there has been an increase in international students from 5,109 to 16, 909 between the years 1998 and 2008 and for the years 2009 to 2010, that number has risen to 19,376.

In another development, the number of students coming from Africa has been on the increase as well. African students are mostly from The Gambia (the majority), Burkina Faso, Sao Tome and Principe, and Swaziland. Almost all these students are pursuing degree programs, and are in Taiwan due to the special agreement between their governments and that of Taiwan to pursue a higher education in the country. Almost all of them are on scholarship from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan, who provides scholarships in the fields of engineering, computer science, agriculture, medicine, economics, and other professions needed to boost the economy of a developing nation. All are required to return to their countries upon completing studies, with a high expectation to work for their respective governments in the near future.

International students to Taiwan come and go, which makes it hard to keep an exact figure on their number for a time span extending two years. With the exception of the degree students, students to Taiwan hardly stay beyond two consecutive years, although many return, sooner or later, and for one reason or another. International students in Taiwan are generally happy, and take advantage of the beautiful things the country has to offer. Night markets, night clubs, the mountains, friendly local people, an efficient administrative structure, to mention just a few, are all a reason why many students and visitors to Taiwan return.

However, in spite of the good things Taiwan has to offer, many international students still find it hard to acclimatise culturally. Research has linked the international sojourners' inability to adjust to the host-country culture to insufficient pre-departure cross-cultural training (Black and Mendenhall, 1990). For this reason, many multinationals and universities are now delivering pre-departure Cross-Cultural Training (CCT) to their international sojourners/expatriates. The 1998 Global Relocation Trends Survey Report indicated that as

many as 70% of the 177 multinational companies surveyed delivered pre-departure cross-cultural training programs (Windham International & National Foreign Trade Council, 1998) by the year 1998. For the record, cross-cultural training is any training designed to enhance expatriates' knowledge and awareness on the cultural characteristics of the host-country (Brewster and Pickard, 1994; Black and Mendenhall, 1990; Kealey and Protheroe, 1996). Although it is unwise to use these generalisations, sufficient research has shown a positive relationship between pre-departure cross-cultural training and the international sojourner's ability to adapt better to host-country culture.

This research will look at another angle of enhancing international sojourners' adaptability in the host country. The research is restricted to international students, and only those living and studying in Taiwan. It will attempt to bring a relationship between peer mentorship and international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan. It will also seek to determine whether or not schools in Taiwan should focus more on peer mentorship as a means to enhancing international students' cultural and academic adjustment.

## Research Motivation

Peer mentorship programs could come into play, to complement the following situations:

1. International students' inability to adjust to life in Taiwan

2. An increasing global desire to learn Mandarin, and subsequently to stay in Taiwan, and the need to welcome these new-comers and make them feel at home.

With the above variables, it is important for Taiwan to have mechanisms in place to welcome the constantly-arriving international students, reduce the rate of culture shock for them, and try to integrate them into the local culture. Hence, it occurred to the researcher that peer mentorship is positively related to international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan. Certain schools in the country already have various forms of mentorship programs, which go by different names for different schools. At National Chengchi University (NCCU), for instance, there is a program that is similar to peer mentorship, called the Buddy Program. This program matches international students— mostly exchange students— with local students. This is supposed to help a lot in easing the new-comers' anxiety about living in a foreign country since the latter get to receive help and support from their *buddies*.

However, many Taiwanese schools are lagging behind as regards the implementation of effective peer mentorship programs, which could supplement the existing programs designed to ease international students stress with adjustment.

Several literature (e.g. R.J. Sanchez, T.N. Bauer, M.E. Paronto; 2006) show that peer mentorship programs help to enhance the satisfaction rate of freshmen/new entrants to a university, increase commitment, and retention to graduation. Furthermore, given many international students' difficulties comprehending class lectures, and textbooks, and general communication with lecturers and classmates in Chinese, the availability of an effective peer mentorship program that matches international students with local students could be very beneficial to both parties: improved comprehension of class lectures and studies in general for the international students, and increased exposure to foreign cultures and, possibly, languages.

# Research Objectives

The following objectives are hoped to be reached with this research:

1. To determine the relationship between peer mentorship and international student adjustment to Taiwan. Proposed hypotheses about the relationship between availability of a peer mentor and adjustment to Taiwan will hence be tested.

2 Secondly, it is hoped that future researchers will be inspired into working on the same the same subject to ensure a more diversified knowledge.

## Organisation of the rest of the work

Subsequent chapters will discuss the literature review (Chapter 2) on mentorship, peer mentorship, and the relationship between peer mentorship and adjustment in a foreign country. Chapter 3 will discuss the methods employed in this research. Chapter 4 will discuss the results of the research findings. Chapter 5 will conclude the thesis by mentioning the significance and limitations of the research, and recommending strategies for future research.

# CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the international student adjustment issues; concepts of mentorship and peer mentorship as they relate to international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan; the results of previous research on peer mentorship; the hypotheses related to peer mentorship and adjustment.

## International Student Adjustment Issues

Literature on peer mentorship and adjustment of international students in Taiwan is scarce, although there a few on students' adjustment to certain fields of study in the country.

Relying on the study conducted by Mallinckrodt and Leong (1992) about international student adjustment to American life and culture, the following general conclusions are reached about the problems faced by international students in a host country:

● Difficulties with host language

● Financial constraints

●Social integration

● Problems in daily tasks.

● Homesickness

●Role conflicts.

●Changes in food

According to the researchers (Mallinckrodt and Leong, 1992; Parr et al, 1992), the above problems lead to the following undesirable situations:

●Social withdrawal

●Inability to sleep

●Sadness and depression

●Academic problems

●Loss of self-esteem

Ways to avoid or lesson these problems are varied in different countries and schools. Certain schools rely on counselling centers for students to consult in times of hardships. However the success of this method has been doubted given students are reluctant to open up to the counselling center staff, and would instead consult with family members and friends about their problems (Schneider & Spinler, 1986; Surdam & Collins, 1984, Johnson, 1993).

## Mentorship and Peer Mentorship

<u>Mentorship</u>

Generally speaking, mentorship or mentoring is a kind of developmental relationship that exists between an older, more experienced colleague and a younger, less experienced one, where the former provides support and acts as a role model to the latter (Kram, 1985). Mentorship programs are usually organised by institutions, who assign a mentee (protégé) to a mentor. Mentorship programs also exist in schools, where a professor acts as a mentor or role model to a student. The programs are almost always free of charge and are geared towards enabling employees (especially new comers to the organisation) adapt to their working environment, learn the ropes, and excel. During the process of providing mentorship functions,

the mentor also learns things about himself, and develops self-worth, due to the fact that he/she sees himself or herself as contributing positively in someone's success or wellbeing (Allen, Russel, & Maetzke, 1997).When mentorship programs are successful, mentors subsequently have a tendency to serve as mentors again in the future.

Furthermore, their reputation of providing both career and psychosocial support to a protégé makes mentorship programs popular these days. Hence, many universities nowadays integrate mentoring programs in their curricula, and a mentor (referred to as an ACADEMIC ADVISOR in certain schools) is assigned to a protégé— supposedly allowing students to consult with their mentors or academic advisors whenever they are faced with difficulties or doubts regarding studies.

