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# Measurement of International Students' Acculturation in High School Field

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## Abstract

This article selected 7 high schools from 5 districts of Shanghai, asked 165 participates of international students who studied in local class to fill in cross-cultural adaptation scale for international students in local high school (CCAS-ISLHS). This scale refers to cross-cultural adaptation scales and acculturation inventories of Cross-cultural Adjustment Scale (CCAS), Acculturation Attitude Scale (AAS), Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS), Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (ARSMA), and Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA). CCAS-ISLHS contains 30 items as: academic adaption (item=8), campus adaptation (item=9), language preference (item=6), self-adjustment (item=7), thus forming the 4 dimensions of the whole test. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was conducted by using Amos 17.0 to test the relationships among variables. The specified model had certain goodness of fit ( $\chi^2(4) = 114.209$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , GFI = 0.78, RMSEA = 0.301, SRMR = 0.194). The correlations of variables can be analysed through daily practice and accumulated experience in the school field.

**Keywords:** Acculturation, Cross-Cultural Adaptation, International Student, High School, Shanghai

## 1. Introduction

The constructions of an international metropolis need international talent, so the population of foreign residents has become a key index for measuring metropolis' internationalization. This can directly reflect the cities' attract of foreign enterprises, international students, and foreign experts in the international labor market. (Z. W. Wang, 2007) In 2016 175,674 foreigners in Shanghai got permanent residence, including 31,230 Japanese, 21,497 Korea, 23,974 American, 9,453 French, 7,880 Canadian, 8,111 Australia, 6,446 English, 6,134 Singapore and so on. Among which 88,933 foreigners held a working visa, most of their spouse and child (under 18 years old) also got resident status. Those children also could receive K-12 education in Shanghai. Besides, 17,588 foreigners held a student visa, mainly were international students studying in Shanghai's higher education institutes, as well as international or local high schools. (Shanghai Statistical Yearbook, 2017) In April 2018, the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission published an information list of 36 international schools in Shanghai which can admit international students from kindergarten to high school (K-12). These 36 international schools can be sorted into 2 categories: (1) 22 Foreign schools and 7 Foreign Educational Academy Schools established by foreign institutions, international organizations or foreign-funded enterprises such like Shanghai American School, Shanghai Japanese Educational Academy and Shanghai Sundai School (Japanese Cram School). (2) International Division run by local schools, including International Division of High School Affiliated to Fudan University, and International Division of Shanghai Experimental School. (Shanghai Municipal Education Commission, 2018) In addition to international schools running independently,

international students can apply for admission to the International Division of Shanghai local schools. Those international students who have Chinese language basis can also have more opportunities to participate in local classes. (X. Zhao, 2011) In 2002, 71 primary schools, secondary school, and high school had qualifications to enroll international students in Shanghai (W.L. Yan, 2005; X. Zhao, 2011). In 2004, 2000 international students studied in 150 local schools approved by the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission. (W. L. Yan, 2005; X.Zhao, 2011; X.Zhao, 2012) In 2007, the number of local schools in Minhang District which recruited international students to attend local classes increased from 9 to 14, and accepted more than 1,000 international students studied with local students. (T. Ying, 2007; X.Zhao, 2011) In 2009 Education Bureau of Changning District collected statistics that 5 primary and secondary schools in this region enrolled 768 international students, among which 718 international students participated in local classes. In 2005, 16 local schools in Pudong New Area, including International Division of Jincai High School, International Division of No.2 High School Attached to East China Normal University, and International Division of Jianping High School totally enrolled 6074 international students, while this number in 2006 decreased to 2717 (Z. M. Wen, 2006). On Oct 2012, 17 qualified local K-12 schools in Pudong New Area directly enrolled 2782 international students from overseas. (Education Bureau of Pudong New Area, 2012) Along with the progress of opening high-quality education resources in Shanghai widely to overseas, more international students choose to study in local classes. Cross-cultural adaptation of international students participating in local classrooms and sharing the same campus with Shanghai students has drawn researchers' attention (X. Zhao, 2011).

