ACCULTURATIVE STRESS, COPING STRATEGIES AND WELL-BEING AMONG NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION IN MIZORAM

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "**Acculturative Stress, Coping strategies and Well-being among Non-resident students pursuing Higher Education in Mizoram**" submitted to Mizoram University for the Award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education is a research work carried out by Malsawmkimi, Research Scholar in the Department of Education, Mizoram University under my supervision and it has not been previously submitted for the award of any research to any other university/institute.

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DECLARATION

      I, Malsawmkimi, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any pervious degree to me or to do the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University or institute.

      This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education.

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Preface

The present study aims to find out the status of acculturative stress, coping strategies, and well-being among the non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. Cross-cultural differences and transitions are challenging and often have unfavourable consequences for students' mental health and well-being. Once reaching college and higher studies, students in search of higher education institutions need to move from one place to another across the country. The adjustment and adaptation to a new place and institutional settings can contribute to the students being highly vulnerable to the detrimental effects of acculturative stress. The first chapter presents the conceptual framework of the study and discussed the concepts of acculturative stress, coping strategies, and the paramount need and importance of maintaining healthy well-being for higher education students. The statement of the problem and the objectives of the study are also presented.Chapter 2 included the review of related studies; seventy-eight (78) studies of international and studies conducted within India are presented. The research design of the present study is presented in chapter 3. The method of study, population and sample, tools used, the procedures of quantitative and qualitative data collection, and statistical techniques used are also discussed in this chapter. The sample consist of 456 non-resident students from four (4) higher educational instutions in Mizoram using stratified random sampling. In chapter 4, data analysis along with interpretation of the findings has been done and presented according to the objectives. Data is analysed using z-test, Pearson correlation coefficient, and one-way ANOVA. Results revealed that majority of students (n-390) have mild acculturative stress. The most preferred coping strategy that students engages in is found to be avoidance-oriented coping. Study also revealed that majority of the students (n-271) have low well-being. The relationship found between the three variables is presented using dendrogram in this chapter. Suggestions for reducing acculturative stress level and improvement for well-being of the students is also discussed. The final chapter consist of the major findings, summary of the study and conclusions were drawn. Recommendations for further research is also presented.

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List of Abbreviations

AISHE	All India Survey on Higher Education
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AS	Acculturative Stress
ASS	Acculturative Stress Scale
ASSIS	Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students
CISS-Adult	Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations-Adult
Contd.	Continued
Covid-19	Coronavirus disease-19
EDNLEVEL	Education Levels
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FWBC	Friedman's Well-being Composite
FWBS	Friedman's Well-being Scale
GPA	Grade Point Average
HATIM	Higher and Technical Institute Mizoram
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
ICEF	International Consultants for Education and Fairs
ICFAI	Institute of Chartered Financial Analysts of India
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LOS	Length of Stay
MZU	Mizoram University

NIT-Mizoram National Institute of Technology-Mizoram

PG   Postgraduate

Ph. D   Doctor of Philosophy

RIPANS   Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences

SAFE   Social, Attitudinal, Familial and Environmental Acculturative Stress
                Scale

SAFE-R   Social, Attitudinal, Familial and Environmental Acculturative Stress
                Scale-Revised

TTSC   Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping

TV   Television

UG   Undergraduate

UGC   University Grants Commission

UK   United Kingdom

UKM   Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

UTM   Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

US   United States

USA   United States of America

ZMC   Zoram Medical College

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Internationalization in education has dramatically increased over the past few decades as students seek for the best higher education possible. Students from across the globe leave their homes and countries to pursue higher education in other countries. In 2018 from India, more than 750,000 Indians studied abroad (ICEF Monitor, 2019), and as many as 47,427 foreign students signed themselves up in higher education in India the same year (The Economic Times, 2019). Even within one country, students make a move from one state to the other seeking higher education. According to 2020 Indian University Ranking (UniRank), there are all over 877 higher-educational institutions in India alone, and students seek these out for higher studies and employment.

India's Higher education system is the world's third largest apropos of students, with the University Grants Commission (UGC) being its major governing body. In India, higher education personates a cardinal role in the all-inclusive build-out of the country. It creates skill development, generates employment and income, reduces poverty, plays an indispensable part in rural development, and brings about empowerment of women. It ushers in new technological development as well as industrial, social, and economic development. It focuses on producing skilled human resources, training for research career and job opportunities, and changing learning systems in today's digital era. The main aim of Indian higher educational institutes is to deliver quality-based educational system and research to empower youth for self-sustainability.

Higher education, therefore, plays a vital role in meeting the demands of the world nowadays. With the pressure to excel, competitions in schools and colleges have been intensifying as year's progress. This results in an increased amount of stress experienced by students.

1.1 Stress

Everyone feels stressed out from time to time regardless of age, gender, educational status, profession, or socio-economic status. Stress causes psychological, physical, or emotional strain. It is a change in the environment that requires the body to react and adjust in response.

Researchers holed up on multiple variables of stress-as-transaction model, widening and cataloguing assorted determinants to look on for the involute systems entailed in coming up against a stressor (Werner, 1993). The nature of stress, therefore, can be acute, episodic, intermittent, or chronic.

In our lives, there are different types of changes that cause stress, known as stressors; these stressors could be an event, situation, cue, and condition; they could even be illness, changing institutions, going to college, exam pressure, peers and parents' pressure, getting married, relationship problem, losing loved ones, and job problems. Stress also happens when one feels like they cannot or do not know how to manage all the demands in life. It is not always easy to recognise and identify the sources of stress. Sometimes, stress comes from an obvious source, but sometimes even small daily stresses mentioned above can take a toll on a person's mind and body. This calls for the need to be aware of one and meticulously appraise the causes of stress. People experience stress in very many ways for different reasons. The reaction to stress is contingent on perception of an event or whereabouts (situation). What might be stressful and exasperating for one individual may not be the similar case for another.

These bummers (stressors) are categorised based on their predictability, tone, impact, duration, and the locus of control. In some cases, stress is necessary to motivate and challenge someone to realise his/her potential; however, in some, it may be damaging, especially when it becomes excessive.

Students, especially when they begin their higher education, are exposed to stress of different kinds; then, they face new university environment; then, they leave their homes and face the challenge of separation from their home, friends, and family

members; then, they face homesickness and the process of getting into and trying to fulfil new responsibilities in a new culture that has different beliefs and norms. For some, their inability to make new friends and get into new relationships can also cause lot of stress. Besides, when students sense that they are different from others in their looks and skin colour, accent, culture and religious affiliations, stress tend to occur. Lack of proper sleep can also lead to stress resulting in their inability to concentrate, learn and solve problems. Other causes of stress are the pressures and high expectations from their parents and their teachers. The pressure to perform well, along with rigorous load of work and strict assignment deadlines, makes students stressed and exhausted. When students undergo high level of stress or rather, chronic stress, it may affect their memory and their critical thinking ability; these, in turn, affect their performances and lead to increase in the risk of drop-outs. It may also decrease their level of productivity and they may experience declining and poor mental, emotional, and physical health.

Stress, acute or chronic, can have serious consequences if not well managed on time. This necessitates the need to have professionals in educational institutions, especially in higher educational institutions, so that stressors can be identified at an early stage, and firmly and professionally dealt with by the administrators and those concerned.

1.2   Acculturation

For higher education students, academic-related stress alone is already a lot to overcome; add to this a thing called acculturation, and then stress intensifies.