However, in reality, mentorship programs in schools are almost always ineffective due to the fact that neither the mentor nor the protégé takes the relationship seriously. On the one hand, students might not see the need to consult with their mentors when in difficulty simply due to the novelty of the mentorship relationship or due to the unfamiliarity with the program. On the other hand, mentors might be 'too busy' with 'more important' activities (such as teaching, research, traveling) to be genuinely concerned about their students emotional and academic wellbeing. Further, the failure of mentorship programs in the schools (universities, in our case) can also be attributed to the fact that the availability of a mentor is not communicated to a new student, who as a result, goes through the whole academic program without the faintest idea of having a mentor. Such is the case at National Chengchi University, where most of my course mates and schoolmates are unaware of an academic advisor (they each know about an eventual thesis advisor/supervisor, though, since each will be writing a

thesis before graduation. On the other hand, the few of us who are aware of the availability of an academic advisor are no better off than those who are not.

As a result of this failure to effectively meet the needs of the students, many schools (universities) have turned to less formal forms of mentorship, most notably peer mentorship – the subject of this research. Previous research has shown peer mentorship to be more effective in fostering students' satisfaction and commitment to their respective universities, willingness to stay on and complete studies rather than drop out of school (Bauer et al, 2006). In Taiwan, informal peer mentorship abounds among the local students, who act as coaches to one another. By staying in the classroom much after the classes have been concluded and frequently visiting the study rooms (many students in my department spend more than 8 hours everyday in the student study lounge), local students naturally develop a friendship, that sooner or later materialises into informal peer mentorship or coaching relationships, often without their awareness about the existence of such a relationship among them. They help one another with explanations of the class lectures, assignments, presentations, and term papers. Hence, local students are generally more satisfied and committed to National Chengchi University, and the departments of MBA (in particular), are more involved with studies, and naturally have a stronger intention to graduate with a degree in MBA than international students.

Given the above-mentioned situation, the need to integrate international students in effective mentorship programs in the Taiwanese schools should be at least identified. International students are particularly vulnerable in their first year of arrival in a foreign land, and as such particular care should be given in their case.

Mentorship Functions

Kram, 1993, identified two main functions of mentorship. Career Support Functions and Psychosocial Functions.

Career-support functions have to do with any activity geared towards enabling a staff member or student adjust to their new working/studying environment, get a better understanding of his/her job responsibilities, and learn to work well with diverse personalities in their team. Work assignment, feedback, sponsorship (Kram, 1996), to mention just a few, are all examples of career-support functions of mentorship. A mentor might try to accomplish these by supporting the staff member, supervising him or her, and sponsoring him or her (Kram, 1985). Supports functions have to do with any activity that will make the junior staff member do his or her job well and with confidence (such as the mentor recognising and acknowledging the efforts the protégé makes to add value to the organisation). Protégé supervision will reduce errors on the job and enable him/her to learn things about his or her job. Sponsorship has to do with any activity geared towards training the protégé on future responsibilities. For instance, a mentor might send his/her protégé on challenging missions to prepare the latter for his/her next job role (Kram, 1988). Furthermore, a mentor might also open windows of opportunities for his protégé in the course of exercising sponsorship function.

Psychosocial functions, on the other hand, are those interpersonal functions of mentoring that are geared towards enabling the protégé develop a positive self image, feel confident about his or her abilities in the organisation, feel accepted (particularly by his or her mentor) and welcomed in his or her new work environment. Psychosocial functions take the

form of acceptance, role modelling, confirmation and counselling on the part of the mentor (Simon et al., 2004). Hence, it takes a deliberate effort on the part of the mentor to be friendly to his or her protégé, be sensitive and concerned about the latter's wellbeing (by listening to them, enquiring about how they feel), and see them as friends, rather than just as colleagues. When these functions are performed to the utmost, employees have a greater career and personal development (Noe, 1988), higher job satisfaction , higher commitment to their organisation (Corine, Buntzman, & Busch; 1995), more willingness to stay with the organisation, realise increased job performance, and subsequently realise a raise in salary and, most often, get a promotion (Scandura, 1992).

In the academic setting, career-support functions are replaced by academic-support functions since both the school and the students are preoccupied more with academic success rather than career success. Academic development functions in a university setting might reflect in the following activities: sufficient meeting times with the protégé,   helping the protégé with school work or assignment, sharing ideas with the protégé, and any other activity designed to enhance the protégé's academic performance (GPA, for instance). On the other hand the psychosocial functions of mentoring in the universities do not differ much from those of work places. Like in the work places, mentors in the university provide psychosocial functions of mentoring by acting as role-models to the protégé, being friendly to them, accepting them as friends (rather than just mere protégés) and making them feel accepted in the university, serving as role models to their protégés, encouraging them to get involved with academic work, and displaying genuine sensitivity and concern in their lives both inside and outside their academic world.

In summary, and as mentioned previously, effective mentoring in the universities should benefit both the students and the mentors: it is likely protégés' academic and emotional condition will improve, while the mentors themselves will get an immense intrinsic joy for providing help and support to somebody, and accumulate experience for being a mentor to somebody (Kram, 1983).

Forms of Mentorship

Previous research identified only two forms of mentorship: formal and informal mentorship. The table below lists the differences between formal and informal mentorship:

Table 2.1 Formal and Informal Peer Mentorship compared

| Formal Mentorship | Informal Mentorship |
|---|---|
| Established by an organisation | Spontaneous and voluntary |
| Rigid | Flexible |
| Professional | Intimate |
| Extrinsic reward | Intrinsic reward |
| Increasingly less common, less successful | More common, more successful |
| Organisational | Mutual attraction |

As the table above portrays, formal mentorship differs from informal mentorship in that while formal mentorship relationships are established by the organisations in which the mentors and the mentees work or study, informal mentorship relationships develop spontaneously, often without the parties involved realising they are in fact in a mentorship relation. Another

difference between formal and informal mentoring is while formal mentorship relationships are rigid (inflexible, due to their tendency to be very structured), informal mentorship programs are inflexible both with frequency and venue of meeting. Furthermore, while formal mentorship relationships are professional, informal mentorship relationship are intimate, often with the mentor and protégé seeing each other as friends, rather than as mentor and mentee. In addition, while mentors in formal mentoring relationships receive an extrinsic reward for their efforts (in terms as salary and other benefits), mentors in informal mentoring relationships receive an intrinsic reward for their efforts, and are more likely than their counterparts to serve as mentors again in the future. Furthermore, while the mentors and the protégés in the formal mentorship relationships rarely identify with each other, mentors and protégés in informal mentorship relationships often identify with one another, and are better able to empathise with one another: this is to be expected since the relationship came into being naturally, spontaneously, and since the parties involved have personalities that correspond. Furthermore, while both formal and informal mentorship programs aim at increasing students' (in the university setting) satisfaction and commitment with studies and the university, informal peer mentorship programs are more common since they are unplanned and can thus develop among students and between students and professors almost on a daily-basis. Also, because of their flexibility and informal nature, informal peer mentorship programs are almost always more successful than formal mentorship relationships.

