

FRIENDSHIP FORMATION: A STUDY ON FOREIGN STUDENTS
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-OSHKOSH

by

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B. A., National Taiwan University, 1969

A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1976

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My special thanks to Dr. Eugene J. Cech, Jeffrey Taylor and Marilyn Anderson at Testing Research and Services, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh for making this possible. I also want to thank Dr. George Peters for his patience and encouragement.

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Chapter I

Statement of Problem and Its Significance

Foreign students who come across national boundaries and attend American universities often must adapt to a culture with which they have had no previous contact. Their cultures differ from that of the American students'. They may speak different languages, read different newspapers, value different literature. Their culture has its own stories, films, heroes and history. They may make and consume different goods, cultivate different arts and have political and religious beliefs which vary greatly from that of the dominant culture on the American university campus.

The foreign student also differs from immigrants and tourists. As sojourners with an educational purpose, they are distinguished by an element of marginality and a dual membership that in some ways is more complicated than the shifting of an immigrant's loyalty to the adopted land. Because foreign students have an educational purpose, their cultural and personal contact differs from that of the casual tourist. The pursuit of their studies and training necessitates a

different type of communication with people in the host country.

Tourists generally seek fun and relaxation so that their communication with their hosts is often limited to a very superficial level. Foreign students, by necessity, must learn to communicate more precisely or fail to attain their educational goals.

During his everyday existence on the university campus a foreign student has many opportunities to meet and communicate with people. As a student, he enrolls in the university under a certain department; he may live in a dormitory or he may share an apartment off campus.

Teachers, classmates, roommates and even people he may pass in the corridor provide him with a number of situations where he may interact with people. He is likely to be in classes where there are mostly American students, possibly foreign students from different countries and even students from his homeland. He is confronting decisions with respect to approaching or avoiding others: whether to smile or frown, to agree or disagree, to accept or reject, to be involved or indifferent.

With this potential, the foreign student may spend much of his time dealing with and meeting other people. He has the opportunity to develop various levels of personal relationships with the people he meets. The forms of these relationships may range from casual attraction to friendship to love and marriage.

I. Statement of Problem

Why does the foreign student choose particular friends from the general range of possibilities, and what national background is most

likely to provide close friendships?

This study attempts to investigate patterns of foreign student friendship formation. It deals with the problem on both a descriptive and an analytical front and is concerned with the specific problem of the factors influencing the friendship formation. The study has three goals:

1. to gather detailed information about foreign students at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh which also includes the circumstances under which their friendships were initiated, when during the student's time in the United States the friendships were formed and how those friendships started and developed--situational factors.
2. to study sex, class level and nationality to find out their effects on friendship formation--positional factors.
3. to use "nationality," and "perceived similarity" as the variables to test the reason for their choice of friendships.

This study therefore, attempts to answer the following questions:

1. If two foreign students have the same cultural background, does this facilitate the formation of a friendship?
2. If a foreign student perceives that another person has similar values or attitudes to his own, does this facilitate the formation of a friendship?
3. If two foreign students have the different sex and age, what is the effect of it on their friendship formation?

II. Operational Definitions

Throughout this study the terms level of closeness, nationality, perceived similarity and intimacy are constantly used. The following are the operational definitions for those terms.

Level of closeness: the state of being friends as perceived by the respondents. Respondents were asked to list five persons they themselves considered as their friends and also to indicate from their list of friends those persons who they themselves considered to be their closest or less close friends or acquaintances. The respondents could list fewer than five friends if they felt that they did not have as many. The sex and nationality of the friends also were indicated.

Nationality: country of citizenship. It was determined by the country and the cultural background of the respondents. Co-national friends were defined as respondent's friends who were from the same country and shared the same cultural background as the respondent. Other-national friends were defined as respondent's friends who were from different countries (outside of the United States) than were the respondents. American friends were defined as respondent's friends who were from the United States.

Perceived similarity: the attitudinal similarity between respondents and their friends as viewed by the respondents. This similarity was tested with a group of six questions. Each question represented a different issue which may be important to the respondents. Respondents were asked to provide answers for himself and what he thought were each of his friends' views. Perceived similarity is the degree of congruence between the respondent's responses for himself and his responses for his friends (see Methodology).

Intimacy: the constitutive features of friendship. The intimacy score was obtained from a group of eight questions. Each question represented a different dimension in which a friendship may be confronted. Respondents were asked to provide information on how they would react with each friend under these various situations (see Methodology).

The concept of friendship in this study was dealt with from two directions - (1) the differentiation of others into various categories. This was the level of closeness derived by respondents' rank ordering their friends. (2) the willingness to enter the depth of the friendship as perceived by the respondents. These features comprised the intimacy score.

The level of closeness was used as a control variable to test nationality and perceived similarity variables. It was also later on tested to differentiate the different patterns of friendship formation for male, female, undergraduate, graduate, Chinese, and other country respondents. The intimacy score was treated as an effect of friendship relations.

III. Significance of the Study

The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh has little organized information on foreign students beyond a list of foreign students' names, addresses and telephone numbers. The office of Foreign Student Advisor initiates little contact or communication.

This friendship study on foreign students is expected to have these contributions:

1. As the first study on foreign students on this campus, this study will add to understanding of foreign students and hopefully serve as a basis for further research on foreign students and on friendships.
2. In most interpersonal attraction experiments the dependent variable has been reported attraction to (sometimes hypothetical) strangers, while firmly established friendships have only been recently investigated. This study investigated already established friendships as recognized by the foreign students themselves.
3. This study will provide campus authorities information for planning and counseling purposes. There may be many foreign students for whom personal relationships are surrounded with strain and perplexity. Some may never even try to begin forming friendships. An understanding of the basis and the mechanism of the particular choices of association by foreign students on this particular campus may help the less socially motivated foreign students to develop more adequate relationship techniques.
4. This study will help American students to understand more about foreign students and hopefully lead to increased cross-cultural relationships between the Americans and foreign students.
5. The study of situational and positional factors on friendship formation may open up a new dimension for friendship literature.

Chapter II

Literature Review and the Hypotheses

I. Literature Review

Although speculation about the origin of interpersonal relationships can be found in the new classic works of Cooley and Simmel, systematic efforts to measure actual patterns of attraction are of recent origin. Jennings,¹ in an intensive two-year study of the social structure of a training school for girls, found that her subjects tended to include about the same number of persons in their "social repertoire" over a long period of time. Her measure of social contacts, "The Acquaintance Index" remained fairly constant for each subject, in spite of changing enrollments and housing arrangements. Deutschberger² in a later study of stable and unstable neighborhoods in Pittsburgh, found general confirmation for this conclusion, i.e., the existence of an optimal number of communicative linkages for each person. The device for measuring social attraction was the Social Distance Scale developed

¹Jennings, H. Leadership and Isolation New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1943

²Deutschberger, P. "Interaction Patterns in Changing Neighborhoods: New York and Pittsburgh." Sociometry 9 (1946): 303-15

by Bogardus,³ later varied by Westie.⁴ Their scales provided the opportunity to make more subtle discrimination among personal acquaintances, yet their referent was different than that of recent friendship studies. Moreno⁵ outlined a socio-metric approach to the study of social relations which provided the impetus to the later study of friendship patterns.