This paper takes "acculturation," "cross-cultural adaptation," and "student" as keywords, searches databases as EBSCO-ERIC, ProQuest-PQDD, Taylor & Francis, Web of knowledge-Social Science Citation Index, select literatures from 2000 to 2017, finally finds out that the discussion of cultural adaptation in education fields most concentrated in the following eight categories: (1) Cultural Adaptation and Academic Performance of Domestic Minority Ethnic Students and Immigrant Students in Higher Education Institutions (Zheng K., 2017; Yoko B., Megumi H, 2014; Mokounkolo R.et al., 2008; Peguero A.A., 2008; Jazira A., 2005 ; Acosta O.M.et al., 2004). (2) Domestic students studying abroad especially in foreign universities and other higher education institutes. (Hamad R et al., 2013; WenMa, 2010; Caycedo, C.et al., 2010; Chavajay P.et al., 2008; Jia-Yan P.et al., 2007; Senel P.et al., 2007) (3) Acculturation of international students in K-12 schools.(Wong,S.T.et.al., 2010; Nilsson, J.E.et al., 2006) (4) Acculturation of minority ethnic children and immigrant children in K-12 schools. (Madziyire S.M., 2017; Perreira, K. M.et al., 2006; Brown B.et al.,2004; Krampen G.et al., 2002; Livaditis M.et.al., 2000; Bhattacharya G., 2000; Bauman,S., 2008) (5) Acculturation and education of refugee children. (Dodds, Agnes E.et al., 2010; Sarr, K. G. et al.,2010; Tadesse, S.et al., 2009) (6) The influence of teacher and student cultural background differences on academics. (den Brok P, et.al., 2010; Eick, C., Valli, L., 2010;Archer, L. et.al, 2010) (7) Cultural adaptation during youth's socialization process (Abramova, M.A.et al, 2009; Washington C.S.et.al., 2008; Duan C.M.et al., 2000) (8) Cultural adaptation of immigrant family members and spouses of foreign students (De Sousa CSP. et.al, 2017; Hwang,W. C.e t al, 2009; Zadeh, Z. Y.et al., 2008; Cho, K. et al., 2005).

Besides this study selected and combined "acculturation", "cross-cultural adaption", "student" as keywords, set published period from 2000 to 2017, searched Chinese literature databases as: CNKI, Wang Fang data, etc., and found out that most related studies focus on applied research, absorbed cultural adaptation theories overseas to review and analyze the current phenomenon in China. Mainly studies of acculturation concentrated on three subjects: international students' education, immigrant education, and minority education. Highly spotted topics involved in 5 categories: 1) Research on the adaptation of overseas Chinese ethnic groups. 2) Research on cultural adaptation in second language learning. 3) Study of acculturation in specific regions or groups, such as the new immigrants to cities. 4) Acculturation of minority groups, especially minority students' adaptation in main universities. 5) Acculturation of international students in local schools, especially in universities and colleges during the higher education stage. International students in local K-12 schools mostly happened in a metropolis such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong. Due to the limited scope and small amount, the phenomenon of international students studying in local K-12 schools has not gotten enough attention. Add in "international student" and " foreign student" as keywords, select abovementioned database, and it turns out that no more than 40 papers focus on international student or foreign student study in local K-12 schools. No more than 20 papers have talked about an international student or foreign student' acculturation during studying in

local K-12 schools. Though continuing efforts made by state education commission, regional education bureau, related schools, teachers, local Chinese students, and international student, obviously scholars and researches from universities and institutes have not paid enough attention to this common phenomenon especially in a metropolis.

Above all this study tries to describe international students' acculturation during studying in Shanghai's local high schools. In this study, cross-cultural adaptation scale for international students in local high school (CCAS-ISLHS) is designed to analyze international students' acculturation.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Participants and procedures

In qualitative investigation there are no specific or strict regulations of respondents' number, the actual operation proposes "most saturation and difference of information." When choosing the school sample, researchers should not only calculate the total size of the statistic but also notice the multiple aspects of other information, make sure to retain the biggest difference between the research objects (J. M. Zhao, 2011).