Peer Mentorship

Peer mentorship has been defined as a 'developmental relationship with the clear purpose of supporting individuals within it to achieve their job objectives' (Holbech, 1996: 26). Simply put, peer mentorship is that type of mentorship program, where the mentor and

the protégé are *peers*. In a university setting, peer mentoring teams would consist of classmates, course mates, department mates, school mates, or simply friends. Usually, the peer mentor is slightly older and more experienced than the peer mentee, who is in most cases a new-comer in the school or department. Like traditional mentoring, peer mentoring could either be established by the university or by the students themselves. Also, like traditional mentoring, peer mentoring programs are geared towards developing staff members, or students - in a university setting- both professionally (in the case of universities academically) and psychologically.

Moreover, because they tend to be more effective than traditional mentorship programs, peer mentorship programs are widely being established in many organisations, particularly work places and universities. Quite often, universities establish student associations that, though were not designed to function as mentorship programs, actually turn out to function exactly or close to one since over time students develop solid friendships with one another, and those who have matches in personality unconsciously develop a mutually-supportive relationship.

At National Chengchi University (NCCU), almost every local student has at least one peer mentor, though when asked these students would answer that they have none, since most people only know peer mentorship to be formal (where a mentor is assigned to a protégé). The Association of International Students, NCCU Buddy Group, and Counselling Center all bring students together, and as mentioned earlier, friendships begin, some of which eventually develop into informal peer mentorship relationships among the participants, though this more common among the local students.

Research has shown successful peer mentorship programs to have a positive impact on both career and personal development. In work places, both protégés and mentors have more job and emotional satisfaction and, naturally, less willingness to leave the organisation. Similarly, in the schools, students show more satisfaction and commitment to the university and to learning, are more willing to stay until graduation, and have a better GPA upon graduation than those universities without one or whose mentorship programs have not been successful (Noe, 1988; Corzine, Buntzman, and Busch, 1995). A four-year longitudinal survey (Sanchez, Bauer, & Paronto, 2006) in a large Midwestern business school revealed that peer mentorship is a cost-effective way of examining students' attitudes and behaviour regarding satisfaction with the school and graduation. In this survey freshmen were assigned mentors who were seniors in the school, and their progress both in the semester the mentorship program was established to their fourth year of studies. The results were desirable for any university. Mentored students reported more satisfaction with the university, were willing to stay on and graduate compared to those who only received a formal orientation on their first day at the school. Furthermore, Lankau and Scandura (2002) found that mentoring in a hospital setting was related to higher personal learning, which in turn resulted in lower intentions to leave the hospital. Payne and Huffman (2005) also found a similar result in a military setting.

Peer Mentorship Functions

Like traditional mentoring, peer mentoring has two main functions: career support functions and psychosocial functions (Kram, 1985; Noe, 1988; Scandura, 1992). In a university setting, there are the academic support functions and psychosocial functions. However, peer mentorship functions might be less obvious than traditional mentorship

functions as protégé and mentor are peers and naturally are helpful to one another (either at one time or another), thereby making both the mentor and the mentee accountable to each other. When effective, peer mentorship could be mutually beneficial to the parties involved.

Forms of Peer Mentorship: Traditional Top-down Mentorship vs. Peer Mentorship

Like traditional top-down mentoring programs, peer mentorship is either formal or informal. In formal peer mentoring programs the mentee is assigned a mentor by his/her institution, with a specific duration. In an academic setting, an academic advisor or simply mentor is assigned to provide the vocational and, to a large extent, the psychosocial functions of mentorship to his/protégé. In contrast, in informal peer mentorship programs, peers spontaneously become mentors to another. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, the peers usually do not realise they are providing mentorship services to one another since they came into the relationship unawares.

Regarding traditional top-down mentoring, peer mentorship is different in these ways:

1. Peer mentorship relationships are usually mutually-beneficial to the parties involved since each one in a dyad certainly has something unique to offer to his/her peer.

2. Time is not an issue, meeting places are not important (friends can provide mentorship services to one another in the friendliest of atmospheres). As a result, peer mentorship programs are generally more effective than traditional mentorship programs as peers can provide more accurate and relevant support in contemporary times, than older, 'wiser' colleagues or teachers. Peers provide both educational and psychosocial functions of mentorship, and are better able to (Mavrinac, 2005; Ebby, 1997; Ensher, Thomas & Murphy, 2001) to empathise with one another.

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3. Furthermore, peer influence is more solid (Bennis, Belew, Schein, & Steele, 1973) than superior influence. Peer mentorship increases the interaction and sharing of knowledge (Dussault & Barnett, 1996) since the parties involved are more relaxed and willing to share the 'little they know' with colleagues and friends. In addition, while traditional mentorship programs are designed for the protégé to learn from the mentor (Ragins & Kram, 2007), peer mentorship is designed to be a mutually-beneficial relationship or practice for both mentor and protégé.

Table 2.2 Traditional Mentoring *v*s. Peer Mentoring

| Traditional Mentoring | Peer Mentoring |
|---|---|
| Mentor is on a higher hierarchical level, is likely to be older and to have been in the organisation for a longer time than the protégé | Mentor and mentee are on the same hierarchical level |
| Mentorship duration is shorter | Mentorship duration is longer |
| Usually formal in nature | Usually informal in nature |
| Older practice | Newer practice |
| A more common practice of mentorship | A less common practice of mentorship |
| Well-structured | Minimally-structured |

## Results of Previous Peer Mentorship Studies

**Peer-Mentoring Freshmen: Implications for Satisfaction, Commitment, and Retention to Graduation—the United States**

The results of the study conducted by Rudolph J Sanchez (2006, California State University), T N Bauer, and Matthew E Paronto (2006, Portland State University) about peer mentorship and freshmen retention and satisfaction with the university is shown below:

Method used

A four-year longitudinal design to examine the impacts of a randomly-assigned peer mentorship program, together with a freshmen general orientation course on the behaviours and attitudes of freshmen was employed. Both questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. Participants were tested 3 times: during the semester the mentorship program was started, the second semester into the mentorship program, and four years later (before graduation from the school of business). In the study, freshmen were assigned peer mentors who were already seniors in the school. These were the proposed hypotheses:

Results

*Hypothesis 1a: Peer-mentoring will be positively related to satisfaction with the university*

*Hypothesis 1b: Protégés will have higher levels of affective commitment to the university than nonmentored individuals*

T-tests and Hierarchical regressions were employed in this study. According to the results, there were no significant differences between groups on the demographic and attitudinal variables. However, there were significant differences between the groups on actual graduation from the school of business ($t \_ 3.03$, $p \_ .05$) and GPA at time of exit ($t \_ 2.38$, $p$

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_ .05). In both cases, the complete data group had the higher mean. For the mentored group, there were significant differences between the groups on Time 3 social norm ($t$ _ 2.06, $p$ _ .05) and time to graduation ($t$ 2.13,$p$ _ .05). In both cases, the missing data group had the higher mean. Based on the pattern of missing data and the results of the $t$ tests, the researchers concluded that there is no systematic or theoretical threat to the results of further analyses due to missing data (Sanchez, Bauer, and Paronto, 2006).