Some evidence suggests that the capacity for interpersonal relations is relatively stable throughout adult life. Some persons prefer interacting with many acquaintances, others prefer close relations with only a few. Are there any discernible "laws" governing social relationships? The first, perhaps most influential factor regulating friendship patterns appears to be a matter of simple ecology - physical presence. Whether interactions are studied at the level of the nation, the neighborhood, or the campus, it is apparent that physical location alone exerts a powerful influence over the people who meet or do not meet, those who become friends or do not become friends and those who marry or do not marry. People as members of units such as a nation, or club, or as an attitudinal identity tend to carry implications concerning communicative boundaries. Studies of large social units such as Israeli immigrants, Indian tribes, New England villages and company towns show a similar pattern in interpersonal relationships. There is frequent com-

³Bogardus, E. "A Social Distance Scale," Sociology and Social Research 17 (1952): 299-308;

⁴Westie, F. "Social Distance Scales," Sociology and Social Research 43 (1959): 251-58

⁵Moreno, J. Who Shall Survive? New York: Beacon, 1953

munication within the communal unit and interaction is substantially lower outside it. Feelings of affection or hostility are proportional to the frequency of communication contact. The clearest support for the propinquity hypothesis comes from intensive studies of housing developments and university communities. In two housing projects for married students at MIT, Festinger⁶ found overwhelming support for the influence of physical location upon communication. The span of acquaintance and extent of social interaction were clearly related to the placement and proximity of dwelling units, and, in the case of apartment buildings, friendship patterns were even influenced by the location of stairwells and hallways. Caplow and Forman⁷ investigated the social structure of a housing area at the University of Minnesota and obtained almost identical data. In other words, friendship groups are often composed of "next-door neighbors." Homans⁸ and Gullahorn⁹ similarly suggested that frequency of interaction played a part in friendship formation. It can be said that if an individual never meets or interacts with someone or expects never to see them later, then there is little ground for friendship formation. Proximity, frequency of interaction, and expectation of interaction with another were treated as factors

⁶Festinger, L.; Schachter, S.; and Back, K. Social Pressures in Informal Groups: A Study of Human Factors in Housing. Harper and Row, New York, 1950

⁷Caplow, T.; and Forman, R. "Neighborhood Interaction in a Homogeneous Community," American Sociological Review 15 (1950): 357-66

⁸Homans, G. The Human Group. Harcourt, Brace and World New York, 1950

⁹Gullahorn, J. "Distance and Friendship as Factors in the Gross Interaction Matrix," Sociometry 15 (1952): 123-34

necessary for friendship formation. This study, therefore, gathered information about these situational factors on each friendship.

In Warr's¹⁰ study, it was shown that propinquity does not guarantee positive feelings and that other factors are required. In other words, situational factors are better taken as having a filtering effect, in subdividing the total pool of people who are encountered into those who can usefully be regarded as potential friends and those who cannot.

Therefore while physical (or situational) accessibility determines the outer limits within which interpersonal relations are formed, there are other factors that operate to restrict the choices made within these limits. One such factor is the similarity hypothesis. This similarity hypothesis has probably generated more research than any other hypothesis in this field of friendship formation, and the types of similarity which have been investigated are manifold. (e.g., Winslow, 1937 -- similarity of opinions; Broderick, 1956 -- similarity of values; Byrne, Clore and Worchel, 1966 -- similarity of economic status; Miller, Campbell, Twedt and O'Connell, 1966 -- similarity of reputations; Senn, 1971 -- similarity of task-performance.) There is, however, evidence of similarity of attitudes underlying much of the work which has been completed.

Newcomb,¹¹ following Heider (1958), had developed and tested a theory that persons with similar orientations (attitudes) are attracted to each other -- A-B-X system. An ABX system consists of three elements

¹⁰Warr, P. B. "Proximity as a Determinant of Positive and Negative Sociometric Choice," British Journal of Social Clinical Psychology 4 (1965): 104-09

¹¹Newcomb, T. The Acquaintance Process. New York. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961

making an interdependent system: A (the perceiver of the system), B (the person with whom A is communicating), and X (the person, object, or idea about which A and B are communicating). Newcomb's theory was based upon the general hypothesis that there were lawful relations among beliefs and attitudes held by a given individual and that certain combinations of beliefs and attitudes were psychologically unstable, resulting in events leading to more stable combinations. An attitude toward X on the part of B who is attracted to A may have significant effects on the relationship between A and B. Communications perform the necessary function of enabling two persons to maintain simultaneous orientations toward one another and toward objects of communication. Attraction is therefore positively related to the similarity of attitudes concerning X as a by-product of the attempts to maintain or to restore cognitive balance. In addition, Newcomb was concerned with the ability of perceived similarity to predict attraction, i.e., the closer the friendship the greater the perceived and the actual similarity of person to person with respect to issue.

Byrne's¹² work presented the strong view that similarity serves as "consensual validation" for beliefs held by individuals. He demonstrated that the effect of attitude similarity is a causative one with 64 students (36 males, 28 females) who were enrolled in an Introductory Psychology course at the University of Texas. Two weeks after the students first filled out the attitude scale, they were told that in-

¹²Byrne, D. "Interpersonal Attraction and Attitude Similarity," Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology 62 (1961): 713-15

dividuals in another class had been given the same scale that they had and students in the two classes were matched on the basis of sex. They were to be given each other's tests in order to determine how much they could learn about one another from this information alone. The important and less important issues were decided by the class before examining the tests. Actually the subjects had been randomly divided into four groups: one group received scales with exactly the same answers as theirs had been, one the opposite views expressed, one with similar on the most important issues, and the fourth received the similar opinion on the less important issues. The results supported the hypothesis that the group with attitude scales filled out the same as their own indicated significantly more positive feelings toward the "stranger."

Byrne and Nelson¹³ showed a significant positive relation between similarity of attitudes with a stranger and attraction towards him. In other words, subjects who were more similar to the stranger were more likely to be more attracted to him. The finding was supported by Byrne and Rhamey¹⁴ who reported that attraction to a stranger was significantly increased by having him appear similar to subject on items concerning personal attributes and evaluations.

Newcomb and Byrnes' perceived similarity theory was significant when seen as a general predictive value, because, in real everyday life

¹³Byrne, D.; and Nelson, J. "Attraction as a Linear Function of Proportion of Positive Reinforcements," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 1 (1965): 659-63

¹⁴Byrne, D.; and Rhamey, R. "Magnitude of Positive and Negative Reinforcements as a Determinant of Attraction," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 2 (1965): 884-89

there may be some exceptions to their predictions. It may be erroneous to assume that attraction to strangers, different-sex and same-sex choices, friendship in children, etc. are all governed entirely by the same principles at the molecular level. It would also be simple-minded to apply this similarity hypothesis to the area in too uniform and undifferentiating a manner. It does not imply that friendship pairs involving person A would characteristically show similarity of the same aspects of attitude, such that all his friends had the attitude of psychological twins. Peters¹⁵ showed that while Newcomb's theory fit the early levels of friendship, at later more mature stages disagreements provide little or no threat to the relationship. This suggested first that there are characteristically different stages of attraction; second that at different stages of attraction, different types of factors are attended to; third, that factors may lose their force as the acquaintance develops.

Lundberg¹⁶ tested the friendship patterns at the level of social characteristics and found that a "consciousness of kind" factor existed that caused students in a women's college to prefer friends of the same class (year in college), major, scholastic standing and socio-economic status -- positional factors. Naegele¹⁷ also stated that "friendship

¹⁵Peters, G. R. and Kennedy, C. "Close Friendships in the College Community," Journal of College Student Personnel 11 (1970): 449-56

¹⁶Lundberg, G.; and Beazley, V. "'Consciousness of Kind' in a College Population," Sociometry 11 (1948): 59-75

¹⁷Naegele, K. D. "Friendship and Acquaintances: An Exploration of Some Social Distinctions," Harvard Educational Review 28 (Summer, 1958) No. 3 p. 241

cannot bind those who markedly differ in age. It presupposes a degree of equality with which wide differences in age are incompatible." One of the main findings in Williams'¹⁸ study was that younger and older housewives had more close friends than those in the intermediate group. Undergraduate students are more likely to be younger (average age for undergraduate respondents in this study was 20, while 24 for graduate respondents), more gregarious, and more oriented toward activities outside of the academic setting than are graduate students. This may lead to contacts with a wider variety of people at school and community in both formal and informal situations, increasing both the chances of learning "campus" values and of having opportunities to develop friendships. A comparison between undergraduate and graduate respondents therefore was conducted in this study.