Acculturation is a trial of socialisation by which foreign-born individuals come face to face with and encounter the norms, customs, values, belief, attitudes, and practices of the propellant host culture. Acculturation has been aesthetically construed as "the changes that develop when groups of individuals come into contact with a different culture" (Redfield et al., 1936). It is a technique of learning and incorporation; being such, acculturation is a cultural, psychological, and social, change that comes from the blending between customs and traditions. In principle,

change crops up in both the autonomous and independent culture groups. In praxis, however, more change passes off in the non-dominant than in the dominant group.

The out-run of acculturation can be conceived at variegated levels in both interacting cultures. At a group level, acculturation brings about changes in culture, customs, and social institutions, salient among these are changes in language food, and clothing. At the individual level, changes can be observed in daily behaviour, and in psychological and physical well-being.

Though often theorised as a bipartite procedure of change, acculturation is often researched from the point of view of the accommodation and adjustments procured by the marginalised, such as, indigenous people, immigrants, and refugees, in echo to their correspondence with the out-weighing lion's share. Present time research lays great stress on divergent strategies of acculturation and how aberrations in acculturation take a hold on individual and international students' adaptability to their society.

1.3   Acculturative Stress

People experience stress notwithstanding their race, colour, ethnicity, and professional or academic milieu. According to Anspaugh et al. (2003), stress makes headway in discrete forms and strike at people of all epoch and all metiers of life. To lay it in simple words stress is a facet of life and has scores of causes to it. The measure of stress in our lives is mightily swayed by factors such as a singular person's physical health, the worth of our inter-individual tie-ups, the tally of allegiance and liabilities we ram, the rung of others' dependence on and expectations of us, the amount of reinforcement we come by from others and the sum total of unpleasant occurrences we rifle through in our lives. It implies that stress is a relative term, contingent on an individual's lifestyle and the magnitude of cultural development.

Stress, as mentioned before, is common among college students. Acculturative stress comes to pass when students run across difficulties and conflicts

emanated due to adjusting to unaccustomed social etiquettes and faith of a far out culture (Lin & Yi, 1997).

Acculturative stress is resultant of the acculturation process between the host culture and a coming in culture.

The variety and vehemence of acculturative stress reclines copiously on the similitude or disparateness betwixt the host culture and that of the latest entrants. The determinants included are amount of exposure, personal characteristics, level of education and skills, gender, age, race, language, psychological and spiritual strengths, and the host culture's political and social slant peculiarly toward the newcomers (Cox, 1987).

The assorted levels of acculturative stress may evince as an upshot of acculturation experiences and stressors.

The influences that pilot to acculturative stresses are diversiform and involute at the same time. Up next are a few significant constituents that chip in to acculturative stress of non-resident students.

Homesickness: Homesickness refers to "longing for home and family while absent from them" (Mish, 1986). Students leave their homes to pursue higher education. This gives a vent for missing one's families and loved ones, a pertinent feeling of alienation, problems of keeping oneself up with the expectations from that place, and memories of home. Those who contact with these are perceived to taste higher acculturative stress and difficulties.

Prejudice and discrimination: Despite making the most of the provisions of the host states or countries, these benefits for some can also be sources of representative and directly appraised discriminatory practices. This may dragoon international students to become less reciprocate and cooperative in the enterprises of the host community and in the due course take sick with health problems, for instance, psychological distress and alienation.

Culture shock: Due to differences in culture and practices, there often arise cultural incompatibilities among international students. This, known as culture shock, is tracked down to be a recurrent stumbling block among the bulk of international students.

Fear, guilt, and hatred: With international students making headway to a new socio-cultural habitat, they run into physical fear and trepidation of the undisclosed. Some encounter prejudices against them, while some, and negative stereotyping. Threats concerning discrepancies in belief systems, value systems, social standards and attitudes are obtained to be the cardinal agency of threat for international students. On occasions, cohesion with the socio-cultural exercises of the host country can make them discern delinquently as persons who denounce their native cultures.

According to Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994), one's dubiousness to have dealings in the local language, stress to of throwing oneself into social activities, an aching sense of inclusion to the host community, worries about the unknown future regarding what to do after they have completed their studies, should they go back home or should they continue staying abroad — all these factors and concerns for bye hand out to international students' acculturative concern.

1.3.1 Acculturative stress and gender

Gender is a cardinal predictor in the procedure of acculturation and the stress it generates. Stress affects male and female differently. Wide individual differences were found in both cognitive and physiological responses (Steptoe, 1983). Gender differences on cross-cultural research have also shown on emotionality and sociability, for instance, on the scales quantified by Big Five Personality traits as weighed up by the NEO Personality Inventory test- Revised. Women are reported to have higher warmth (an extraversion facet), agreeableness, neuroticism, and openness to feelings; on the other hand, openness to ideas higher and a facet of extraversion are often reported among men (Costa et. al., 2004). Further, men are seen to score lower than women in trust, anxiety, extraversion, and tender mindedness (Feingold, 1994). So, due to the gender differences in emotions, attitudes, beliefs, values, and personality, the reactions and responses to stress could

vary. Majority of the studies done on immigrants have indicated that acculturative stress differs across gender (Berry et al., 1987; Neto, 2002; Mak et al., 2005; Mehta & Beri, 2017) while others have affirmed that it does not on migrants (Azizah et. al., 2014).

Due to the inconsistent results of past research, it is critical that more studies should be carried out to study how gender might be related to acculturative stress; therefore, this research tries to identify the same to determine if there is glaring variance between male and female non-resident students.

1.3.2 Acculturative stress and level of education

It has been presumed that the differences in the levels of assignments and engagements required may make students differ in their level of stress. An international study has found that postgraduate (PG) students face greater acculturative issues than undergraduate (UG) students. Further, doctoral students also contact with elevated acculturative stress compared to the other two levels (Gebregergis, 2018). Undergraduate students are generally required to acquire basic cognizance and skill which may be comparatively amenable than the rigorous workload and the mastery needed to analyse the knowledge required of the master's students. Further, Ph. D scholars are required to make a novel and significant contribution to society and in their area of studies; these may be challenging yet can prove to be a demanding and gruelling task. This may provoke greater strain and stress in achieving their goals, and in turn maximising their acculturative stress. Besides, the academic experience in new institution may add concerns related to understanding classroom instructions, participation in discussions and activities, and/or figuring out the teachers' expectations, and interacting with local mates and administrative staffs.

At the same time, however, lower or higher educational level may not necessarily predict lower or higher stress level as an outcome of acculturation. This may be due to varieties of reasons: easy adjustment and adaptation to the new place and/or successful use of coping strategies. Despite various studies on international students and immigrants, there has been insubstantial backing for to attest the

influence of acculturative stress and educational level across the country. Hence, this research also aims at understanding the effect of the level of education and its relationship with acculturative stress on non-resident students of various higher education institutions in Mizoram.

1.3.3 Acculturative stress and length of stay

The magnitude of acculturative stress may also be largely influenced by the length of stay in the new culture. One of the aspirations of this study is to fathom out the relationship between acculturative stress and spell of stay of non-resident students.