Peer-Mentoring Effects on Affective Constructs

"Hierarchical regression was used to test Hypothesis 1a, which predicted that peer-mentoring would be positively related to satisfaction with the university. After controlling for high school rank, peer mentoring was significantly related to satisfaction with the university halfway into the semester ($\_R2$ _ .05, $p$ _ .10), at the end of the semester ($\_R2$ _ .05, $p$ _ .05), and at the end of the semester following the intervention ($\_R2$ _ .10, $p$ _ .05). These results provide support for Hypothesis 1a.

An examination of the raw means of the protégé and control groups shows that the protégé group reported higher affective commitment than the control group at all times (approximately 0.2 higher on a 5-point scale). Additionally, for both groups, affective commitment increased over time (approximately .2 between each time period). However, after controlling for high school rank, protégé status was unrelated to affective commitment at Time 2, Time 3, and Time 4. These results provide limited support for Hypothesis 1b."

Predictors of Intentions to Persist

"Hypothesis 2a predicted that satisfaction with the university would be positively related to later intentions to persist. After controlling for high school rank, Time 2 satisfaction with the university was related to Time 3 intention to graduate from the university ($_R2 \_ .07, p \_ .05$) and Time 3 intention to graduate in their major ($_R2 \_ .15, p \_ .01$). Additionally, Time 3 satisfaction was related to Time 4 intention to graduate from the university ($_R2 \_ .11, p \_ .05$) but was unrelated to Time 4 intention to graduate in their major. These results provide general support for Hypothesis 2a. Hypothesis 2b predicted that affective commitment would be positively related to subsequent intentions to graduate. After controlling for high school rank, Time 2 affective commitment was unrelated to Time 3 intention to graduate from the school of business, but was related to Time 3 intention to graduate from the university ($_R2 \_ .1.01$). Additionally, Time 3 affective commitment was unrelated to Time 4 intention to graduate from the school of business, but was related to Time 4 intention to graduate from the university ($_R2 \_.39, p \_ .01$). These results provide partial support for Hypothesis 2b. »

Sanchez et al, 2006

**The effect of peer Mentoring Strategy on Student Nurse Stress Reduction in Clinical Practice—Kaohsiung, Taiwan**

Method

This study was conducted to examine the effects of a peer mentoring program on the reduction of stress on nursing students during clinical practice. Forty-nine junior nurses were assigned mentors from more experienced nursing students. A six-scaled questionnaire was designed for perceived stress levels.

<u>Results</u>

The results revealed that peer mentorship could be important in reducing student nurses' stress levels during clinical practice providing effective mentorship functions are practiced, and the nursing department/school provides support and encouragement to the mentors and mentees at all time during the course of the program.

In Sum, based on the results of these two studies, and based on the perspective of the Social Support theory, peer mentorship could indeed be an effective way of reducing stress on students, to which the international students in Taiwan are no exception.

**Hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1*: International students with peer mentors will find it easier than their counterparts to adjust to life and studies in Taiwan*

Mentoring have for the years been reported to provide tremendous benefits to both protégés and mentors (Allen et al,). Mentored individuals have been reported to have increased job competencies, promotion, and satisfaction with an organisation (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Fagenson, 1988, 1989; Kram, 1985; Roche, 1979, Scandura, 1992; Whitely, Dougherty, & Dreher, 1991). Mentors have been reported to have increased confidence, and more experience (Kram, 1985).

In the schools, peer mentorship results have also revealed a higher satisfaction with the university, and the intention to stay up to graduation (Bauer et al, 2006). Beck (1989) found that participants in a mentoring program reported higher career development benefits.

Most of the literature reviewed is on the adjustment of new employees in their organisation, or students in their schools. However, relying on the Social Support theory, this study proposes that peer mentoring could go a long way in ensuring international student adjustment in Taiwan. Social Support theory is the theory that the feeling of being part of a community of loving and caring people will help in preventing, reducing and coping with stress (C.F. House, 1981). From these perspectives, peer mentors could help international students adjust to a foreign country by proving them with information about studies and the country, give advice, assist them with their problems, give them reassurance, and help them with the local language.

Hypothesis 2a: *Protégés with informal peer mentors will report more mentorship functions with current mentorship experience than their counterparts.*

Hypothesis 2b: *Protégés with informal peer mentors will report a higher level of satisfaction with current mentorship experience than their counterparts.*

The effectiveness of formal mentoring programs— in terms of the mentorship functions provided and satisfaction for the protégés— has been questioned by researchers (Conrad, 1985; Noe, 1988a). Its inability to provide adequate career or vocational benefits has been also been pointed out by Noe (1988a). Informal peer mentorship programs are formed spontaneously, usually due to the mutual attraction between the protégé and the mentor,

which sparks a mutually-supportive relationship. In an informal mentorship program, the parties involved are likely to have been friends already by the time the mentorship relationship is formed. Moreover, since it is natural to feel more comfortable with and to be more willing to provide help/support to a friend than to a new acquaintance, it is not surprising that informal peer mentorship provides more effective vocational and emotional support than a formal one. Also, with formal mentorship programs, there is no problem or risk of mismatching protégé and mentor. Therefore, this study proposes that having an informal peer mentor is positively related to receiving higher mentorship functions and more satisfaction with the mentorship program. Again relying on the Social Support theory, the study proposes that international students will adjust quicker to life and studies in Taiwan if they have an informal peer mentor.

Hypothesis 3a: *Protégés with Taiwanese peer mentors will report more mentorship functions than those with non-Taiwanese peer mentors.*

Hypothesis 3b: *Protégés with Taiwanese peer mentors will report a higher level of satisfaction with mentorship experience than those with non-Taiwanese peer mentors.*

Since Taiwanese mentors know their country more than international mentors, it is likely they will make better mentors to international students than their counterparts. For example, they would be in a better position to provide translation services for an international student who needs after-class translation services since Chinese Language is their native language and therefore they have more competencies in this field than non-native speakers. Furthermore, because it is their country, they would also be in a better position to advise their foreign

protégés/peers about life in Taiwan. Therefore, this study proposes that having a Taiwanese peer mentor would be more beneficial to the international student than a non-Taiwanese peer mentor.

# CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods employed in the research. It displays information on the participants, the procedures employed in the research, and the design and measures of the research.