Research on sex differences made by Little¹⁹ found that females, relative to males, appear to specialize in persons rather than things at the behavioral and interest levels. Females obtained higher intensity scores and thus lower complexity scores for person objects than do males. Duck²⁰ discovered that some differences in friendship styles could be discerned between the sexes. Female subjects were contributing to the effect of actual personality-similarity more than were the males.

¹⁸Williams, J. "Close Friendship Relations of Housewives Residing in an Urban Community," Social Forces 36 (May, 1958): 358-62

¹⁹Little, B. R. "Sex Differences and Comparability of Three Measures of Cognitive Complexity," Psychological Reports 24 (1969): 607-09

²⁰Duck, S. W. Personal Relationships and Personal Constructs: A Study of Friendship Formation, John Wiley & Sons Ltd. 1973

Also, both sexes used the same apparent cognitive strategy for choosing friends of the same sex, but when it came to choosing friends of the opposite sex, males and females use different factor strategies. A comparison between male and female respondents therefore was conducted in this study.

While a good deal of concern in the sociological literature focuses upon the impact of interpersonal relationships, few studies have viewed the specific character, dynamics and consequences of cross-cultural relationships. Despite the increasingly significant role of the international students upon the relationship of various groups and nations as well as the consequent effect of such relationships upon individuals and institutions, little attention has been devoted to the study of friendship among foreign students. In reviewing the literature on international students published during the past decade, two trends were found. First were studies made by the Institute of International Education.²¹ They were mostly descriptive in orientation. Data were collected for the purpose of illustration rather than systematic analysis. The second trend was toward the generation of socio-psychological theory and attitude change and adjustment in a foreign culture.²²

✓ ²¹Institute of International Education, African Students in the United States, 1960; Foreign Professors and Research Scholars and United States Colleges and Universities, 1963; How Long Do Foreign Students Study in the U.S.? Institute of International Education: News Bulletin 33 (April, 1963): 21-25 etc.

²²Neumeyer, M.; and Peterson, J. "Problems of Foreign Students." Sociology and Social Research 32 (March-April, 1948): 787-92. Bardia, P. "Social Distance Among Foreign Students," Sociology and Social Research 41 (November, 1956) etc.

Becker's²³ cross-cultural study of foreign students conducted at UCLA during the academic year 1967-68 provided information regarding the nature of the foreign students' "social niche." It was noted that the foreign students' social group has a high proportion of compatriots. It was suggested that the foreign student is inclined to surround himself with fellow nationals.

Many people tend to categorize other people on the basis of overt physical difference and to invest these categories with certain connotative meanings. Rather than being engaged as a unique individual, a person may be marked as an exemplar of a group and become an object. For example, he may be identified first of all as Chinese or Indian. The person who may be differentiated because of skin color may be forced to seek cues as the other's assessment of him. The internal logic may go: "He sees I am Chinese;" then, "What does he think of Chinese?" He cannot be certain, in effect, whether a warm smile or a cold remark is a reaction to his racial category or to his individual personage. With his own fellow people there is at least no such "racial" or "skin color" category. On the other hand, a foreign student can hardly avoid becoming, to some extent, an unofficial representative of his country. American people may ask him to talk about his home country, the student himself may feel an obligation to try to explain his country to the American people. The student's nationality becomes an important aspect of his personal identity. This could be another reason why fifty per cent of the foreign students at UCLA indicated that their best friends

²³Becker, T. "Cultural Patterns and Nationalistic Commitment Among Foreign Students in the United States," Sociology and Social Research 55 (July, 1971): 467-81

consisted of their compatriots. Nationality in this study becomes a very important factor of foreign students friendship formation.

Chinese students from Hong Kong represented half of the foreign student population at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. A Chinese student did not have to reach out for "foreign" friendships if he chose not to. He had enough of his own fellow people for his friendship choice. The study therefore used Chinese students as a group to compare against the rest of the foreign student population in order to provide more evidence for the existence of the foreign students' social niche.

II. Hypotheses

Using the previously described theories the studies as a base, the extent to which "nationality," and "perceived similarity" influence the formation of foreign student friendships will be tested with the following hypotheses:

- A. Foreign students tend to form friendships with students from their own country.
 - 1. Co-national friends will be more likely than other-national friends or American friends to cite the friendship as "closest."
- B. Foreign students tend to identify as friends those whom they perceive as similar to themselves.
 - 1. Friends perceived by the foreign students as more similar to themselves will be more likely to be cited as "closest."

The extent to which "age," "sex" and "being a Chinese student" influence the formation of foreign student friendship relations will be tested with the following propositions.

- C. The distinctions of age and sex are associated with friendship.
 - 1. Age changes one's notion of friendship.
 - 2. Sex limits or enlarges one's friendship.
- D. Being a member of the majority group of the foreign student population, changes one's notion of friendship, i.e., Chinese student.

Chapter III

Methodology

The total population of foreign students enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh during Spring semester 1975 served as the sample of this study. All eighty-one foreign students were contacted by telephone and asked for cooperation. Eight students refused to give any information and seventy-three were able to be present to fill out the questionnaires. On-campus students were met in their dormitory lobbies, off-campus students were asked to come to the University Testing Center, where the questionnaires were completed. Sixty-eight students completed the questionnaires fully and were treated as the respondents in this study.

I. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to:

- A. gather the descriptive data for the pattern of foreign student friendship formation -- situational and positional factors.
- B. gather the analytical data for the pattern of foreign student friendship formation -- perceived similarity factor.
- C. investigate the effect of friendship -- intimacy.

It started with demographic information such as sex, age, marital status, class level, major and nationality of the respondents. Then asked questions concerning respondents' living arrangements, social participation and future plans about returning to home countries. The respondents at this point were asked to list people they perceived as friends. Also the respondents were to identify the sex and nationality of their friends. There were two indices of friendship employed in this part: (1) number of friends listed, (2) level of closeness of the friends. Each individual has his own particular concept of friendship. The respondents were asked to list the number of friends they wished and to categorize them according to what each friend meant to him. This did not follow an experimental paradigm: there was no attempt to manipulate respondents. The sixty-eight respondents listed 330 friends with different levels of closeness, different sex, and nationality. It is probable that respondents were not set by the instructions of the questionnaire, since the numbers of friends and the levels of closeness varied between respondents. This also indicates that respondents were able to satisfy the instructions and were not merely giving random responses in a situation which they could not grasp. Questions such as when, how, where and what as well as scales of measuring intimacy and perceived similarity were then applied to those friendships.

The questions to measure the scale score for perceived similarity and intimacy were based upon the author's personal experiences as a foreign student at Kansas State University and by reviewing articles in the issue of the Journal of Social Issues -- "Attitudes and Adjustment in Cross-cultural Contact: Recent Studies of Foreign Students," Vol. 12 No. 1 (1956).

II. The Scale Score

The scale used in this study varied as shown below.