Researchers have opined that acculturation outcome has been linked with the stetch of students' stay in a host culture (Oberg, 1960; Berry, 1989). Oberg (1960) claimed that individuals who have stayed on considerable length in the host country tend to adjust better as collated to those who have newly arrived to the environment because they had to transcend through different stages of adjustment. The prolongation of stay in the host country can be significantly correlated with low-cut of acculturative stress (Vergaraa et al., 2010). Likewise, similar result found that higher acculturative stress and poor health students were reported with short length of stay (Ayoob & Singh, 2011). Low level of acculturative stress is indicated through better social and networking skills with the increase in the duration of stay.

However, some researchers have also argued that there was no striking tie-up between years of study and acculturative stress or any of its subcategory factors (Azizah et al., 2014) on immigrants and international students.

Identifying whether more experiences in the host place aid in adaptive skills to reduce the acculturative stress is, therefore, necessary.

Accordingly, this study tries to find out if the length of stay has an impact on non-resident students studying in Mizoram.

While talking about the various direct or indirect factors that affect an individual's adaptation to a new cultural and environmental context it is essential to understand the concept of acculturative stress. It signifies unresolved problems

resulting from new practices and experiences in a different and unknown environment, which cannot be overcome easily by simply adjusting. A study has revealed that participants had reported their requisite assistance in adapting to the various types of experienced stress (Poulakis et al., 2017). Not all forms of stress have the potential of becoming a good stress; however, a positive mind-set may be achieved by changing the perception of stressors. Perceiving acculturative stress in this study, as a challenge and as a motivator to survive, and adopting new coping strategies may help one look through the potential benefits that gets offered by the situation and triumph over them.

1.4　Coping

Coping takes place mostly when one refers to his thoughts and actions in order to deal with any threatening situation. According to Folkman and Lazarus (1985), "Coping refers to cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage (master, reduce, or tolerate) a troubled person-environment relationship." According to Carver et al. (1989), there has to be a coping style in order to coexist with the coping strategies and set a "preferred set of coping strategies that remains relatively fixed across time and circumstances." Similarly, Endler and Parker (1999) define coping styles as the one's customarily used by an individual to gratify various stressful situations, as cognitive/behavioural modes typically.

In simpler words, coping may be referred to as a course of actions, a reflection used to meet a frightful or off-putting state, or in restyling one's reaction as per the requirements of the situation. It typically involves a purposive and head-on approach to problems. It is also important to be aware that due to individual-distinctiveness, one's discernment of a threatening situation may not necessarily be similar with the significant other.

1.4.1　Coping strategies

Coping strategies opted by people are subject to change, and vary from one person to the other.

Many coping strategies have been pinned down by researchers. These try to group coping strategies by categorising them as rationally or empirically coping strategies, or an amalgam of both. Folkman and Lazarus (1985) told on coping strategies into four groups, namely meaning-making, support-seeking, emotion-focused, and problem-focused coping. Weiten (2008) categorised them as emotion-focused, problem-focused (adaptive behavioural), occupation-focused coping, and appraisal-focused (adaptive cognitive). Billings and Moos (1981) added that avoidance coping form an important part of the emotion-focused coping. A brief explanation of these coping strategies is as follows:

Appraisal-focused coping: Appraisal-focused (adaptive cognitive) strategies come to pass when persons modify their way of thinking about things; they, for instance, dissent or distancing themselves from the problem(s). Ones thinking about a problem may be altered by their outlook of the problem, that is, by permuting their values and goals, such as by giving way to the humour in a set of circumstances (Weiten, 2008).

Problem-focused/Adaptive behavioural coping: Problem-focused coping hands out with the main ground of the hitch and yield an interminable solution. It involves discerning information regarding the set back and learning new skills to head it. It aims at swapping or stamping out the source of the stress. Folkman and Lazarus identified the three coping strategies based on focused-problems, which include taking control, information seeking, and evaluating the pros and cons. However, problem-focused coping would not ideally make the problem go away. This is mostly correct where the radix of stress is further on, than a person's control; for instance, dealing with the loss of a loved one is beyond a persons' control however hard that person may try to make the source go away. That's exactly why a problem-focused coping tactics work nonpareil when an individual can preside over the fount of stress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).

Emotion-focused coping: Emotion-focused coping strategies pointed out by Folkman and Lazarus are accepting responsibility, escape-avoidance, disclaiming, exercising positive reappraisal and self-control (Weiten, 2008). In this strategy, a

person releases his/her pent-up emotions, distracts himself/herself, manages his/her hostile feelings, takes up meditation, and/or uses systematic relaxation methods.

Emotion-focused coping, therefore, alleviates anguish by paring down, keeping at minimum or turning aside the emotional integrant of a stressor. In this, a person seeks social support, reappraises the stressor in an absolute light, accepts management and makes use of non-participation, wielding self-control and putting oneself at a distance.

Reactive and proactive coping: In this coping strategy, a person reactively and proactively responds to stressors. A future stressor is anticipated, and preparations are made on how to cope with it when it comes. Anticipation reduces the stress of some difficult challenges. A future and action-oriented behaviours can prepare one for not only specific stressor, but also for different stressors which are considered inevitable and may arise at any course of one's life.

Social coping: In social coping, an individual acknowledges and accepts that he/she is very much a part of the social environment that surrounds him/her. Though social environment itself can be a stressor, once a person acknowledges him/her being a part of it, he/she more willingly seeks support from others.

Maladaptive coping or non-coping: As the term indicates, maladaptive coping strategy deals just with symptoms of stressors; it results in maintaining stressors and even times strengthening them. Examples of defective coping include safety behaviours, sensitization, dissociation, rationalisation, anxious avoidance, and breaking free including self-medication. This coping strategy is helpful only as a short-term coping process, and is often applied to stressful events, often unconsciously.

Besides the above classification, coping strategies can also be broadly arrayed into two headings: positive coping mechanisms and negative coping mechanisms.

Further there are two ways of classifying coping: active or avoidant. Active coping conveys resemblance to the coping strategies that entails the stressor's awareness, followed by doing one's utmost to take the edge off the negative

outcome. The strategies mentioned above, excluding maladaptive coping, may be grouped under active coping. Avoidant coping strategy, as the name suggests, refers to ignoring the stressor, and resulting into denial of the problem. Activities such as isolating and withdrawing oneself from the stressor, taking alcohol and abusing drug fall under avoidant and maladaptive coping strategies.

Most of the studies that have been carried out assess two coping dimensions: problem-focused coping and emotion-oriented coping.

This study aims to study the two mentioned dimensions, besides a third basic coping strategy: avoidance coping. To overhaul the stressor or to budge attention away from the stressor are the corner-stones of coping strategies. In this research, different coping mechanisms are likely to be employed by students in their attempts to manage stress resulting out of acculturation.

1.4.2   Transactional theory of stress and coping

The Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (TTSC) had been devised with the aim of explaining stress as a dynamic process by Lazarus (1966). The theory confers stress as a spin-off of an undertaking between a person taken in under multiple systems: cognitive, psychological, physiological, neurological, and affective, and his or her tangled backdrop (TTSC-Lazarus, 1966; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Coping is an evolving process, which postulates changes in contextual response to manage different internal and external demands. Coping strategies in all likelihood pertain to an ability to adjust and change in a way that open door for positive outcome. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) in their model of stress appraisal included primary, secondary, and reappraisal components.

Figure 1.1   The Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (Source: J. Walinga, The Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, p.698)

Primary appraisal involves determinant factors as to whether the stressors result in an intimidation.

In secondary appraisal, a person involved evaluates different coping strategies to address perceived threats. This appraisal is an on-going process: a person involved must constantly reappraise himself/herself regarding the stressors and the coping strategies to be employed.