## Participants

Because the research is on peer mentorship and international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan, only international students living in Taiwan were selected. Although international students all over Taiwan were targeted, however, only those living in Northern, Central, and Southern Taiwan eventually received questionnaires. Out of the 154 respondents who completed the question on gender, 77 (50.33%) were male, and 76 (49.67%) were female. Over 50% were in the age range of 23-30 years old. 24% were in the age range of 19-22, 1% in the age range of 17-18, 23% in the age range of over 30. Most of the participants (over 70%) had a college and university/bachelor's degree and are currently pursuing a master's degree or Mandarin Language program in Taiwan, at the time the study was being conducted. 13% of the participants had already completed high school education before coming to Taiwan, which is normal since most students to Taiwan are at least 18, and take Mandarin classes or degree programs. About 4.7% of participants were pursuing a PhD degree in Taiwan. African students made up the majority of the participants (32.9%). This could be a bit surprising given the number of students from Africa to Taiwan make a small proportion (at around 300 or so only) of the total number of international students. However, the researcher was able to get a bigger proportion of African students' participation by attending the New

Year's Eve party thrown by the Students from Burkina Faso. All the 30 questionnaires taken there were immediately completed and returned. A seventh option had been indicated on the questionnaire as Middle East, but no respondent appeared on the option. Moreover, the graph below affirms a statement that international students to Taiwan hardly stay beyond 2 consecutive years. As can be seen, almost half of the participants had been living in Taiwan for a period of less than 6 months only at the time the study was conducted.
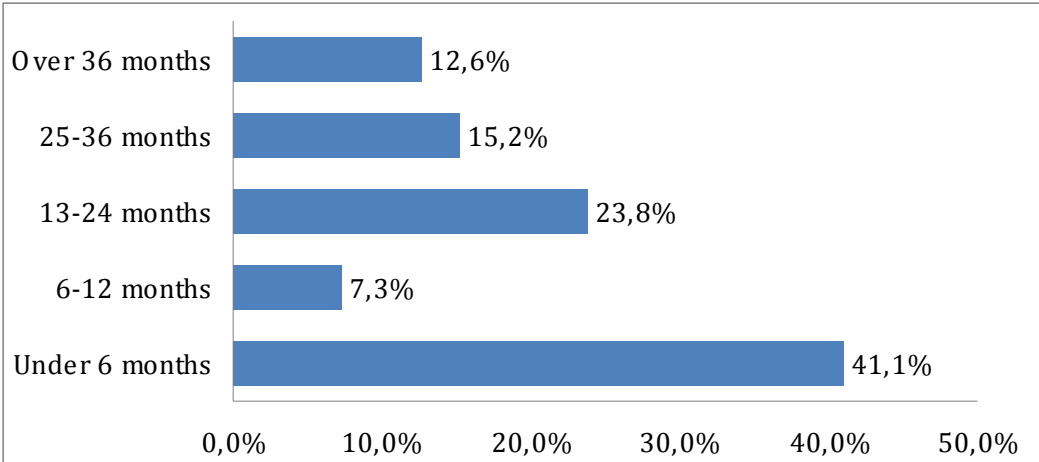


Figure 3.1 Participants' Duration of stay in Taiwan at the time of the survey

In sum, participants completed the survey based on their free will. They were politely approached with the hard copies and asked if they could kindly complete a survey. Most seemed willing to do so. The subject of peer mentorship was explained to those respondents who asked questions, and to those who appeared to be having a hard time understanding the questions.

## Research Procedure

The study was conducted in Taiwan, and mostly in Taipei. A quantitative method was employed, questionnaires, consisting of 28 questions, were drafted. Initially 25 questionnaires were prepared for a test case (pilot test), and distributed among friends and neighbours at the dorm (National Chengchi University's Female Zhuangjing Hall 9). Later on a bit of adjustment was done for the final survey, where a total of over 525 hard-copy questionnaires were sent. The numbers of soft copies were un-estimated, though. A total of 154 responses were completed and returned over a period of six weeks. Pens were distributed among the respondents the researcher personally approached, for their time. Of the 154 responses received, however, only about 9.94 % were soft copy responses (received via email). The researcher personally distributed about 50% of the hard-copy responses among the international students in National Chengchi University, National Taiwan University, and National Taiwan Normal University. Friends helped distribute the other 50% of the survey in the schools mentioned above, and in the far away schools as well. Please find in the table below the list of the schools that participated in the survey.

Table 3.1   Number of questionnaires distributed

| Region (School) | Hard copies distributed | Copies completed | Soft copy responses |
|---|---|---|---|
| National Chengchi University (Taipei) | 250 | 41 | |
| National Taiwan University (Taipei) | 100 | 31 | |
| National Taiwan Normal University (Taipei) | 50 | 27 | |
| National Cheng Kung University (Tainan) | 50 | 13 | |
| National Jiao Tung University (Hsinchu) | 15 | 2 | |
| National Kaohsiung University (Kaohsiung) | 10 | 3 | |
| Others (Taichung, NTUT, Furen, Tamkang, Yunlin Universities) | 50 | 26 | |
| Total | 525 | 154 | 11 |

As mentioned previously, the survey consisted of 28 questions, with the first section asking about participants' demographic information, how long they have been living in Taiwan, why did they choose Taiwan for studies, have they adjusted to life and studies in Taiwan, to mention but a few.  Section 2 asks whether they have a peer mentor or not, and if yes what kind of mentorship program is it (formal or informal). Section 3 questions those subjects with peer mentors about the mentorship functions and qualities they receive. Section

4 inquires about the demographic information on the peer mentor (Is S/he Taiwanese are they friends, classmates). Then, participants were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 4, 1 representing *strongly disagree*, 4, representing *strongly agree*. The last section, Section 5, asked participants whether they had a peer mentor in the past, and if yes, to what degree were they satisfied on a scale on 1 to 4 (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

## Design/Measures

The use of questionnaires employed in the study facilitated the collection of data from international students from varied backgrounds and geographical locations in Taiwan. The diagram below describes the various stages of research design:

| Questionnaire drafting and development |
| :---: |

↓

| Sample collection |
| :---: |

↓

| Data collection |
| :---: |

↓

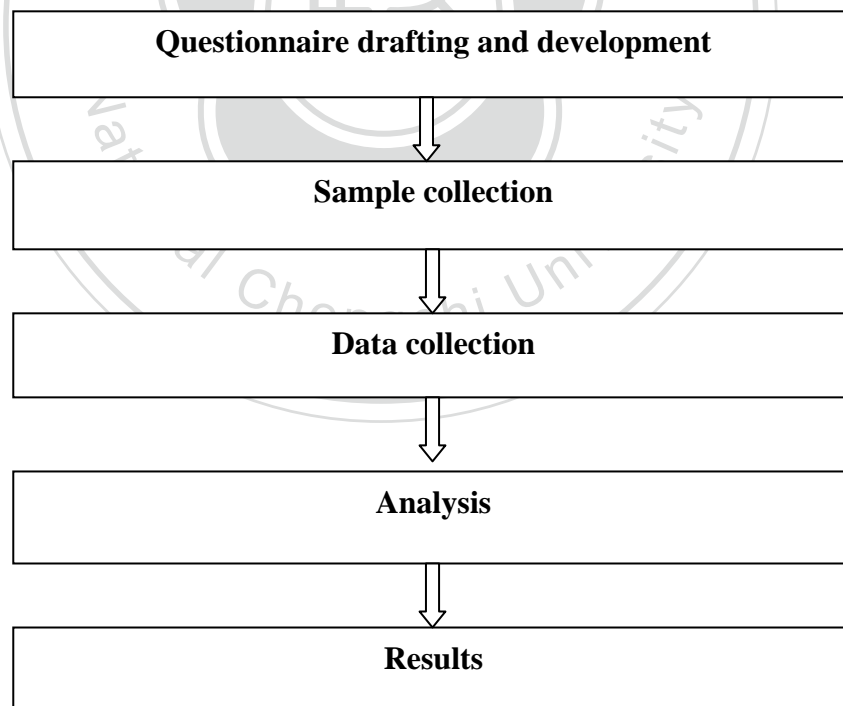| Analysis |
| :---: |

↓

| Results |
| :---: |

Figure 3.2 Research Design Stages

Questionnaires were drafted in such a way as to provide information on participants' demographical data, duration of stay in Taiwan, the availability of a peer mentor, satisfaction with mentorship experience, and eventually, adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan. The table below consists of sample design questions in the questionnaire:

Table 3.2 Sample questions in the questionnaire and responses

| **Sample questions** | **Choice of responses** |
|---|---|
| Age | 1=17-18, 2=19-22, 3=23-30, 4= over 30 |
| Sex | 1=male, 2=female |
| How long have you been living in Taiwan? | 1=under 6 months, 2=6-12 months, 3=13-24 months, 4= over 36 months |
| I currently have a peer mentor | 1=yes, 2=no |
| On the whole I am satisfied with current mentorship relationship | 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree |
| Have you adjusted to life and studies in Taiwan? | 1=not in the least, 2=no, I have not, 3=somewhat, 4=yes, I have adjusted, 5= yes, very much |

The above questions helped get an idea about many participants had peer mentors; if, were they satisfied with the program?; whether adjustment was positively related to the availability of a peer mentor.

As mentioned previously elsewhere, own questionnaires were drafted. The purpose for this was to make the research original, and to help the researcher precisely get the information sought. Questions in the questionnaire were sent to the research supervisor for a review.

# CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

This chapter analyses data collected from the survey. Hypotheses are tested using an Independent Samples Tests to test relationships. Five hypotheses are proposed in relation to the results. Out of the 154 responses, 121 were valid.

## Hypotheses Testing

It was proposed that peer mentorship could play a major role in ensuring international students' adaptability to Taiwan and studies. Hence the first hypothesis goes as follows:

Hypothesis 1: *International students with peer mentors will find it easier than their counterparts to adjust to life and studies in Taiwan.*

Most of the participants (88, out of a total of 121) indicated they currently did not have peer mentors. The 33 participants who responded they had peer mentors did not necessarily report a higher level of satisfaction. Hence, although the adjustment scores reported by the participants who had peer mentors (M=3.64) were slightly lower than those who did not have peer mentors (M=3.75, SD = 1.03), based on the t-test result there was no significant difference between those mean scores, (t (119) = -.55, p > .05). Therefore, hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Hypothesis 2a: *Protégés with informal peer mentors will report more mentorship functions with current mentorship experience than their counterparts.*

For the participants with peer mentors, 19 indicated that their mentors were assigned to them by their departments/school, while 14 indicated that their mentors were not assigned to them by their school/department. Although, the mentorship function scores reported by participants with formal peer mentors (M=3.0965, SD = .51) was slightly higher than those with informal peer mentors (3.0714), based on the t-test result, there was no significant difference between those mean scores, (t (31) = .16, p> .05). Therefore, hypothesis 2a was not accepted.

Hypothesis 2b: *Protégés with informal peer mentors will report a higher level of satisfaction with current mentorship experience than their counterparts.*

Although the mean scores regarding satisfaction with current mentorship experience for the protégés with formal peer mentors (M = 1.79, SD = .42) was slightly higher than those with informal peer mentors (M = 1.64), test result revealed no significant difference between those mean scores, (t (31) = .92, p > .05. Therefore hypothesis 2b was not accepted.

Hypothesis 3a: *Protégés with Taiwanese peer mentors will report more mentorship functions than those with non-Taiwanese peer mentors.*

Participants who responded that their peer mentors were Taiwanese were 20, while those who indicated their peer mentors were not Taiwanese were 16. The mentorship

functions scores reported by participants with Taiwanese peer mentors was slightly higher (M = 3.13, SD = .44) than the participants with non-Taiwanese peer mentors (M = 3.07). However, test result revealed no significant difference for these scores, (t (34) = .39, p > .05. Therefore hypothesis 3a was not accepted.

Hypothesis 3b: *Protégés with Taiwanese peer mentors will report a higher level of satisfaction than those with non-Taiwanese peer mentors.*

The satisfaction scores for participants with Taiwanese peer mentors (M = 1.76, SD = 44 ) was slightly higher than participants with non-Taiwanese peer mentors (M = 1.73), test result nonetheless did not reveal a significant difference between these scores, (t (34) = .20, p > .05. Therefore hypothesis 3b was not accepted.
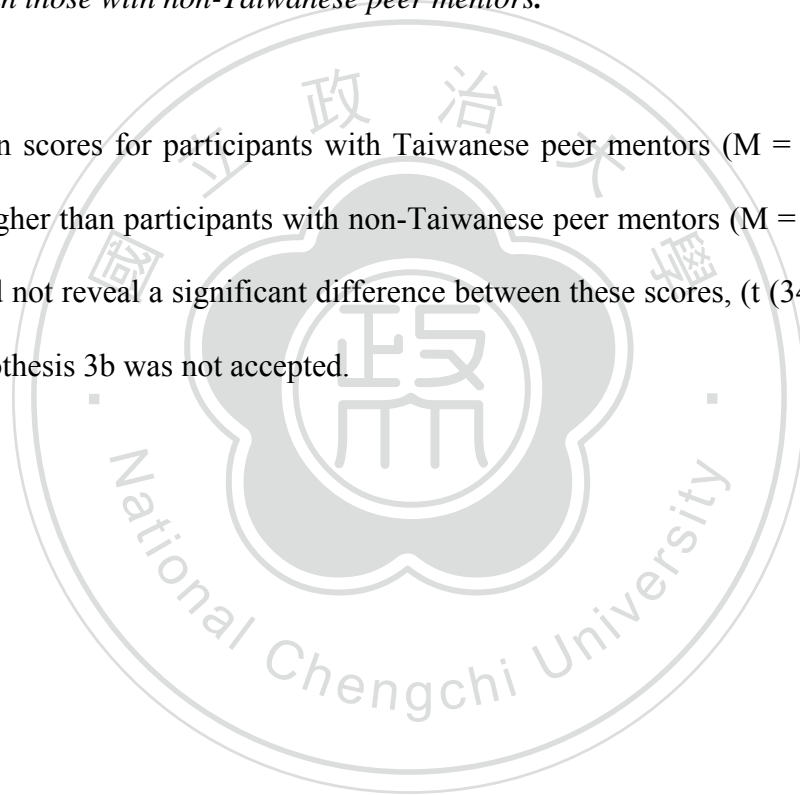
Table 4. 1 Summary of test results for the hypotheses

| Hypothesis | Test Result |
|---|---|
| Hypothesis 1: International students with peer mentors will find it easier than their counterparts to adjust to life and studies in Taiwan. | No |
| Hypothesis 2a: Proteges with informal peer mentors will report more mentorship functions than their counterparts. | No |
| Hypothesis 2b: Proteges with informal peer mentors will report more satisfaction with current mentorship experience than their counterparts. | No |
| Hypothesis 3a: Proteges with Taiwanese peer mentors will report more mentorship functions than those with non-Taiwanese peer mentors | No |
| Hypothesis 3b: Proteges with Taiwanese peer mentors will report more satisfaction with current mentorship experience than those with non-Taiwanese peer mentors. | No |