- A. The scale for perceived similarity was based on six questions in the questionnaire. Each of the six questions permitted five response alternatives: (1) strongly agree, (2) moderately agree, (3) undecided, (4) moderately disagree, and (5) strongly disagree. Responses to each questions by each respondent for himself and for each of his friends were paired and were assigned scores as follows:²⁴

Respondents	5	-4	-3	-2	2	4
	4	-3	-2	-1	3	2
	3	-2	-1	0	-1	-2
	2	2	3	-1	-2	-3
	1	4	2	-2	-3	-4
		1	2	3	4	5
		Respondents' Perception of His Friend				

A perceived similarity score for each friendship pair was derived by taking the algebraic sum of the scores assigned to each question. There were totally 315 scores. A constant of

²⁴Adapted from Peters, George R.; and Root, Donald. "Bases of Attraction in Close Friendship," (unpublished article, Kansas State University, 1971)

5 was added to each questions' score to eliminate the negative scores. Original scores ranged from -10 to 24. After the constant was added, scores ranged from 20 to 54. The median score of 40.541 for all 315 perceived similarity scores was calculated as the dividing point to dichotomize the scores into high and low perceived similarity categories. There were 163 perceived similarity scores higher than the median, 153 lower. The high and low perceived similarity along with the "nationality" variable were then used in the analysis.

- B. The scale for intimacy was based on eight questions in the questionnaire. The Guttman scaling Cornell technique was applied to the intimacy scale (result analysis see Chapter IV). Each question permitted a yes or no answer. Given the weight 1 for yes answers and 0 for no answers, the total score across eight questions ranged from 0 to 8. These were the intimacy scores. There were 313 intimacy scores for the respondents. All the scores were rank ordered and the cutting points were set for each question which gave a total of 326 errors. The Coefficient of Reproducibility (c.r.) was .8698. Two questions were eliminated because they did not have very significant results. The total error was 251 and the c.r. was .8668. The median score of 3.578 for all 313 intimacy scores was calculated as the dividing point to dichotomize the scores into high and low intimacy categories. There were 190 intimacy scores higher than the median and 123 lower.

Chapter IV

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

I. Characteristics of the Respondents

At the time this study was conducted during the Spring semester 1975, the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh has a student population of 7,000 full time students, of which ninety-eight per cent were Wisconsin residents. Foreign students, therefore, were a very small portion of the student population. Seventy-five per cent of the sixty-eight respondents were males and twenty-five per cent were females, while the university population had fifty-two per cent males (3670) and forty-eight per cent females (3411). One half of the respondents were in an age group between twenty-two and twenty-five years of age - a higher age than the average American university student. Sixteen per cent of the respondents were married students which was also higher than the university's thirteen per cent. Eighteen per cent of the university students were graduate students; thirty-four per cent of the respondents were at the graduate level. One half of the respondents sought majors in the College of Letters and Science, while the second largest group of respondents was attending the College of Business Administration. Table 1 illustrates the age, marital status, class level and major of the respondents. (All the percentages in this paper were rounded for statistical use.)

cc
33
-5
native
580
3.17

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents According to Age, Marital
Status, Class Level and Major

Characteristic	Number	Percentage of Sample
<u>Age</u>		
18-21	19	27.9
22-25	34	50.0
26-29	10	14.7
Over 29	5	7.4
<u>Marital Status</u>		
single	57	83.8
married	11	16.2
<u>Class Level</u>		
undergraduate	45	66.2
graduate	23	33.8
<u>Major In*</u>		
College of Business Administration	30	44.1
College of Education	4	5.9
College of Letters & Science	34	50.0

*There are four college at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. The only college not represented by foreign students is the College of Nursing.

Thirty-two respondents, which was almost half of the respondents, were Chinese students from Hong Kong. The rest of the respondents were from sixteen different countries in the world. Table 2 illustrates the countries from which respondents and all other foreign students originated. (See Table 2.)

Twelve (seventy-one per cent) of the spouses or fiances of the respondents were from the same country, although five (two spouses, three fiances) of the spouses or fiances (twenty-eight per cent) were Americans.

While attending school most of the respondents lived either in a university dormitory or in off-campus apartments. Nineteen of the twenty-three respondents living alone were the students who occupied their own rooms in a university dormitory. In other words, sixty-six per cent of the respondents living in the dormitory had their own rooms without a room-mate. Table 3 demonstrates more information about the respondents such as where they lived and whom they lived with during the school year. (See table 3.)

All the respondents at least belonged to the student association of their nationalities. Some affiliated with up to four organizations on campus. The majority of the respondents thought participation in the activities definitely or somewhat helped them make friends. Again, almost every respondent considered having friends was important for their campus life. Previous experiences that respondents had in their homeland did not seem to be a very vital factor for their later encounters with people. The respondents showed confidence in their English ability and only a very small percentage of the respondents considered language as a definite barrier to making friends. Table 4 shows the information on social participation of the respondents. (See Table 4.)

The respondents were evenly divided as to the length of time they had been in this country -- one year period through five or more years. The majority of the respondents intend to return to their home countries after they get their Bachelor, Master or Ph.D. degrees, except for the sixteen per cent of them who were undecided about this matter at that time.

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents and All Foreign Students on Campus
According to Their Mother Countries

Mother Country	Respondents		All Foreign Students	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Hong Kong	32	47.1	40	49.4
India	6	8.8	6	7.4
Vietnam	4	5.9	4	4.9
Trinidad	4	5.9	6	7.4
Iran	3	4.4	3	3.7
Ethiopia	3	4.4	3	3.7
Libya	3	4.4	4	4.9
Kenya	2	2.9	2	2.5
Nigeria	2	2.9	3	3.7
South Africa	2	2.9	2	2.5
Other*	7	10.3	8	9.9
Total	68	100.0	81	100.0

*There was one student from each of the countries listed under other (Rhodesia, West Africa, Australia, Bangladesh, Italy, Japan, Panama, Peru) except the student from Italy who did not respond to the questionnaire.

Table 3

Living Arrangements of Respondents

Where and With Whom	Number	Percentage
<u>Where they lived</u>		
dormitory	29	42.6
apartments	28	41.2
a house	7	10.3
a room	4	5.9
<u>Whom they lived with</u>		
Americans	25	36.8
fellow people	16	23.5
other foreign students	4	5.9
alone	23	33.8

Table 4
Social Participation of Respondents

Social Participation	Number	Percentage
<u>Number of organization belonged to</u>		
one	26	38.2
two	14	20.6
three	5	7.4
four	23	33.8
<u>Participation help making friends</u>		
definitely	32	47.1
somewhat	27	39.7
not at all	9	13.2
<u>Importance of friends</u>		
highly	29	42.6
somewhat	36	52.9
not at all	3	4.4
<u>Previous experiences</u>		
yes	47	69.1
no	21	30.9
<u>Importance of previous experiences</u>		
highly	9	19.1
somewhat	22	46.8
not at all	16	34.0
<u>Language as a barrier</u>		
definitely	3	4.4
somewhat	25	36.8
not at all	40	58.8

II. Characteristics of the Friends.

Respondents were asked to list five persons who they considered as their friends on campus and to rank order the friends from the closest to the least close friends -- closest, less close and acquaintance. Three hundred and thirty friends were listed. Table 5 shows the results of the classification of the level of closeness.

Table 5
Level of Closeness of the Friends

Level of Closeness	Number	Percentage
Closest friends	137	41.5
Less close friends	127	38.5
Acquaintances	66	20.0

As to the sex of the friends, for male respondents almost eighty-one per cent of the friends were also males, while nineteen per cent were females. For female respondents, almost seventy-four per cent of the friends were females while twenty-six per cent were males. (See Table 6.) Among 330 friendship pairs, seventy-nine per cent were same sex friendship pairs (male-male and female-female), while twenty-one per cent were different sex friendship pairs (male-female and female-male). This is to say that the respondents had a tendency to make friends with their own sex.