Employing appraisal-focused coping strategy by taking efforts to alter the way of viewing the stressor may prove to reduce the stressor to a certain extent, depending on the situation. Further, problem-focused coping may sometimes be considered the most effective strategy to reduce any type of stress as it directly focuses on the root cause of the problem. This strategy may even be useful in providing long term solution.

However, problem-focused coping may not be suited for coping with stressors such as grave sorrow of a cherished one and terminal illnesses. Emotion-focused coping may be more suitable for managing such kind of stressors which are beyond the control of an individual. Emotional-focused coping strategies, such as looking round for social support from families and friends, may prove to be more beneficial to follow-up such as the one mentioned. Improving/progressing outcomes for a short period of time may be derived out of agencies of emotion-focused coping, such as disassociating or self-restraint; however, the outcome can be detrimental if used over an extended period.

Personality necessitates the employment of distinct coping strategies. Personality refers to the collection of thoughts, attitudes, values, beliefs, perceptions, and behaviours that define how a person sees himself/herself and the environment. Many researchers believe that some are better at dealing with life events and daily hassles everyone faces while some are more easily stressed than others. Personality has a lot to do with this. Research has found that extraverted individuals exhibited smaller cortisol activation to stress and lesser increment of negative impact. The research further elucidated that neuroticism, extraversion and openness are cardinal variables equated with the stress response and that discrete dimensions of personality

trait are bracketed with individual outlooks of the stress response (Xin et. al., 2017). Evidence has also reported that higher extraversion is drawn parallel with more positive idiosyncratic feeling and a higher sense of control, which might be laid hold of as a more resilient psychological response to stress (Penley & Tomaka, 2002).

The different strategies may also differ according to varying attitude, and length of stay in the host state. Each situation requires a peculiar coping strategy; for it to be persuasive or not, pivoting on an individual's perception of the state of affairs as dire or not (Carver et al., 1989). Likewise, some people may be resilient in coping with stress while some may show maladaptive responses to the same stressor.

For identifying the different strategies, the inventory employed in this study tries to find out the coping strategies including avoidance-oriented coping, task-oriented coping, and emotion-focused coping. The uses of these strategies depend upon the situation. Acculturative Stress among students within the country has not gained much attention in comparison to migrants and international students. Only few studies have assessed the intensity of stress and coping strategies among higher educational students in India; therefore, this study aims to find out new and different coping strategies that may be employed by students.

1.4.3   Coping inventory for stressful situations

This study employs Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS-Adult) generated by Endler and Parker (1999) to find the differences in coping strategies used by non-resident students in relation to their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses.

CISS-Adult is an asserted paper and pencil quantum of coping, consisting of 48 statements. Task-Oriented coping is formed an impression of by Sixteen items; another sixteen items get the measure of Emotion-Oriented coping, and the next sixteen items weigh up Avoidance-Oriented coping. There are two sub-scales for Avoidance-Oriented scale: Distraction (8 items), and Social Diversion (5 items).

Task-Oriented coping: It recounts for enterprising task-oriented efforts that are aimed at puzzling out or cognitively reorganizing the source of the problem to

transfigure the prevailing set of circumstances. The underlining is on the piece of work or planning, and on setting out to find a key to the source of trouble.

Emotion-Oriented coping: It delineates self-oriented emotional feedbacks, with the desired result of making cutbacks in stress. Reactions mostly are made up of emotional retaliation (lay the blame on oneself for being too emotional, for getting angry, or for becoming tensed), self-conceitedness, and indulging in fancies (daydreaming reactions). In some cases, stress is shot up by these reactions (becomes very disconcerted, becomes very rigid). The reaction is pitched on the way to the person.

Avoidance-Oriented: It marks out activities and cognitive changes grail at circumventing the arduous situation. To alleviate stress, a person may distract himself/herself by partaking in situations/tasks (task oriented) or by putting on the payroll social diversion (person oriented).

1.4.4 Acculturative stress and coping strategies

This research aims to bracket the diverse coping strategies employed by students in order to adjust and adapt to new cultural and geographical environment.

For many students, attending higher education in universities and colleges alone can be stressful and challenging. They are likely to face many demands such as financial constraints, high competition among students to excel in their studies, high expectations and pressures from friends and family and the like. In addition, moving away from home without close social support of families and friends that they were used to may result in difficulty in adjustment to the new environment.

Any types of stress have impresses upon both mental and physical health of a person. It is important to first recognize the stressors. Identifying the sources is crucial in order to manage the stressors and employ the right coping skills and strategies. Here arises the students' own ability to successfully adjust and cope to facilitate positive outcomes.

1.5   Acculturative Stress and Well-Being

To overcome stress of any kind, including acculturative stress, a healthy well-being is necessary.

Over the years, there is an astounding development in the study of quality of life and well-being globally which, unfortunately, is neglected in India. This study is especially crucial for higher educational students as it may affect their performance, learning and success, and thereby, significantly influencing the success and failure of any educational programme. Hence, one of the objectives in this study is borne by the influence of acculturative stress on well-being of the students.

Well-being refers to one's experience when it comes to prosperity, happiness, and health. It incorporates having unduly priced life satisfaction, a sense of significance or impetus, and a good mental health. It tots up in the showing up of positive moods emotions and temper (gratification, felicity), the dearth of negative emotions (dejection, apprehension), and delight with life and a feeling of fulfilment. In other words, well-being is inferring life indubitably and feeling good about it.

However, when we say well-being is to be able to feel good about one and being able to operate well discretely or in a relationship does not naturally infer feeling happy around the clock; instead, it implies being able to get through with the impediments we face and thrive to get hold of the opportunities, and encompass a sense of purpose. Incidents, personal outlook, past experiences, and attitudes, can all influence one's well-being.

The major types of well-being are:

- Emotional Well-being: The propensity to praxis stress-management techniques, resilience, and trigger the emotions that wises up good feelings

- Physical Well-being: The propensity to tweak the running order of body through salutary eating and good exercise habits

- Social Well-being: The ability to meet up, fill out purposeful inter-connection with others, and bolster up a support network to bridle loneliness

- Societal Well-being: The means to anticipatorily entail oneself in a community, culture, and environment

- Psychological Well-being: It roots for contentment, gratification with all elements of life, self-actualisation, peace, and happiness.

- Subjective Well-being: The aptitude of a person's cognitive and affective weighing up of his or her life

- Workplace/institutional Well-being: The calibre to make up to one's interests, values, and impetus to carry off meaning, happiness, and enrichment adeptly. The definition of Institutional Well-being has been put forward by Dohms (2014) as "a result of the effectiveness of the institution as a result of a harmonious, effective and affective coexistence, coming from all its collaborators in action, and the promotion of a healthy environment in which teaching and learning processes (in the case of an educational institution) are more significant, generating positive effects throughout the chain of relations that constitute the institution."

There is no sole clinching factor of one's individual well-being. Well-being is highly swayed by factors such as good health, good social relationships, and the admissibility and ingress of basic physiological needs such as shelter, and financial support.

To put up overall well-being, one has to corroborate all of these types to operate to an extent where each part of well-being is important to one's overall sense of well-being. Putting up well-being skills is possibly the most instrumental for those students who are struggling with well-being, particularly if they have gone through stress as a result of acculturation. It may be hefty to set-up well-being for them, but the impression may be greater.