Table 4.2　Means, Standard deviation, and correlation among study variables

| | Variables | M | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sex | 1.46 | .50 | - | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Age | 2.78 | 0.85 | -.28 | - | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Education | 3.08 | 1.05 | .04 | .59** | - | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Origin | 3.65 | 1.60 | -.20 | .02 | .14 | - | | | | | | |
| 5 | Duration | 2.19 | 1.39 | -.05 | -.32* | .13 | .12 | | | | | | |
| 6 | Adjustment | 3.64 | .93 | -.17 | .24 | -.03 | .06 | -.29 | | | | | |
| 7 | Mentorship Type | 1.56 | .70 | -.07 | .12 | -.08 | .07 | .02 | .01 | | | | |
| 8 | Mentorship Function | 3.1065 | .46 | .08 | -.23 | -.32 | .04 | .03 | -.03 | .13 | | | |
| 9 | Mentor's Characteristics | 1.43 | .50 | -.15 | .09 | .10 | .44 | .12 | -.22 | .14 | .07 | | |
| 10 | Satisfaction with mentorship | 1.75 | .44 | .26 | .23 | .10 | -.06 | -.58 | .16 | -.01 | -.6 | -.03 | |

Note: *p<.05; **p<.01; $^+$p<.10; (two-tailed); N=33-37
Internal consistency coefficients are shown in the parentheses on the diagonal of the correlation matrix.

Dummy coded variables; male= 1, female=2; formal mentorship=1, informal mentorship =2, same sex=1; different sex=2

The correlation coefficients are shown in Table 4.2. Education has a significant positive correlation with age (.59). This means that the higher the education level, the older individuals are. Duration of stay in Taiwan, on the other hand, is negatively associated with age (-.32). This indicates that the younger individuals are, the longer they have been staying in Taiwan.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the independent samples tests results did not support any of the hypotheses that were proposed in the research. Hence, the results portrayed that international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan is not dependent on the availability of a peer mentor.

# CHAPTER V. SIGNIFICANCE OF FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter summarise the findings of the research, discusses the research limitations, and offers suggestions for future research in the subject of peer mentorship and international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan.

## Summary of findings

This research attempted to bring the relationship between peer mentorship and international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan. It proposed five hypotheses about peer mentorship, international students and their adjustment to Taiwan. Independent samples Tests were employed in the hypotheses testing.

### The Hypotheses

As mentioned earlier, it was proposed that there will be a positive relationship between the availability of peer mentorship and international adjustment to Taiwan. Contrary to what was thought, test results showed that there was no significant difference in adjustment between students with peer mentors and those without peer mentors.

Perhaps something is missing in the research: for example, the participants probably just knew peer mentorship to be formal (that is where a mentor is assigned to the protégé by the school/department). It seems many people are unaware that a peer mentor could even be one's close friend. The researcher could recall that during the course of distributing the survey, there were participants who had started responding that they did not have peer mentors, only for them to later say that they indeed had one after the term peer mentorship had been

explained to them. Unfortunately, the participants who did not get to directly ask questions about the survey probably went on responding to the questions without understanding them.

For hypothesis 2a, again test result revealed no significant difference between protégés with informal peer mentors and those with formal ones. Furthermore, the proposition that informal peer mentorship translates to more mentorship functions is not supported.  This thus leads to the conclusion that informal peer mentors are not necessarily more effective in terms of providing more mentorship functions than formal peer mentors.

For hypothesis 2b, it is not supported by the test results either. Perhaps it makes no difference whether the international students have formal or informal peer mentors, as far as satisfaction with the mentorship experience is concerned.

For hypothesis 3a, the results revealed there is no significance difference regarding more mentorship functions between protégés with Taiwanese and those with non-Taiwanese peer mentors. This was originally proposed because it was thought that since the Taiwanese people understand their country, language and culture better, they would be in a better position to provide help with school work, advise the international students on how to do things in Taiwan, and offer better translation services to their international protégés.

This result may be as a result of the fact that international peer mentors understand the need of international protégés better, since they probably are from the same country, cultural backgrounds, and/or speak the same native languages. So, even though Taiwanese peer mentors might be more proficient with the local language, language and cultural similarities with protégés might make non-Taiwanese peer mentors effective as well.

Finally, for hypothesis 3b, it may be that the reasons the tests results did not supportive was because international students actually are equally satisfied with international peer mentors as they are with local peer mentors. As mentioned above, similarities in language and culture might lead to more mentorship functions been provided. Even where mentor and protégé are not from the same country and do not share a mother tongue, the ability to empathise with one another is highly possible since both are international sojourners and both understand how it feels to be living and studying in a foreign country.

In conclusion, though the tests results failed to accept all the proposed hypotheses, the researcher would still suggest that the Taiwanese schools consider peer mentorship as one of the means of reducing stress for the former. Past research has revealed that peer mentorship is a cost-effective way of enhancing student adjustment to a school. Furthermore, peer mentorship programs would serve as avenues for cultural exchange between the local and international students.

## Limitations

The research has a few remarkable limitations, which will be discussed below:

<u>Small sample size</u>

The sample size was very small. A total of only 525 hard-copy questionnaires were sent. Worse still, only about 154 responses were received by the day of the day. Out of this amount there was missing and invalid data, which further shrinks the number of participants. Furthermore, out of this number, only about 33-37 participants responded that they currently

had peer mentors. This figure is probably too small to represent the views of the 19,000 plus international students in Taiwan.

Lack of comprehension of the questions

As mentioned earlier, peer mentorship is a relatively new and unknown subject for many people. As a result, many respondents did not know how to respond to certain questions, which has equally resulted in a lot of missing data, or responses provided where they were not required.

Adjustment to life and Studies

The research failed to provide all the questions addressing adjustment or academic performance. For example, we do not know whether the respondents meant they had adjusted to life in Taiwan but not to studies, or vice versa. Moreover, there was no question asking the respondents whether their academic performance has improved upon receiving peer mentorship. So, we do not know exactly whether the peer mentorship received by international students was effective regarding adjustment to studies or not.

Misunderstanding of the questions

As mentioned several times already, many respondents did not seem to understand the questions. The reasons for this may be two-fold: first, the questions were probably not clearly articulated to allow easy comprehension. Unfortunately, the researcher was not around to verbally clarify things at the time most of the questionnaires were being filled out; second, the questionnaires were in English only. Most of the participants were not native speakers of English (in fact many did not seem to have mastered the English Language). This probably was the reasons many questions were not properly answered.

<u>Adjustment to life and studies</u>

The survey failed to include all the questions addressing adjustment or academic performance. Therefore, it is not known whether the participants who responded that they had adjusted meant they had adjusted to life but not to studies, or vice versa. The question relating to adjustment was this: "Have you adjusted to life and studies in Taiwan?" From this question it is hard to determine exactly which of the two variables was addressed: studies or life? Furthermore, there was no question on whether those who responded that they were satisfied with current mentorship experience had seen improved academic performance as a result of the mentoring program or not.