Table 6
Sex of the Friends

Respon- dents	Friends					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Male	199	80.6	48	19.4	247	74.8
Female	22	26.5	61	73.5	83	25.2

The respondents were also asked to identify the nationalities of their friends. Among three hundred and thirty respondents' friends, over half of them were Americans and the second largest group of friends were friends with the same nationality as the respondents. Table 7 shows the results. Fifty-two per cent of the friends were respondents' American friends showing the fairly good relationship foreign students had with American students on campus. There were sixty-one respondents who were able to make co-national friends (having at least two respondents from each foreign country) and the outcome for co-national friendship pairs was one hundred and sixteen. This indicates the possibility that everyone of the sixty-one respondents had two other co-national respondents as their friends or two respondents shared one co-national friend. This result implies that there is a form of social niche between co-national respondents.

Table 7
Nationality of the Friends

Nationality	Number	Percentage
Co-national Friends	116	35.2
Other-national Friends	42	12.7
American Friends	172	52.1

III. Friendship Formation

A. Situational factors

The following tables demonstrate the time, method, and place of the formation of the friendship, as well as the activity and frequency of the friends' gatherings. Half of the friends became acquainted with respondents within six months of respondents' arrival, however, many friendships were formed within the first year or the first two years on campus. Considering some respondents had been here a few years and they knew their friends during their first few months of arrival, this could indicate that friendship persists through the years once it was established.

Table 8
When did the Respondents First Meet Their Friends?

When	Number	Percentage
Within six months after arrival	164	49.7
Within first year after arrival	53	16.1
Within two years after arrival	56	17.0
Two or more years after arrival	46	13.9
Other (knew each other at home)	11	3.3

The responses to the question how did the respondents first meet their friends were spread out quite evenly between introduction by a friend, self-introduction and room- or house-mate. This is to say that there was not one single special way for the respondents to meet their friends. Yet, introduction by a mutual friend or the respondents' self-introduction were seen more commonly than rest.

Table 9

How Did the Respondents First Meet Their Friends?

How	Number	Percentage
Class-mate	59	17.9
Room- or house-mate	71	21.5
Introduced by a mutual friend	87	26.4
Self-introduction	83	25.2
Other (host family, instructor, advisor, co-worker)	30	9.1

Dormitories were considered as residences for respondents who had roommates or lived alone. Thirty-three per cent of the friends were met at the residences, either in the dormitory or in an apartment. This result implies that living alone did not limit the friendship formation and along with nineteen per cent of the friends first met at a friend's house indicates that "residence" -- yours or mine -- is a very important and convenient meeting place for respondents and their friends. (See Table 10.)

Most of the friends participated in one, two or three activities together. Not so many respondents would have more than four activities in common with their friends. The actual activities were not shown in the table because of the wide variety - studying, exercising, chatting, cooking, etc. (See Table 11.)

The respondents would meet their friends daily or two to three times a week. This frequently meeting with friends, again, was due to the fact that respondents' friends were their roommates or classmates which provided a daily meeting situation. (See Table 12.)

Table 10

Where Did the Respondents First Meet Their Friends?

Where	Number	Percentage
Classroom	64	19.4
Residence	108	32.7
At friend's house	62	18.8
Student union	25	7.6
Library	6	1.8
Local bar	9	2.7
Other (at the orientation, Commons, working places)	56	17.0

Table 11

How Many Activities do the Respondents Participate with Their Friends?

Activity	Number	Percentage
One	184	55.8
Two	58	17.6
Three	51	15.5
Four	31	9.4
Five	5	1.5
Six	0	.0
Seven	1	.3

Table 12

How Often do the Respondents Meet Their Friends?

How Often	Number	Percentage
Daily	138	41.8
2-3 times a week	94	28.5
Once a week	34	10.3
Very occasionally	64	19.4

The data gathered for the situational factor supported the propinquity hypothesis. Students from seventeen different countries were studying at the campus of University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. This condition was a requisite to friendship formation, which started shortly after their arrival on campus. This is necessary even though not sufficient for the friendship to form.

The question will arise as to whether friendships result from the choice of association or whether friendships already formed on some other basis cause respondents to choose living

together (in a dormitory or apartment) in order to associate more closely. It is impossible to resolve this completely on the basis of the data we have at hand.

B. Positional factors

Part of the purpose of this study was to find out if there was any differences between male respondents' and female respondents' friendship pairs; undergraduate and graduate respondents' friendship pairs; and Chinese and other country respondents' friendship pairs. The comparison will be shown in Tables 13, 14 and 15.

1. Effect of sex on friendship formation

Male respondents had equal numbers of closest and less close friends. Female respondents had a tendency to have more closest friends than male respondents. If a female respondent's friend was not considered as a closest friend, there was a higher possibility that she would consider that friend as an acquaintance. A male respondent would consider the friend as a less close friend. Female respondents, as a result, had more acquaintances than had males. (See Table 13.)

Female respondents had a greater tendency to have co-national and American friends than male respondents. Female respondents tended to shy away from making other national friends. Both males and females showed the same pattern of having Americans as largest friendship group,

while the other-national groups was the smallest. (See Table 14.)

Almost half of the male and female respondents met their friends within six months of their arrival on the campus. Male respondents knew their friends through self-introduction while female respondents through introduction by a mutual friend. Both male and female respondents met their friends at their residences where female respondents had a higher chance to do at least one activity together with their friends. They all saw their friends almost daily. (See Table 15.)

2. Effect of class on friendship formation

Undergraduate respondents had a slightly higher percentage of making closest friends than graduate respondents. Graduate respondents had more less close friends than closest friends. This could mean that graduate respondents had higher expectations of friends, or that graduate respondents were more independent and were less willing to cling to people. (See Table 13.)

Undergraduate respondents had a very similar pattern to the female respondents -- had more co-national and American friends. Graduate respondents' friends were spread between their own fellow people, other country foreign students and Americans. In other words, nationality of the friends did not seem to be as important a

factor for graduate respondents as it was for undergraduate respondents. (See Table 14.)

The difference is seen on how and where the respondents first met their friends. Undergraduate respondents met their friends because they roomed together, while graduate respondents met theirs through a mutual friend. Undergraduate respondents met friends at their residences, while graduates met theirs in the classroom. Graduate respondents met most of their friends within six months of their arrival, while undergraduates continued to make friends over the years of their staying. Undergraduate respondents also had more chance to meet their friends on a daily basis. (See Table 15.)

3. Effect of being a Chinese student on friendship formation

Chinese respondents and respondents from other countries made a similar number of closest friends yet the Chinese had a higher tendency to consider a not so close friend as an acquaintance rather than a less close friend. Other country respondents had equal numbers of closest and less close friends. (See Table 13.)

For Chinese students, the contrast was very similar to female students', only even more clear -- they either made friends with Chinese students or Americans. Chinese respondents had twice as many co-national friends as did other country respondents, yet only one-seventh of the

other-national friends as did other country respondents. There is obviously a feeling of "we" -- fellow Chinese students and Americans and "they" -- other country students. There were seven other country students representing seven different countries who would not be able to make co-national friends. They sought friendships among their other-national people. In this sense, there is also a feeling of "we" -- other national students and "they" -- Americans. (See Table 14.)

Chinese respondents formed their friendships around their living circumstances while other country respondents reached out to introduce themselves to their friends when first met. Chinese respondents had higher tendency to meet their friends at their residences and daily. (See Table 15.)