This article selects 7 schools from 5 districts of Shanghai, considers the following 7 points: (1) Take urban district, suburb region, and new area into account, consider geographic locations of different schools. (2) At least 3 years' uninterrupted admission of international students studying in campus, schools which have a longer history of international students' enrollment is in priority. (3) Take grade, facility, and teaching characteristics into account. (4) Choose schools which accumulate rich experience in intercultural management, willing to provide a deep description of cases. (5) Select those schools preferentially which set international division and have more than 10 international students participating in local classes. (6) Pick out those schools which make great efforts to promote the participation of international students attending local classes and provide auxiliary curriculum (X. Zhao, 2011). (7) Decide school samples are high schools or have senior grades from 10 to 12, opt student samples are international students from 15 to 19 years old in those schools. The Chinese school year starts from the first year's September to the second year's June, includes 2 semesters: the first year's fall semester and the second year's spring semester. The first-round questionnaire (2010 spring) started from March 2010, finished in June 2010; the second-round investigation (2010 fall) started from Oct 2010, finished in Dec 2010; the third round interview (2012 spring) started from Mar 2012, finished in May 2013. Totally 165 International students (71 males, 94 females; mean age = 17.3 years, SD = 1.43; 123 from grade 10, 42 from grade 11) from 7 schools filled in the questionnaire and accepted interview (Table 1).

Table 1 Participates of School (2010)

School Name	School Type	Grade	International Division	location	Participate in local class and campus activities
JP High School	public experimental high school	10-12	√	PD district	N=57
JC High School	public experimental high school	10-12	√	PD district	N=17
XM High School	public experimental high school	10-12	√	L district	N=11
JQ Experimental School	private school	K-12	√	C district	N=14
GQ foreign language school	public school	7-12	√	P district	N=29
JH High School	private school	7-12	√	P district	N=21
DT High School	public experimental high school	10-12	√	H district	N=16

Those 7 participated schools have all set International Division in the same campus or in quite near neighborhood, such as just across the street. International Division takes in charge of international students'

academic and daily management. International students who are studying in Grade 10, sometimes in Grade 11, holding HSK Level 4/3 or higher, can apply for participation in local class and/or campus activities.

Table 2 Statistics of participated schools (2010)

School Name	International students participate in local class and campus activities	International students in Campus (International Division Size)	School Size
JP High School	57	57	2100
JC High School	17	230	1800
XM High School	11	80	1700
JQ Experimental School	14	103	3000
GQ foreign language school	29	50	1200
JH High School	21	39	1300
DT High School	16	40	1700

Those 165 participates of international students who studied in a local class can be divided into 4 categories:(1) Exchange students sent by International Education Exchange Organization like AFS (American Field Service), YFU (Youth for Understanding), EIE (Europe International Education Service Center). (2) Oversea enrolled international students who approve basic education of China, want to experience Chinese culture. (3) Expatriate children of foreigners, who company their parents living and studying in Shanghai. In this study, in order to facilitate statistics, this article has divided 165 participates into 2 groups on the basis of high school diploma achieving or not (Table3).

Table 3 Participates of Non-Diploma Students and Diploma Students

Category(N=165)	Characteristic & Description	N
Non-diploma Students (N=76)	International exchange students	N=24
	Temporary study for Expatriate children	N=18
	Chinese born overseas, hold of foreign nationality	N=12
	Oversea enrolled international students	N=19
	Temporary Chinese culture experience	
	Others	N=3
Diploma Students (N=89)	Who wants to apply for Chinese universities	N=37
	Who wants to apply for domestic universities	N=23
	Who wants to apply for other foreign universities	N=25
	Others	N=4