The way in to higher education labels a period of changeover for students. It carries many new responsibilities which are challenging and may pose to be a burden to some. It includes making independent decisions about their studies and lives, the need to make adjustment to learning environment and to fulfil the academic

demands. It also often requires students to take oneself off from their home for the first time, leaving their strong support network to work alongside with an assorted range of new people. This resulting acculturative stress affects their well-being. As 18-25 years of age, they are confused and are at a dilemma. Undeniably, there is credence that a hassle on mental health and well-being is rated on students once they start university. Although it cuts back right through their studies (Macaskill, 2013; Mey & Yin, 2015), it does not fling back to pre-university levels (Cooke et al., 2006; Bewick et al., 2010). Also, the odds of running into common psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, and stress, become greater throughout adolescence and make it to its pinnacle in early adulthood around age 25 (Kessler et al., 2007) which puts the heat on university students making them an unfortified population. At the same time, it is also a period where students could be primed for their adult life at the fore. Being aware of their own mental health and well-being, and the understanding by their teachers will help tremendously in clearing up and enumerating conventions to help them think up for their lives ahead.

1.5.1 Friedman's well-being scale

To identify the level of well-being of the students, Friedman's Well-being Scale (FWBS) developed by Friedman (1992) was used. The Friedman Well-Being Scale consists of twenty bi-polar adjectives. It can be chalked up for a comprehensive estimation of well-being, the Friedman Well-Being Composite, and for five sub-scales. The five sub-scales and the number of items in the scale are emotional stability (10 items): self-esteem/self-confidence (3 items); sociability (3 items); happiness (1 item); and joviality (3 items). In this study, the gross computation of well-being, i.e., Friedman Well-Being Composite (FWBC) is used.

There is a greater recognition at present that well-being is of increasing importance and concern for students attaining higher education, compared to the last decades. The intrigue in both mental health and well-being of students athwart the country has flourished logarithmically. The emerging challenges have also necessitated that schools and institutions put focus on the psychosocial needs of the students and cater to the overall well-being of the students. It also brings self-

awareness and its importance on the students themselves. Students are progressively becoming aware that there is an undeviating linkage between well-being and academic outcome. They have started to recognise that well-being is a crucial prerequisite for achieving desired outcome. Students who receive mental health support to achieve positive well-being tend to do better in academics, and have the ability to cope with daily life changes effectively.

To ensure positive psychological and general well-being of the students, easy way in to mental health service and support in institutions are the first steps needed. A large number of students across the country do not receive the required attention and care they need because of the prevalent stigma associated with mental illnesses and lack of trained professionals in both schools and higher education institutions. These have been mentioned by few of the students in this study as well. This proves the importance to have widespread awareness by institutions to address the mental health challenges faced by students and promote positive well-being for successful future endeavours.

Institutions have the prime responsibility to promote and optimise the physical and social well-being of students. It is important to create a culture that enables student to report safety concerns. Counsellors or mental health professionals trained to handle behavioural, emotional, and lifestyle challenges faced are crucial to provide support to the on-going needs of the students. Family is also equally important; it the most valuable source of support for students, besides institutions. There is a growing consensus about the positive influence of parents and siblings on the student's development and, consequently, on their general well-being. However, providing awareness on the importance of moral and academic support to the families for their child's well-being is still indispensable.

1.5.2   Well-being and coping strategies

It has been proved that coping styles are the key to prevent stress responses. Consequently, taking up that coping strategies are paramount for the students' well-being, this study has also indistinctly talked about studying whether some coping strategies are more flexible than others. Use of varieties of coping strategies may

help to reduce the general well-being and different psychological distress related in higher education students. The CISS-Adult employed in this study emotion-oriented coping, task-oriented coping, and avoidance-oriented coping. Prior researches have distinguished adaptive and maladaptive coping with stress where avoidance-oriented coping has been squinted at as maladaptive due to prolonged manoeuvring. Negative coping strategies have been found to be the risk factors for low well-being (Stanislawski, 2019), and the use of maladaptive strategies when coping with stressful situation may wind up into long-term repercussions for their academic achievements and psychophysiological health (Babicka-Wirkus et al., 2021). Further, it has also been proved on international students that appropriate use of coping strategies has a positive influence on their psychological well-being (O'Reilly, 2018). Thus, based on the findings of past researches, a support program or guidance may be necessary for non-resident students; this would involve both psychological and adaptation of healthy coping skills to achieve high status of well-being.

1.6   Higher Education

Higher education is not just about learning. Students pursue higher education to enrich their life, to gain knowledge, and develop essential skills for their career, and increase learning potential. For such reasons, students need to move from state to state, and internationally to achieve their desired goals. It is a stage where it requires students to come out of their comfort zone and take a big step to widen their horizons for countless benefits including the chance to pursue their passion, personal growth, better quality of life, and provides independence and self-sufficiency. Furthermore, the high unemployment rate in India may motivate and drive students to create new opportunities for them to start a new wave of entrepreneurship. So, within the process of moving from one place to another, numerous issues in adjusting to the new environmental setting may emerge.

In this study, higher education refers to the stage of learning that comes to pass following secondary education at Degree Colleges, Universities, Medical College, and Institutes of Technology. It covers undergraduates, postgraduates, and research scholars.

Higher education plays a key role in a society. It helps student develop skills, abilities, and knowledge needed in order to succeed in today's world. It prepares them for a career they want to pursue. Moreover, it brings personality development by enabling psychological and intellectual growth and development. The importance of higher education is enormous. It offers strong potential to support local, national, and global economy and the over-all development of a country. It can be considered as the most dominant force that shapes our world today. It plays a key role in acquiring critical thinking skills needed. Among the many importance of higher education is education itself. This is followed by the expectation that goes with it. Getting quality education is of great achievement and success. Furthermore, another important thing to consider is accomplishing what the society needs and expects from these institutions for the over-all development which includes but is not limited to economic, industrial and society. The importance of higher education cannot be stressed enough and it may be said it is a prerequisite for employment in a globalised economy, and is the important cornerstone of the present modern society.

1.6.1 Higher education in India

In India, higher education is commonly referred to as post-secondary education, third-level or tertiary level, which generally lies at one's discretion, is final stage of formal learning after cessation of secondary education. The courses range from professional or technical to general or vocational. According to the latest All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE- 2019-2020), there are 1043 Universities, 42,343 Colleges and 11,779 Stand-Alone Institutions in India. It is the third largest higher education system in the world with University Grant Commission (UGC) being the governing body. According to Brookings India (November, 2019), the number of institutions has seen expansion by more than 400 per cent since 2001, where larger growth is attributed to private educational sector. Rapid expansion has been witnessed in responding to the changing need of times. Indian HEIs, at present, proffer a wide assemblage of courses in various streams. Some of these courses have set foot on global accreditation. It has highly regarded and prestigious institutions and universities that are within casual outstretch for its students-citizens and foreigners from distinct corners of the globe; some of these, for instance, are the

Indian Institute of Technology at Kanpur, Delhi, Bombay, Kharagpur and Madras. Other higher educational institutes too play great roles in fundamental research in fields such as medical science, neurosciences, planning, design, management, agriculture, and mental health.

Access to higher education has improved to a certain extent due to the three principles namely, acceded to merit, equality of rights, and equality of opportunities (Clancy & Goastellec, 2007).