All the data above showed support for how the positional factors influence the friendship formation. Females had different friendship patterns than males; undergraduates different from graduates; and Chinese different than other country respondents. It also indicated the possibility of similar friendship patterns for female, undergraduate and Chinese respondent groups. They all had more closest friends, less other-national friends and the propinquity was an important factor for the friendship formation. The question may arise at this point as to whether or not the similarity between the three result from

Table 13
Comparison of the Level of Closeness

	Level of Closeness	Number	Percentage
Effect of Sex	Male Respondents' Friends		
	Closest	100	40.5
	Less Close	101	40.9
	Acquaintance	46	18.6
	Total	247	100.0
	Female Respondents' Friends		
	Closest	37	44.6
	Less Close	26	31.3
	Acquaintance	20	24.1
	Total	83	100.0
Effect of Class	Undergraduate Respondents' Friends		
	Closest	93	42.5
	Less Close	79	36.0
	Acquaintance	47	21.5
	Total	219	100.0
	Graduate Respondents' Friends		
	Closest	44	39.6
	Less Close	48	43.2
	Acquaintance	19	17.1
	Total	111	100.0
Effect of being Chinese	Chinese Respondents' Friends		
	Closest	66	41.2
	Less Close	56	35.0
	Acquaintance	38	23.7
	Total	160	100.0
	Other Country Respondents' Friends		
	Closest	71	41.8
	Less Close	71	41.8
	Acquaintance	28	16.5
	Total	170	100.0

Table 14

Comparison of the Nationality of Friends

	Nationality	Number	Percentage
Effect of Sex	Male Respondents' Friends		
	Co-national	82	33.2
	Other-national	39	15.8
	Americans	126	51.0
	Total	247	100.0
	Female Respondents' Friends		
	Co-national	34	41.0
	Other-national	3	3.6
	Americans	46	55.4
	Total	83	100.0
Effect of Class	Undergraduate Respondents' Friends		
	Co-national	81	37.0
	Other-national	19	8.7
	Americans	119	54.3
	Total	219	100.0
	Graduate Respondents' Friends		
	Co-national	35	31.5
	Other-national	23	20.7
	Americans	53	47.7
	Total	111	100.0
Effect of being Chinese	Chinese Respondents' Friends		
	Co-national	76	47.5
	Other-national	5	3.1
	Americans	79	49.4
	Total	160	100.0
	Other Country Respondents' Friends		
	Co-national	40	23.5
	Other-national	37	21.8
	Americans	93	54.7
	Total	170	100.0

Table 15

Comparison of Situational Factors

Situational Factors		Modal Percentage
Effect of Sex	Male Respondents' Friends	
	When - within six months	49.8
	How - self-introduction	29.1
	Where - residences	32.4
	Activity - one	52.2
	How often - daily	42.1
	Female Respondents' Friends	
	When - within six months	49.4
	How - by mutual friend	31.3
	Where - residences	33.7
	Activity - one	66.3
	How often - daily	41.1
Effect of Class	Undergraduate Respondents' Friends	
	When - within six months	43.4
	How - room- or house-mate	27.4
	Where - residences	39.3
	Activity - one	57.1
	How often - daily	45.2
	Graduate Respondents' Friends	
	When - within six months	62.2
	How - by mutual friend	34.2
	Where - classroom	20.7
	Activity - one	53.2
	How often - daily	35.1
Effect of being Chinese	Chinese Respondents' Friends	
	When - within six months	41.2
	How - room- or house-mate	28.7
	Where - residences	42.5
	Activity - one	58.1
	How often - daily	48.1
	Other Country Respondents' Friends	
	When - within six months	57.6
	How - self-introduction	31.8
	Where - residences	23.5
	Activity - one	53.5
	How often - daily	35.9

the overwhelming number of female respondents in undergraduate or Chinese groups. Table 16 shows that this is not the case. One-third of the undergraduate respondent group was female respondents while a little less than one-third of the Chinese respondent group was females. This matched the distribution of the whole sample -- one-third of them were females. Of the twenty-three graduate respondents only two were females. This may be why their responses differed so much from the overall population -- they had more "less close" friends and nationality of a person was not a substantial factor for their friendship formation. This also indicates the importance of "nationality" for female respondents.

Table 16
Distribution of Female Respondents in Undergraduate
And Chinese Respondent Groups

Respondents	Male	Female
Total Sample	51	17
Undergraduate	30	15
Chinese	22	10

IV. Testing of the hypotheses

It was mentioned in Chapter one that this study attempts to answer several questions. The first question asked in this study was: "If two foreign students have the same cultural background, does this facilitate the formation of a friendship?" From the previous descriptive

data, it has already been shown that thirty-five per cent of the friends listed by the respondents were people from the same country. A step beyond that, the data also showed that female respondents, undergraduate respondents, and Chinese respondents had more co-national friends than their opposite respondents -- male, graduate, and other country respondents. In Chapter II hypothesis 1 stated: Foreign students tend to make friends with their co-nationals and the co-national friends are more likely than other-national or American friends to be cited as "closest" by respondents. The study supported this statement as Table 17 shows. The χ^2 were at the .05 level and indicated that the nationality of a person was a significant factor in putting friends into "closest," "less close" and "acquaintance" categories. In Becher's study, four out of the six nationality groups, as well as for the sample as a whole, compatriots outnumbered Americans in the "best friend" category from 3 to 18 per cent. Table 17 shows that co-national friends were 11 per cent more than American friends in the "closest friend" category. (See Table 17.)

The second question asked was: What is the bearing of similarity of attitudes upon the formation of friendship? The indications are that particular kinds of people usually choose friends from an environment similar to their own. This is to say that people tend to over-select similars as friends and to confine their friendships to individuals of like background. The A-B-X model suggested that those who express their views and find these seconded by like-minded acquaintance have a doubly rewarding experience. Sometimes these gratifying experiences will motivate them to seek continued contact and gradually result in a strong

personal attachment. Hypothesis 2 in this study stated: Foreign students tend to identify as friends those whom they perceive as similar to themselves and these friends are more likely to be cited as "closest." The results reinforce similarity as a factor in the friendship formation as is shown in Table 18.

Table 17
Nationality as Factor in Level of Closeness

Nationality	Closest		Less Close		Closest		Acquaintance	
	#	%age	#	%age	#	%age	#	%age
Co-national	71	51.8	30	23.6	71	51.8	15	22.7
Other-national	10	7.3	25	19.7	10	7.3	7	10.6
Americans	56	40.9	72	56.7	56	40.9	44	66.7
$\chi^2 = 19.2161$				$p < .05$	$\chi^2 = 18.3856$			
					$p < .05$			

Table 18
Perceived Similarity as Factor in Level of Closeness

	Total	Closest		Less Close		Acquaintance	
		#	%age	#	%age	#	%age
High	162	84	51.2	62	38.7	16	10.0
Low	153	46	30.1	57	37.3	50	32.7
$\chi^2 = 17.5696$				$p < .05$			

So far it has been shown that nationality and perceived similarity were the factors of friendship formation. The relationships between the two will now be examined. Table 19 indicates the high and low perceived similarity score by classification of the nationality. The χ^2 is set at the .10 level and is not of strong significance. Yet it still indicates that among respondents and their friends from the same country, a slightly higher perceived similarity score was obtained. Among respondents and other-national and American friends, high scores were obtained in the low perceived similarity column.

Table 19

Nationality as Factor in High and Low Perceived Similarity

Nationality	High		Low	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Co-national	66	58.4	47	41.6
Other-national	22	52.4	20	47.6
Americans	72	45.6	86	54.4

$$\chi^2 = 3.2939$$

$$p < .10$$

The study is not able to provide evidence as to which one of the "nationality" and "perceived similarity" variables can be used as a better factor to predict friendship formation. Nationality had a qualitative measurement -- co-national, other-national and American friends while perceived similarity had a quantitative measurement -- high and low score.