## 2.2 Measurement

### 2.2.1 Literature Review

Cross-cultural adaptation is a traditional topic discussed in many fields such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, and other different disciplines. Related studies involve etymological backtracking, research models, stage diagrams, influencing factors, and measurement tools for acculturation. (Cuellar L.C., Harris, R.,1980; Chataway C.J., Berry J.W.,1989; Ward C., Kennedy A.,1999) Cross-cultural adaptation models were primarily used to describe elements of the acculturative process of minorities such as immigrants, refugees, and indigenous peoples. Although numerous models of acculturation exist, for example Berry's multi-dimensional model of cross-cultural adaptation (Berry W. J., 2005), Bourhis' Interactive Cultural Adaptation Model (IAM) (Bourhis R.Y., Moese L.C.,et al, 1997), Piontkowski's relative cross-cultural adaptation expansion model, Navas's Relative acculturation extended model (RAEM) (Navas M., García M.C., et al, 2005), Toth's fusion model (Arends-Toth J, Van de Vijver F. J. R., 2004), Eric Kramer's theory of Dimensional Accrual and Dissociation (DAD) (Kramer, Eric Mark, 2012) as well as Fourfold models. Inventories were developed to consider and measure intercultural conflict and adjustment. This paper mainly referred to cross-cultural adaptation scales and acculturation inventories of Cross-cultural Adjustment Scale (CCAS), Acculturation Attitude Scale (AAS),

Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS), Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (ARSMA), and Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA).

Cross-cultural Adjustment Scale (CCAS) was proposed in 1989, which is now one of the most popular cross culture adaption measurement and scales. This Scale designed 5 levels, involving: willing to live, adjust, previous international experience, viewpoint before going abroad, and cultural novelty (Black J.S. & Stephens G.K., 1989).

Acculturation Attitude Scale (AAS) consists of 4 subscales, a total of 38 items from 4 aspects to measure the cultural adaptation, namely as: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization (Chataway C.J., Berry J.W., 1989; Berry J.W., Poortinga Y.H., Pandey J., 1996; Serpell R., 1997).

Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) concludes 41 items, covers dating, transportation, shopping, social adaptation, details of local customs and daily life, and finally give a personal evaluation of cross-cultural contact as well as social and cultural difficulties. Subjects report less difficult, that means more adapt to the host country's cultural environment. (C. Ward & A. Kennedy, 1999) Later Colleen Ward et al. revised and adjusted SCAS, and carried out the Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS-R) (Ward C., Bochner S. & Furnham A., 2001).

Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (ARSMA) is extensively used for African Americans in Mexico as evaluation tools including 20 items. ARSMA assesses of the Mexico American's adaptation of American white culture in the level of language use and preference, ethnic identity, social relations, and daily activities (Cuellar I., Harris L.C. & Jasso R., 1980). The Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans Version 2 (ARSMA-II) was proposed later (Cuéllar, Arnold, & Maldonado, 1995).

For a long time, most psychologists have used Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA scale) (single dimension) to study the cultural adaptation of Asian immigrants (Lim K.V., Heiby E., Brislin, R. et al., 2002), or choose revised SL-ASIA scale. (Suinn, Rickard-Figueroa. Lew & Vigil, 1987) Asian American Multidimensional Acculturation Scale (AAMAS) measures the multiple facets of acculturation (Gim Chung, Kim, & Abreu, 2004): acculturation to host culture, acculturation to Asian culture of origin, as well as acculturation to pan-ethnic Asian American culture defined as "a consistent underlying structure for an emergent pan-ethnic culture in the domains of cultural identity, language, cultural knowledge, and food consumption" (Gim Chung, Kim, & Abreu, 2004).

### 2.2.2 Design of Measurement

This paper refers to those cross-cultural adaptation scales and acculturation inventories and carries out a cross-cultural adaptation scale for international students in local high school (CCAS-ISLHS). This scale contains 7 subscales, 50 items and applies in the Likert scale, tries to describe those international students who choose to study in local high schools and participate in Chinese students' classes. CCAS-ISLHS designs 7 subscales: (1) academic adaptation, (2) classroom adaptation, (3) campus life adaptation, (4) campus communication adaptation, (5) campus cultural identity, (6) language preference, (7) self-adjustment. (Table 4)

Table 4 Subscales of CCAS-ISLHS

Subscales	Items	Resource & Reference
academic adaptation	7	others(6), CCAS(1)
classroom adaptation	7	others(7), SL-ASIA(1), AAS(1)
campus life adaptation	10	others(11), SCAS(2)
campus communication adaptation	8	others(3), CCAI (2)
campus cultural identity	10	CCAS(4), AAS(1), ARSMA(1), others(4)
language preference	4	ARSMA(2), others(2), SL-ASIA(1)
self-adjustment	4	CCAS(1), others(3)