However, despite the rapid growth in establishment of HEIs and an increase in enrolment, seats in different institutions are still not enough to serve the large population of students in the age-group eligible for higher education in the country. The gross enrolment ratio in the country is still lower than the average of those in other developing and developed countries. This predicts the need to enlarge in terms of quantity and enhance its quality, considering the context of increasing globalisation. The rapid expansion of higher educational system as a whole has brought several issues and challenges related to equity, access, efficiency, and excellence to higher education in the country.

Regional, social, gender, and income inequalities still subsist today. Since most HEIs are established in urban and metropolitan cities, higher education suffers from the large rural-urban divide. Consequently, social inequalities also continue to persist. When social and geographical disadvantages transect, it results in inequality in accessing higher education. Studies have also found that low economic status continues to be one of the challenges in gaining access to higher education. Quality and excellence are of great significance for both students and education providers. In order to achieve these, efforts and initiatives to improve infrastructure, shortage of quality faculties, new higher education management system, good governance are necessary.

Necessary changes and improvement for higher education, facilitated with flexibility, innovation, high quality learning environment, and fostering a global culture would attract international students to improve India's orientation as a higher education terminus.

1.6.2 Higher education in Mizoram

Mizoram's population accounts to 10.97 lakhs as per Census 2011. Further, with a literacy rate of 91.3 per cent and holds the third position in the country.

Formal education started with the advent of two Christian missionaries Lorrain and Savidge, in 1894. These devised a Roman script for Lushai language. It was in 1905 that the first middle school was started, followed by a high school in 1944. However, growth and development of education proceeded at a very slow pace, and no attention was given for the development of higher education.

After a long year gap, in the year 1958, Pachhunga University College (then Aijal College) was got off the ground. It became the earliest institute of higher education in Mizoram. Although the establishment of higher education was neglected and started more than a decade after the start of high school, gradual growth and developments were seen, especially after Mizoram became Union Territory in 1972. In 1973 a distinct Directorate of Education was formed, followed by the founding of Mizoram Board of School Education 1976. Directorate of Higher and Technical Education was later established in the year 1989; since then, this has been dealing with matters concerning higher education from collegiate level upwards including technical education. Furthermore, in 2001, Mizoram University was brought into being by the University Grants Commission of India.

Despite the late start in higher education, Mizoram has seen tremendous growth and development. There are now various areas of studies that students can opt for such as veterinary, nursing, pharmacy, engineering, technology, medical studies, and a few more career-oriented courses. The latest establishment of higher educational institutes included Chartered Financial Analysts of India (ICFAI) in 2006, Higher and Technical Institute Mizoram (HATIM) in 2007, National Institute of Technology Mizoram (NIT-Mizoram) in 2010, and Zoram Medical College in 2018. As per the data of AISHE- 2019-2020, there are 32 registered colleges and 15 registered stand-alone institutions at present. Further, there are 36 institutions affiliated to Mizoram University.

Attaining higher institutes alone comes with many issues and challenges along the way. These issues can be academic, institutional, and/or personal issues depending on individual differences. The high responsibilities vested on the students, new educational system, rigorous workload, financial constraints, academic stress, peer pressure from friends and families back home, and uncertainty in job opportunities come along with the start of their courses.

Apart from the academic stress mentioned, when studying away from home in a new place, multitude of challenges tends to rise.

In this study, according to the experiences shared by non-resident students, making purchases, getting direction, and transportation as a result of language barrier are some of the major factors that students struggle with. Difficulty in adjusting to food items available and the meal timings of hostels and paying guests, too, are things students struggle with. They also reported bias and unequal treatment in both academic and in society. The feeling of homesickness and isolation resulted in their inability to make new friends. It has also been reported that the lack of basic facilities and the experiences aforementioned lead to lack of interest and motivation in studies. All these challenges generate acculturative stress. In the opinion of Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994), the individual commonalities reeve that furthermore hand out to the international students' acculturative concern are made up of ambiguity to speak in the local language, feeling of slight fear in having a hand in social activities, be in need of a sense of fellowship with the host community, gets worked up about the doable after rounding off one's study: whether to about face to their home country or push back in a foreign land. Stressors may supervene on due to this wavering acquaintance of acculturation. For some, acculturative changes may be in all respects in the form of stressors, while for others, they may be of no stumbling block. These proliferating measures of acculturative stress may bespeak as a follow-up of acculturation occurrences and stressors.

Mizoram in itself is a serene state. The Mizos are known for their hospitality, kindness, unselfishness and helpfulness to others. Highly driven by a Christian culture, and being a close-knit society, Mizo culture is disciplined and a spirit of

brotherhood hovers over all. Known as a society with no gender and class distinction, the need emerges to examine if the state provides conducive environment for students coming from across the country. Moreover, the study of whether the favourable general nature of the home residents and institutions, and students' experiences here make it easier for adaptation and adjustment to the new environmental setting is essential.

Over and about that, when distinct stressors spring up due to acculturation, it is blatant that these may be detrimental towards students' well-being. Sad to relate that the magnitude of well-being has been ploddingly tapering off at all ages globally at hand at the technological age. With a falling off in well-being, one's prowess to fend and deal with stress is odds-on to subside.

Studies have set out that the pay-off of acculturative stress is mentioned in the same breath with poor health (Ayoob & Singh, 2011) and several mental issues including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, psychological well-being, and negative career outlook (Soriano, 2009; Tafoya, 2011; Li et al., 2014; Pitre, 2017; Wang, 2017; O'Reilly, 2018). With the increasing and emerging higher institutes that invite students from across the country, it is therefore equally important to pour over the untoward aftermath of acculturative stress on the students' well-being to succour and get a grip on their acculturation related issues.

1.7   Rationale of the Study

Higher education internationalisation has jacked up in the last few decades. Consequently, millions of students have been traveling from pole to pole (from their home countries to other countries) to seek hands at higher education. In recent past, India is talked of as one of the germane centres of education for international students. The international students' bearing in our institutions lend a hand to push for culture and international fore-bearing among themselves. The number of cases of acculturative stress inflates with the hike in international students. International students not only come unstuck almost identical to those of other university students, but they have the put the screws on in confederation with life in a new environment (by learning the new language and culture). The concoction of these stresses reduces

the performativity of international students. The preceding research on acculturation lead to the belief that an individual can find one's capability back to operate fine by building up his/her supposition of the new environment's language and culture. Besides, research further testified international students adjusted themselves quicker and easier if they received information and support (Chae, 2014).

The greater part of studies brought about on acculturative stress and coping strategies are wrapped up elementally on international students studying overseas, whose focus has also been shared with migrants worldwide.

It is to be noted that students also relocate from land to land within a country for higher education that is one step ahead. In a diverse country like India, every state has its own unique culture and tradition. The human body is one even though it contains many member parts, and all of those members together make up the full-functioning body. Similarly, although there are differences in caste, creed, colour, religion, region, gender, ethnicity, and culture, we are all humans and social beings. Along the same line, the researcher through this present work tries to explain the importance and make people understand the concept of unity in diversity through respecting, adapting, accepting, and coping with others and their cultures. These differing culture, tradition, religion, and lifestyle require one to adjust and adapt to any place. The inability or difficulty in adjusting to a new place may impact students functioning, resulting in low academic performance as well as decreasing overall well-being.

Only few studies on acculturation stress have been taken up in the country; and no previous studies have explored the status of well-being associated with acculturative stress among students in the north-east.