V. Intimacy

There was complete information for three hundred and thirteen friendship pairs when respondents were asked questions for the intimacy

scale. For seventy-three per cent of the friendship pairs the respondents took the first steps to meet their friends. Fifty-six per cent of the respondents would go to their friends with personal problems that bothered them. If a friend asked something of the respondents which meant a personal sacrifice, eighty-three per cent of the respondents would be willing to help. Fifty-one per cent of the respondents would go to their friends to borrow money when the really were in need. Sixty-two per cent of the respondents shared embarrassing or personal emotions with their friends, while there were sixty-four per cent of the friends who would share theirs with the respondents. Table 20 shows the Guttman scale step for six questions: The respondents would help their friends out when in need, take the initiative to meet their friends and share their emotions with their friends; yet, to go to their friends asking for help or to borrow money from friends would be unattractive.

Table 21 shows the high correlation between intimacy score and the level of closeness. This seemed very obvious that a closest friend should have high intimacy. Yet, there are things even a closest friend would do with or without reservation.

VI. Further analysis

When different-sex pairs were compared with same-sex pairs across the board of each respondent, female respondents show greater amount of perceived similarity for friends who were also female. (See Table 22.) There was no significant difference for male respondents. While t-values are not significant, this point may be worth pursuing further by analyz-

ing friendship by means of the statistical measures which can be derived from the Role Construct Repertory Test (Reptest).

A further look at the characteristics used to differentiate between the sex, class and Chinese respondents might prove interesting. More than half of the male respondents' closest friends shared high perceived similarity with them. Yet perceived similarity did not seem to be a significant factor between females' closest friends. The distribution of the intimacy score in Table 23 shows the close relationship between closeness and intimacy; even more so for the respondents' closest friends. The table also shows that intimacy is more important to closest friends for female respondents. This may be another indication showing the female respondents' capability of categorizing their friends.

There were higher percentages of both high perceived similarity and intimacy among undergraduate respondents and their closest friends than were found for the graduate student respondents. Undergraduates' closest friends showed a higher rate of intimate relationship than graduates' friends.

Chinese respondents were more likely to perceive similarity in their closest friends than were the other country respondents. Both Chinese and other country students had similar percentages for the intimacy score with their closest friends. The contrast for Chinese and other country respondents was not very substantial in this respect. (See Table 23.)

Table 20
Intimacy Scale

Scale Step Questions*	Number	Percentage	Errors
1. Would you help your friends which means a personal sacrifice? yes	260	83.1	24
2. Do you take the initiative? yes	227	72.5	64
3. Do your friends share personal emotions with you? yes	201	64.2	41
4. Do you share personal emotions with your friends? yes	195	62.3	35
5. Would you go to your friends with personal problems? yes	176	56.2	38
6. Would you borrow money from your friends? yes	160	51.1	49

*Two questions were eliminated because of the high positive responses, although in the initial scale they only had 25 and 29 errors, suggesting all the items were unidimensional.

Table 21
Intimacy as Factor in Level of Closeness

	Total	Closest		Less Close		Acquaintance	
		#	%age	#	%age	#	%age
High	190	119	61.9	60	31.7	11	6.3
Low	123	15	12.3	58	47.5	50	40.2

$$\chi^2 = 61.0220$$

$$P < .05$$

Table 22

Comparison of Friendship Mean Perceived Similarity Scores for
Same-sex and Different-sex Friendship Pairs

Sex of the Respondents	Sex of the Friends		t-value		
	Male	Female			
Male	1.48	1.41	.1382	N.S.	df=245
Female	1.40	1.63	-.5080	N.S.	df= 81

Table 23

Percentage of Closest Friends of Respondents Compared
On Perceived Similarity and Intimacy Scores

Respondent's Closest Friends	Perceived Similarity		Intimacy	
	Numbers	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Males' Closest Friends				
High	67	68.4	84	86.6
Low	31	31.6	13	13.4
Total	98	100.0	97	100.0
Females' Closest Friends				
High	15	50.0	33	94.3
Low	15	50.0	2	5.7
Total	30	100.0	35	100.0
Undergraduates' Closest Friends				
High	55	65.5	81	91.0
Low	29	34.5	8	9.0
Total	84	100.0	89	100.0
Graduates' Closest Friends				
High	27	61.4	36	83.7
Low	17	38.6	7	16.3
Total	44	100.0	43	100.0
Chinese' Closest Friends				
High	42	67.7	54	88.5
Low	20	32.2	7	11.5
Total	62	100.0	61	100.0
Other Country Respondents' Closest Friends				
High	40	60.6	63	88.7
Low	26	39.4	8	11.3
Total	66	100.0	71	100.0

Chapter V

Summary of Essential Findings and Discussion

This paper studied previously formed friendship relations among foreign students. The scheme of the study was to present the factors and to find out if they are related to these friendship formations. Situational factor was first introduced because without physical presence, there was no foundation for any sort of social relations. Positional factor was then presented for its effect on friendship formation. Perceived attitudinal similarity and nationality factors were used as the two variables to test the relationships with the level of closeness of the friendships. Intimacy was measured to evaluate the constitutive features of friendships

Major discoveries about the factors determining friendship were of recent origin. The most influential factor regulating friendship formation appears to be a matter of simple ecology -- physical location (situational factor) is a powerful influence over the people a person meets or does not meet, becomes friends with or does not become friends with. The propinquity hypothesis that sociologists have studied was supported strongly by the results of this study. The most likely people foreign students first got acquainted with were room- or house- (or dormitory) mates; or classmates. The residences served as the usual meeting place for friends.

Williams' study provided evidence that friendship ties vary with differences in age. Duck's recent study discovered that some differences in friendship patterns could be found between the sexes. This study shows, first of all, that a foreign student tends to form friendships with his same sex. Female respondents' friends were more distinctively divided between closest, less close friends and acquaintances than was found for the male respondents. The implication is that a female foreign student is more aware of the level of closeness of her friends to her; or she is more capable of categorizing her friends into different levels of closeness. Undergraduate and graduate students differ in age and in orientation for knowledge also caused differences in friendship formation. Graduate students showed a tendency to have more "less close" friends than "closest" friends. The implication is that a graduate student has higher expectations of his friends, or that he tends to keep some social distance between his friends.

In friendship formation, the similarity hypothesis is one of the factors that is believed to operate for choices made within situational accessibility. Types of similarity have been investigated. Newcomb's ABX model indicated that attraction is positively related to the similarity of attitudes. Byrne showed the evidence of similarity of attitudes as a causative one for attraction. High X^2 value from this study shows that perceived similarity is one of the factors to determine the friendship formation, and also supports the hypothesis of this study.

Studies on foreign students provided information regarding the nature of the foreign students' social niche. An article in the Kansas State Collegian read as follows:

Sunil Kirtain is going home tomorrow - back to Bombay... 'I will miss most the friendships. It took me about six months to make friends here... first with other Indians, then with foreign students and finally with Americans.'

The Little People - by Ed Taylor
October 8, 1971

From the descriptive data, this study suggests that when a foreign student first arrives on campus he has the tendency to form friendships soon and he also first "looks around" for people of his own nationality and then to Americans for friendships. Analysis shows that nationality along with perceived similarity are significant factors for friendship formation. Chinese students very clearly show evidence of "shying away" from making friends with other than Chinese or Americans. The "we" and "they" feeling have shown more in Chinese students. This may be because Chinese students had a larger number of co-national people for their friendship choices.

Fifty-two per cent of the respondents' friends are Americans on this campus suggesting that the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh offers a fairly good opportunity for different ethnic groups to get to know each other as individuals. The foreign students advisor should be made aware of this cross-cultural social interaction, and use it to increase and encourage practical opportunities for friendships to develop.

Results of this study suggest some interesting possibilities for further study. In depth investigation of the respondents and their friends should be pursued so the comparison of actual similarity could

be studied. Effect of the length of time a foreign student has stayed on one campus should also be considered in future studies. Another potential area for future study is the we-they distinction formed between foreign students co-national or other-national friends and American friends. It is possible that most foreign students seek friendships of both kinds. The first as a support against an alien culture and the second as a mix between the cultures.