Each subscale of CCAS-ISLHS focuses on different points as follows. (Table 5)

Table 5 Contents of Subscales for CCAS-ISLHS

Subscales	Contents
Academic adaptation	Curriculum requirements Self-assessment Formative evaluation Satisfaction with local courses
Classroom adaptation	Hold a post of class cadre or grade leader Organize or take part in class activities Relation with classmates, head teachers, subject teachers
Campus adaptation	Teaching facilities Domestic installation Regulatory framework Code of conduct
Intercultural communication	Student organizations Campus activities Family-school relationship Student collaboration Communication between teachers, local students, and administrators Coordination with community
Campus cultural identity	Campus Context Student identity
Language preference	Native language preference Foreign language preference
Self-adjustment	Guest life Acceptance of campus cultural differences Tolerance of campus cultural differences Adjustment of learning objectives Adjustment of learning habits Adjustment of living habits Adjustment of interpersonal relationship

### 2.3 Analysis of subscales of CCAS-ISLHS

165 international students participants from 7 schools ranged in age from 16 to 19, with an overall mean age of 17.3. Female participants (n=94) outnumbered male participants (n=71). Non-ethnic Chinese students hold of foreign nationality (N=98) comprised of the largest ethnic group, Ethnic Chinese students hold of foreign nationality (N=67). Non-diploma Students (N=76) comprised of 46.06%, diploma students (N=89) comprised of 53.94%. Ask participants to fill in subscales, using 5 points-Likert scales (Likert, 1932) to describe personal cross culture adaption as: 5- strongly agree with; 4-agree with; 3-not sure; 2-not agree with; 1-strongly disagree with. Input data into SPSS 15.0, CCAS-ISLHS scale, got Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.737$ , and was suitable for further analysis. Use KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity for factor analyze, got KMO=0.703, Df=51 (Table 7), as there is a common factor between the correlation matrix, which is suitable for factor analysis. Principal component analysis is used to extract the commonness of the 50 items mentioned above. (Table 6)

Table 6 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.703
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx, Chi-Square	291.435
	Df	51
	Sig	.000

Click on the display of scree plot factors, from the fourth factors after the slope line is very flat, thus preserving the front 4 factors, the first common factor variance is usually the largest, which was 3.946, followed by the

second factor variance 3.217, the third factor variance is 2.143, the fourth factor variance was 1.586. The characteristics of the shaft are 5.291, 4.780, 1.469, 1.231, finally get 4 common factors eigenvalue greater than 1, which were named as an academic adaption, campus adaptation, language preference, self-adjustment, thus forming the 4 dimensions of the whole test (Table 7).

Table 7 CCAS-ISLHS (revised)

CCAS-ISLHS (revised)	
Factor 1: academic adaption	Q: How do you perform in the local course as Chinese language and literature?
Factor 2: campus adaptation	Q: How do you like the food in the school canteen?
Factor 3: language preference	Q: Would you like to talk with a classmate in Chinese?
Factor 4: self-adjustment	Q: Do you have difficulty in adjusting yourself to adapt to local class?

CCAS-ISLHS (revised) contains four dimensions for measurement of international student's acculturation. Items were answered using a 5-point scale (from 1="strongly dislike" to 5="completely like").

Table 8 Correlations of variables

	1	2	3	4	5
1.cross-cultural adaptation of international students in local high school	—				
2.academic adaption	.323**	—			
3.campus adaptation	.201**	.523**	—		
4.language preference	.106**	.213*	.177*	—	
5.self-adjustment	.118**	.192**	.152*	.144**	—

\*  $p < 0.05$ .