Mizoram is inhabited by the Mizos who are a family of tribes, friendly, closely knitted together by different and common tradition, customs, culture, language with distinctive mongoloid features from the rest of the country.

The animosity by the Mizos towards the non-Mizos started more than five decades ago, during the time of insurgency. The Mizo Peace accord was said yes to

in 1986, calling in indissoluble peace and making Mizoram the most peaceful state in north-east India hitherto. Despite this, many Mizos, especially those who had experienced the schism, non-conformity first hand, still retain that feeling of resentment towards the non-Mizos.

But, this trend of generalising all the non-Mizos into one bucket is considered to be a thing of the past. Things change and Mizoram has been growing, especially with the establishment of higher education institutions; these attract students from all over the country.

The Mizos are known as having a society with no class prejudice and no telling of difference on the rationale of gender. Despite this, however, interest and curiosity arise if non-resident students encounter perceived discriminatory practices, how they deal with acculturative stress and the strategies they use to cope during their stay in Mizoram. The thrust of digging up the level of acculturative stress is to aid and abet non-resident students to perform their function at their full flair and reify more scholastic excellence.

Therefore, the need of the study emerges from the lack of research on acculturative stress for non-resident students studying in the north-eastern region. There has always been poor or absence of information and awareness on the kind of acculturative issues faced by the students. Considering the acculturative stress and coping difficulties faced by north-east students as a whole in different parts of the country, there also exists a need to identify if the non-resident students deal with acculturative stress and if so, identify their coping strategies here Mizoram. This study can also help professionals consider acculturation and related stressors when working with non-resident students. Hence, it is the need of the hour to conduct this study and is therefore taken up.

1.8   Research Questions

1. What are the major sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in relation to their gender, education level, and length of stay in Mizoram?

2. What are the strategies non-resident students use to cope with acculturative stress?

3. How do acculturative stresses affect the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram?

4. What measures will reduce the present acculturative stress level and improve the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram?

1.9   Statement of the Problem

In the context of the above-mentioned rationale and quest to find answers to the research questions, the statement of the problem is "Acculturative Stress, Coping Strategies and Well-being among Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in Mizoram."

1.10   Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To study the significant sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in relation to their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses in Mizoram

2. To find out the coping strategies used by non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram

3. To study the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram

4. To suggest the measures for reducing the present acculturative stress level and improving well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

1.11   Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the study are:

1. There is no significant difference of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram in relation to gender, length of stay, educational level, and type of courses.

2. There is no significant difference of coping strategies among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram in relation to gender, length of stay, educational level, and type of courses.

3. There is no relationship between acculturative stress and well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram in relation to gender, length of stay, educational level, and type of courses.

4. There is no significant relationship among total acculturative stress, coping strategies and well-being.

1.12   Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Acculturative Stress

In this study, acculturative stress refers to the stress that results from and has its source in the difficulties experienced in the process of staying and studying in a Mizo social-cultural environment.

Coping Strategies

Coping strategies here refer to the behavioural and psychological efforts that non-resident students pursuing higher education employ to master, tolerate, reduce, or minimise stressful events.

Well-Being

In this study, well-being refers to the state in which non-resident students realizes their potential, can cope with every day and acculturative stresses of life, work productively, and fruitfully contribute to their community.

Non-Resident Student

Non-resident student here refers to non-Mizo students studying in higher education institutions of Mizoram.

Higher Education

It refers to the undergraduate, postgraduate and research courses at degree colleges, universities, medical colleges, and institutes of technology in Mizoram.

Mizoram

Mizoram is a state located in the north-eastern region of India that includes eleven districts, with Aizawl as its capital city.

1.13   Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited to four higher educational institutions in Mizoram, namely, Mizoram University (MZU), Zoram Medical College (ZMC), National Institute of Technology Mizoram (NIT- Mizoram), and Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences (RIPANS).

The review of related literatures of the discussed variables is presented in the succeeding chapter.

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Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The aim of 'review of related literature' is to provide an understanding of the existing study relevant to a particular topic or area of study. It provides the foundation of knowledge on the topic undertaken for study. In other words, review of related literature provides an overview of the current knowledge on the topic and helps in assessing the previous researches carried out and the relevancy of existing materials. It acquaints the researcher with the current knowledge in the area where research is to be conducted. Existing literature is important for a researcher to point out areas that require further study and thus aid in finding out new areas where research needs to be carried out. Results and findings of prior researches are found to be significant in comparing with the results obtained. Further, it helps in comparison and contrast so as to show the originality of the research than that of the existing literatures pertaining to methodologies and statistical technique used.

This chapter includes various studies of existing literatures conducted by earlier researchers related to acculturative stress, coping strategies and well-being of immigrants and international students globally. In the olden days, very few students migrated from one place to another country or one state to other states to pursue their higher education because of a lack of awareness and transport facilities about education. There were very few studies conducted in the previous years. Internationalisation and institutionalisation are a new phenomenon occurred recently in education. In the 21st century, a paradigm shift is taking place in education due to liberalisation, globalisation, and privatisation, now students are traveling across the globe to pursue their education. Slowly these cultural issues were recognized by researchers and gained momentum to handle these issues in the field of Education, Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology in an applied manner to reduce this acculturative stress. Due to this reason, all three aspects of studies are kept under one theme. Relevant studies included in this chapter ranges from the year 1987 to 2021.

2.1   Acculturative Stress, Coping Strategies and Well-being

Mena et al. (1987) conducted a study entitled *"Acculturative Stress and Specific Coping Strategies among Immigrant and Later Generation College Students."* They aimed to study the association of acculturative stress on several variables. This included the students' self-esteem, locus of control, and loyalty to American culture. The sample consisted of multicultural and immigrant college undergraduates with a total of 214 studying in the USA. Major findings of the study found that students who immigrate to USA at a later stage find it difficult to adapt and perceived more acculturative related stress experiences than the other groups. It was also found that late immigrants used more individualistic approach of coping. Further, second and third-generation immigrant students use more of social support to cope with their problems. Early immigrants used both social support and individualistic coping strategies.

Wan et al. (1992) conducted a study *"Academic stress of international students attending US universities"* where academic stress among 412 foreign students enrolled in graduate programmes in the USA was examined concerning several parameters. The study was founded on a cognitive framework that views academic stress as the result of students' assessments of how demanding their role expectations are and how confident they are in their ability to handle those demands. In turn, it was proposed that these two evaluations depended on the students' role competencies, social support system, and cultural distance. It is revealed that there were differences between the two types of assessments' main factors. Self-perceived academic, problem-solving, and English-language skills as well as social support networks were the significant factors of secondary evaluation, whereas the primary appraisals were self-perceived skills of the English language, and cultural distance to a lesser extent. The implications for how colleges may collaborate with foreign students more successfully are examined.

Tyler and Ellison (1994) in a study *"Sources of stress and psychological well-being in high dependency nursing"* examined workplace stress in four high-dependency nursing specialties: operating rooms, liver and kidney,

haematology/oncology, and elective surgery in the USA. Quantitative and qualitative studies were carried out on the causes and effects of stress, their psychological well-being, and their coping mechanisms. The findings showed that while stress was experienced in equal amounts by all four departments, diverse causes were reported. The stress caused by patients' deaths and dying was reduced for theatre nurses. Post-qualification training, the number of children, and partnership status were additional variables that affected both the level and sources of stress. Post-qualification trained nurses reported feeling more stressed overall. It has been discovered that social support affects psychological wellbeing. The symptoms of stress were significantly reduced in married or cohabitating nurses compared to single nurses, and dealing with patients and family members was significantly less stressful for nurses who had two children. Responses to stress resulted in a variety of healthy and unhealthy coping mechanisms. This study suggests enrolling nurses in stress-management programmes and management and administration classes.