When the suggested studies are completed, a broad base of information in a new area of friendship will have been established. Hopefully these studies will help us to better understand the complexities involved with friendship formation among foreign students in american universities.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I. ✓ Sex: Male _____ Female _____

✓ Age: ~~18-21~~ _____ 22-25 _____ 26-29 _____ Over 29 _____

✓ Marital Status: Single _____ Married _____

✓ Class: Undergraduate _____ Graduate _____

✓ Major: College of Business _____ College of L & S _____
 College of Education _____ College of Nursing _____

✓ Nationality:

Australia _____	Hong Kong _____	Panama _____
Bangladesh _____	India _____	Peru _____
Canada _____	Iran _____	Rhodesia _____
Ethiopia _____	Italy _____	Saudi Arabia _____
Gabon Repub. _____	Kenya _____	South Africa _____
Gambia _____	Korea _____	Trinidad _____
Ghana _____	Libya _____	Vietnam _____
Guyana _____	Nigeria _____	West Africa _____

✓ Nationality of spouse or the person you are engaged to: _____

During the school year, where do you live?

dormitory _____	a room with a private family _____
apartment _____	Other _____
a house _____	

Who are the people you live with?

Americans _____	Some other foreign students _____
My fellow people _____	alone _____

Do you belong to any organizations or clubs?

one _____	three _____
two _____	none _____

Do you feel participating in activities helped you make friends on campus?

Definitely _____ Somewhat _____ Not at all _____

How important is it to you that you make friends on campus?

Highly important _____
 Somewhat Important _____
 Not important at all _____

a. Did you have previous contact with Americans or some other foreigners at home? b). If yes, how important was the experiences in helping you make friends here on campus?

a. yes _____
 no _____

b. Highly important _____
 Somewhat important _____
 Not important at all _____

Do you feel your language ability is a barrier for you to make friends?

Definitely _____ Somewhat _____ Not at all _____

How long have you been here in this country?

was born here _____ three years _____
 one year _____ four years _____
 two years _____ five years or more _____

II. Please list names of five persons whom you perceive as your friends on campus. Also identify those who are closer to you by putting number "1" for closest friend(s); "2" for less close friend(s) and "3" for acquaintance(s) after each name. Identify the sexes and nationality of the friends too.

	number	sex	nationality
1. _____	()	()	()
2. _____	()	()	()
3. _____	()	()	()
4. _____	()	()	()
5. _____	()	()	()

III. 1. When did you first become acquainted with your friends? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
within first six months after arrival	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
within first year after arrival	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
within two years after arrival	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
two or more years after arrival	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

2. How was the friendship first initiated? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
class-mate	—	—	—	—	—
room- or house-mate	—	—	—	—	—
introduced by a mutual friend	—	—	—	—	—
self-introduction	—	—	—	—	—
other (specify)	—	—	—	—	—

3. Where did you first meet your friends? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
classroom	—	—	—	—	—
residence	—	—	—	—	—
at friend's house	—	—	—	—	—
student Union	—	—	—	—	—
library	—	—	—	—	—
local bar	—	—	—	—	—
other (specify)	—	—	—	—	—

4. What do you do with your friends when together? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
studying	—	—	—	—	—
playing games (tennis, ping-pong, etc.)	—	—	—	—	—
having parties	—	—	—	—	—
casually get together	—	—	—	—	—
other (specify)	—	—	—	—	—

5. How often do you meet with your friends? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
daily	—	—	—	—	—
2-3 times a week	—	—	—	—	—
once a week	—	—	—	—	—
very occasionally	—	—	—	—	—

- IV. 1. Do you take the initiative to meet your friends? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
yes	—	—	—	—	—
no	—	—	—	—	—

2. Are you willing to take the initiative? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
yes	—	—	—	—	—
no	—	—	—	—	—

3. Would you go to your friends with personal problems that bother you? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
yes	—	—	—	—	—
no	—	—	—	—	—

4. If a friend asks something of you which means a personal sacrifice, would you help? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
yes	—	—	—	—	—
no	—	—	—	—	—

5. Would you go to your friends to borrow money when in need? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
yes	—	—	—	—	—
no	—	—	—	—	—

6. If a friend asks to borrow money from you, would you lend it? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
yes	—	—	—	—	—
no	—	—	—	—	—

7. Do you share embarrassing or personal emotions with your friends? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
yes	—	—	—	—	—
no	—	—	—	—	—

8. Do your friends share their embarrassing or personal emotions with you? Answer for each friend.

	1	2	3	4	5
yes	—	—	—	—	—
no	—	—	—	—	—

- V. The following are questions which may concern you as a foreign student. Please indicate your opinion and your perception of your friends' opinion. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested only in your frank opinion.

1. Foreign students should maintain high involvement with their home country. (i.e., be interested and pay attention to their nation's affairs.)

	Myself	1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
undecided	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—
Strongly disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—

2. The people of the U.S. think highly of my country.

	Myself	1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
undecided	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—
strongly disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—

3. The U.S should provide more economic and technical assistance to my country.

	Myself	1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
undecided	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—
strongly disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—

4. Foreign students as minorities in the U.S. should stick together.

	Myself	1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
undecided	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—
strongly disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—

5. Foreign students make just as much contribution to this campus as the American students.

	Myself	1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
undecided	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—
strongly disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—

6. I am here to get the knowledge I need; I do not want to get involved other than academic work.

	Myself	1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately agree	—	—	—	—	—	—
undecided	—	—	—	—	—	—
moderately disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—
strongly disagree	—	—	—	—	—	—

- VI. Do you intend to return to your home country?

one year later	—	after Bachelor degree	—
two years later	—	after Master degree	—
three years later	—	after Ph.D. degree	—
four years later	—	never	—
		undecided	—

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FRIENDSHIP FORMATION: A STUDY ON FOREIGN STUDENTS
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-OSHKOSH

by

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B. A., National Taiwan University, 1969

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1976

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate the pattern of foreign student friendship formation. It deals with the problem on both a descriptive and an analytical front and is largely concerned with the specific problem of the factors influencing the friendship formation.

The study was conducted during Spring semester 1975. The total population of foreign students enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh served as the sample of this study. Sixty-eight students completed the questionnaires fully and were treated as the respondents in this study.

The propinquity hypothesis that sociologists have studied was supported strongly by the results of this study. The most likely people foreign students first got acquainted with were room- or house- (or dormitory) mates; or classmates. The residences served as the usual meeting place for friends. High χ^2 values from this study show that perceived similarity and nationality are significant factors for the friendship formation, and also support the hypotheses of this study.

This study suggests that when a foreign student first arrives on campus he has the tendency to form friendships soon and he also first

"looks around" for people of his own nationality for friendships. Analysis shows the evidence of respondents' social niche on campus. The "we" and "they" feeling have shown more in Chinese students -- they showed evidence of "shying away" from making friends with other than Chinese or Americans.

A foreign student tends to form friendships with his same sex. Female respondents' friends were more distinctively divided between closest, less close friends and acquaintances than was found for the male respondents. Graduate students showed a tendency to have more "less close" friends than "closest" friends.

Fifty-two per cent of the respondents' friends were Americans on this campus suggesting that the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh offers a fairly good opportunity for different ethnic groups to get to know each other as individuals.

Future studies should pursue in depth investigation of the respondents and their friends so the comparison of actual similarity and intimacy could be studied. Effect of the length of time a foreign student has stayed on one campus and the we-they distinction formed between foreign students co-national or other-national friends and American friends are also potential areas for future study.