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Descriptive analyses

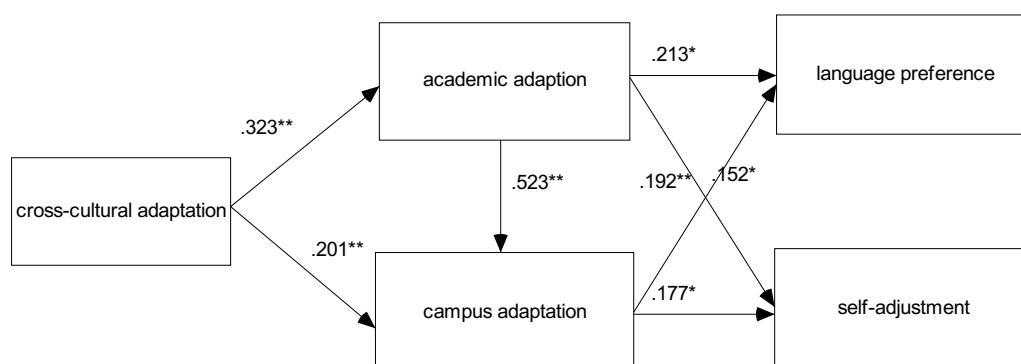
Correlations of the variables are provided in Table 8. The cross-cultural adaptation was positively correlated with academic adaption, campus adaptation, language preference, and self-adjustment. Four factors were correlated with each other.

#### 3.2. Main analyses

Structural Equation Modeling was conducted using Amos 17.0 to test the relationships among variables. The specified model, reported in Figure 1, had certain goodness of fit ( $\chi^2(4) = 114.209$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , GFI = 0.78, RMSEA = 0.301, SRMR = 0.194). The results through path analyses indicated that student identity was associated with academic adaption, campus adaptation, language preference, and self-adjustment. Student identity, academic adaption, campus adaptation, language preference, and self-adjustment were associated with cross-cultural adaptation. Language preference had a correlation with academic adaption, campus adaptation, and student identity. Student identity had a correlation with self-adjustment. The results reported here were obvious as there were several practical experiences for analysis. First, academic adaption and campus adaptation interacted with each other; international students who had Chinese language preference usually got a better academic achievement, and more used to campus life. Second, international students' identities were gradually conducted by daily learning in school, campus life, and application of Chinese language. Third, international students adopted self-adjustment to achieve individual identity. In addition, international students' cross-cultural adaptation was comprehensively directly and indirectly affected by achievement in academic, daily school performance, language preference, through self-adjustment to achieve student identity.



Figure1 Structural Equation Modeling of CCAS-ISLHS (revised)



#### 4. Discussion

The goal of the present study examined the associations between cross-cultural adaptation, academic adaption, campus adaptation, language preference, and self-adjustment. It has addressed two questions. First, how academic adaption and campus adaptation were related to cross-cultural adaptation. Second, did academic adaption and campus adaptation mediate the relationships between cross-cultural adaptation and language preference as well as self-adjustment? Consistent with the previous studies, the present research demonstrated that academic adaption and campus adaptation were positively related to language preference, and self-adjustment. International students pursuing faster and better acculturation of studying in local campus shared attributes such as: used to meals provided by dining hall, adapt to dormitory or homestay, communicate fluently with Chinese people and achieve better in academic. In addition, the results through path analyses indicated that cross-cultural adaptation was associated with language preference and self-adjustment through the mediation of academic adaption, campus adaptation. It means that language preference and self-adjustment may calibrate academic adaption and campus adaptation, which in turn result in individual differences in acculturation. The correlations of variables can also be analyzed through daily practice and accumulated experience in the school field. In order to improve international students' cross-cultural adaption level, all 7 participated schools require that those international students at least get HSK 3 level certificate, otherwise, international students should at first turn to international division in the same campus to search for language training. All participated schools sell western food like sandwich, hamburger, and pizza in the dining hall. 3 participated schools provide single or double room for international students in the dormitory, while most local students share a triple room or quadruple room. International students are encouraged to demonstrate national customs in school activities, as well as welcome to experience Chinese traditional holidays and food during homestay or family visit. In addition, some potential limitations of this study should be acknowledged. Most notably, it is correlational in nature, limiting our ability to draw conclusions about causal links.

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