<u>Participants</u>

Up to 41% of the participants had been living in Taiwan for a period of only 6 months or less, and many were here just for Mandarin Language studies, which is not as demanding as degree programs. Using Gregory Trivonovitch's four stages of cultural adjustment (the honeymoon stage, the hostile stage, the acceptance stage, and the home stage), it seems like those who have been living in Taiwan for a period of less than 6 months were still under the honeymoon stage, and as such, might not be experiencing any adjustment issues yet. This group is probably not the right group of participants.    Moreover, those studying Mandarin were probably not concerned, since they are not very likely to encounter major problems with studies.

## Recommendations

Future research on peer mentorship and international student adjustment could consider the following suggestions:

Larger sample size and longer research time

Given the large number of international students in Taiwan, future researchers could send a minimum of 3000 hard-copy questionnaires and follow up on participants to ensure that a substantial amount of data is collected. With this study distribution and collection of data lasted only 6 weeks. This is a short time for this kind of study. Future researchers could start early and leave a longer time-span between distribution of the questionnaires and their collection.

Drafting of clearer questions

Future research could improve on current research by drafting clearer questions, and in both English and Chinese, if possible, to make sure more people understand the questions. Besides, a clearer definition of peer mentorship would ensure that accurate data is collected.

Adjustment

To effectively measure peer mentorship and international student adjustment in Taiwan, it would be important for future research to address the different variables of life ad studies separately. Also, questions on academic performance would go a long way in ensuring accurate data is collected.

Perhaps there are other short-comings of this study that has not come to the realisation of the researcher at the moment. In any case, with the above-mentioned mentioned suggestions, future research should be an improved version of this one.

# Conclusion

Once again, this study attempted to determine the relationship between peer mentorship and international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan. Research results showed there is no significant relationship between peer mentorship and international student adjustment to life and studies in Taiwan. However, most of previous research on peer mentorship and student adaptation to studies (for example Bauer et al, 2006) showed peer mentorship is indeed positively related to student retention and satisfaction with the university. Also, a study on peer mentorship and students nurse's stress reduction during clinic practice (in Kaohsiung, Taiwan) showed that effective peer mentorship functions could help reduce student nurses' stress level. Nevertheless, the fact that test results did not support the hypotheses proposed in this study is a bit surprising, but as mentioned earlier, maybe the research is missing something. Therefore, the results of this research should not deter Taiwanese schools in establishing peer mentorship programs as one of the ways to ensure quick adaptability of international students to studies and the life in Taiwan.

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# APPENDICES

# Sample Questionnaire

*Peer Mentoring and International Student Adjustment to Life and Study in Taiwan*

**Peer Mentorship – what is it all about?**

As the name suggests, peer mentorship is a form of mentoring relationship among students, colleagues, where (usually, but not always the case) an older student, colleague, or friend provides advice, supports, and acts as a role model to a younger or newer student, colleague, or friend. It should be noted that peer mentorship is not restricted to older-younger student relationships. Rather, this kind of relationship can exist among classmates/schoolmates, friends, relatives. Further, it can exist even without the participants realizing that they are involved in a peer mentorship relationship ('study groups' are all very common in schools)! Hence, the existence of the two forms of peer mentorship: ***Formal Peer mentorship*** and ***Informal Peer Mentorship***. In the former a protégé is assigned to a mentor, while in the latter the relationship develops spontaneously probably due to the mutual attraction between or among the individuals involved.

**Section 1: Respondent Information/Demographic data**

1. Sex  Male    □ Female

2. Age  □17-18 years old □ 19-22 years old □23-30 years old over 30 years old

 3. Education

□High School □ College degree □ University degree □ Master's degree or equivalent □phD

4. Continent of origin

□ Asia □ Europe □ Eurasia □the Americas □ Africa □ Australia & Oceania□ Middle East

5. How long have you been living in Taiwan?

□Under 6 months □ 6-12 months □ 13-24 months □ 25-36 months □ over 36 months

6. Why did you choose Taiwan for study? *You may choose more than one option.*

□I Just wanted a change of environments from where I was living □ I had scholarship to study here □ I wanted to experience life in Asia (Taiwan) □ I wanted to learn Chinese □Studying here is relatively cheap.

7. Is this your first time in Taiwan? □ Yes    □ No ((*If no, please proceed to questions 9 and 10*)

8. If yes, how many times have you visited Taiwan?

□ Once □ Twice □ Three times □ Four times or more

9. Have you adjusted to life and studies in Taiwan? *Please choose from the scale below:*

*1-not in the least   2-No, I have not 3-Somewhat 4-Yes, I have adjusted 5-Yes, very much*

1□        2□        3□    4□        5□        *could you also state what you think might have helped you adjust (if you have adjusted to life and study in Taiwan, that is):*

10. Have you lived in any other foreign country? □Yes □ No

*If yes, please state which ones: Japan in 2006 through Japanese International Cooperation for African Countries(JICA) on Food Safety for African Countries.*


**Section 2: Availability of Peer Mentors /Current Peer Mentoring Type and adjustment to life and study in Taiwan**

11. I currently have (a) peer mentor (s) □ Yes □ No (*If no, please respond to question 13 and proceed to section 5)*

12. My current per mentor was assigned to me by my school/department. □ Yes □ No

13. I believe having a peer mentor would facilitate my adjustment to life and study in Taiwan.

□ strongly agree □Agree □ Disagree □ strongly disagree

**Section 3: Current Peer Mentorship Function**

14. I meet with my peer mentors at least four times in a month.

□ Strongly agree □ Agree □ Disagree □ Strongly disagree

15. My peer mentor (s) often help me with my school work.

□ Strongly agree □ Agree □ Disagree □ Strongly disagree

16. My peer mentor (s) are always willing to share ideas with me.

□ Strongly agree □ Agree □ Disagree □ Strongly disagree

17. My peer mentor (s) often engages in social activities with me (e.g. movies, eating together, clubbing, sports, and e.t.c).

□ Strongly agree □ Agree □ Disagree □ Strongly disagree

18. I feel accepted by my peer mentor (s).

□ Strongly agree □ Agree □ Disagree □ Strongly disagree

19. I respect and accept my peer mentor (s).

□ Strongly agree □ Agree □ Disagree □ Strongly disagree

20. I consider my peer mentor (s) as friends

□ Strongly agree □ Agree □ Disagree □ Strongly disagree

21. I use my peer mentor (s) very effectively.

□ Strongly agree □ Agree □ Disagree □ Strongly

**Section 4: Peer Mentor(s) Characteristics/Dyad Composition**

22. My peer mentor (S) is/are Taiwanese people. □Yes □No

23. My peer mentor (s) are students/friends. □Yes □No

24. My peer mentors consist of both Taiwanese people and foreigners. □Yes □No

25. My peer mentor (s) is/are my classmate (s). □Yes □No

26. On the whole I am satisfied with my current mentorship relationship.

□ Strongly agree □Agree □Disagree □Currently disagree


**Section 5: Previous Peer Mentorship Experience**

27. I have had (a) peer mentor(s) in the past. □Yes □No

28. On the whole I was satisfied with my previous peer mentorship experience.

□Strongly agree □ Agree □Disagree □Strongly disagree