Allen et al. (1998) in a study *"Social support, Hispanic emotional acculturative stress and gender"* investigated whether there are gender disparities in how employees perceive the social support they received from sources in a multicultural workplace. The sample consisted of 219 native Mexican employees and employees of the Republic of El Salvador (USA). Men reported receiving substantially more praise, assistance with personal issues, and assistance with their jobs than women. Also investigated was the link between emotional acculturative stress and perceived social support. Compared to men, women reported much higher levels of emotional acculturative stress. The emotional acculturative stress of women was unrelated to intra-organizational social support. Men's emotional acculturative stress was substantially correlated with social support.

Hamilton and Fagot (1998) compared male and female coping practices in a study *"Chronic stress and coping styles: A comparison of male and female undergraduates."* The study tested the hypothesis that males utilise instrumental coping techniques more frequently than women, who are believed to use emotion-focused coping techniques to cope with chronic stressors. The sample consisted of 51 female and 39 male first-year undergraduates using telephone interviews. The

analyses of variance were utilised to measure gender differences in the occurrence of daily stressors, concurrent perceptions of stress, and use of problem-solving strategies. The finding did not reveal any gender differences. The implications of these findings are discussed in light of cultural expectations. The ramifications of these findings are examined, in light of cultural norms,

Harju and Bolen (1998) conducted a survey on 204 college students in a study *"The effects of optimism on coping and perceived quality of life of students."* The study utilised three levels of optimism to compare coping and subjective quality of life aspects to better understand the consequences of optimism. Findings showed that high-optimist students utilise the most action and reframing coping strategies and have the highest overall quality of life. However, compared to high-optimist students, midlevel optimists utilise more alcohol as a coping mechanism. Low optimists utilise more drinking and disengagement to cope with their general dissatisfaction with their quality of life. Women report higher life quality and use emotion, venting, and religion as coping mechanisms. It is interesting to find that males use more humour and acceptance.

Wang and Patten (2002) assessed how different coping mechanisms affect the relationship between stressors and the prevalence of serious depression in the general population in a study entitled *"The moderating effects of coping strategies on major depression in the general population."* By utilising logistic regression modelling to look at interactions between coping and life stress on major depression, it was possible to identify the effects of coping techniques in relation to psychological stressors on the prevalence of major depression. The result showed that there was little evidence that coping mechanisms had a significant impact on the different types of stress assessed. There is proof that women who use "pray and seek religious help" and "talk to others about the difficulties" as coping mechanisms reduce their chance of developing serious depression while dealing with relationships and financial stress. In the context of one or more recent life events, as well as individual stress, interpersonal stress, relationship stress (with a spouse), and environmental stress, women's use of the emotional expression as a coping mechanism may reduce the likelihood of major depression. The study concluded that depending on the situation,

various coping mechanisms may have varying effects on the occurrence of major depression. These discoveries could be crucial for the treatment and prevention of depressive illnesses.

Noh and Kaspar (2003) looked at how social situations and cultural norms affected how people dealt with perceived racial prejudice in a study *"Perceived discrimination and depression: Moderating effects of coping, acculturation, and ethnic support."* Personal interviews with Korean immigrants living in Toronto produced cross-sectional data that was then examined. Findings indicated that when used frequently, passive, emotion-focused coping had detrimental consequences on the respondents' mental health. Conversely, active, problem-focused coping techniques were more helpful in minimising the effects of perceived discrimination on depression. The current data more strongly support a social contextual explanation of coping mechanisms than a cultural maintenance explanation. Additionally, they contend that individuals from racial minorities with different cultural backgrounds are more likely to oppose racism than to accept it when given access to sufficient social resources.

Nolen-Hoeksema and Rusting (2003) summarised the current body of literature on the subject, which includes both large-scale, nationally representative empirical papers as well as previous meta-analyses on the topic, in order to more thoroughly understand the past research on the relationship between gender and subjective well-being in a study entitled *"Gender differences in well-being."* In the quest to find out the existence of gender differences in subjective well-being as well as justifications for the absence of gender differences, it was concluded by discussing the existing limitations of the current study and significant future directions.

Wilton and Constantine (2003) in a study *"Length of residence, cultural adjustment difficulties, and psychological distress symptoms in Asian and Latin American international college students"* looked at concerns with psychological distress and cultural acculturation in 190 international college students from Asia and Latin America. The results showed that Latin American pupils reported more psychological distress than their Asian counterparts did. Additionally, distress

concerning intercultural competence and acculturative concern were positively connected to psychological distress in both groups. Whereas, the psychological distress symptoms were negatively correlated with the duration of stay in the USA.

Yeh and Inose (2003) in *"International students reported English fluency, social support satisfaction, and social connectedness as predictors of acculturative stress"* examined acculturative stress in relation to different predictors namely age, gender, and social support satisfaction, reported English fluency, and social connection consisting 359 international students. The findings of the study revealed that international students from Europe were less stressed by acculturation than those from Asia, Central/Latin America, and Africa. Additionally, acculturative stress was predicted by social connectivity, social support satisfaction, and English fluency. Research and counselling implications are suggested and discussed.

Constantine et al. (2004) conducted a study on 320 African, Asian, and Latin American international college students studying in the USA. Their title of the study is entitled *"Self-concealment, social self-efficacy, acculturative stress, and depression in African, Asian, and Latin American international college students."* Their study examined if acculturative stress and depression has effect on the students' self-concealment behaviours and social self-efficacy skills. Regional group membership, sex, and English language fluency were controlled. Results indicated that self-concealment and social self-efficacy did not influence or reduce international students' the levels of acculturation related stress experiences and depressive symptomatology.

Misra and Castillo (2004) in a study *"Academic stress among college students: Comparison of American and international students"* evaluated academic stressors and responses to stressors among American and overseas students using Gadzella's Life Stress Inventory. The sample included 392 international and American students from two universities in the Midwest of the USA. The result indicated that in comparison to international students, American students reported more self-imposed stressors and more behavioural responses to stressors. The two best predictors of a respondent's behavioural, emotional, physiological, and cognitive

response to stressors were the respondent's status (American or international) and the interplay of status and stressors. In the regression model, five stressors reached statistical significance. The results highlight the need of taking cultural differences into account while managing stress. The implications for university-based mental health professionals are highlighted.

Lawrence et al. (2006) in a study *"Gender differences in coping strategies of undergraduate students and their impact on self-esteem and attainment"* looked into how coping mechanisms varied between first-year male and female students in a higher education setting, as well as how much those coping mechanisms affected self-esteem and academic achievement. Results showed that academic achievement and use of coping mechanisms varied significantly between males and females. Males were shown to be better at emotionally detaching from situations, more likely to exhibit emotional inhibition or "bottling up" of emotions, and to have higher self-esteem. Additionally, it was noted that women greatly outperformed men in terms of attainment.

Thomas and Choi (2006) conducted a study entitled *"Acculturative Stress and Social Support among Korean and Indian Immigrant Adolescents in the United States."* The sample consisted of 165 Korean and Indian immigrants. It aimed to find out the extent to which social network influence the level of the immigrants' acculturation related stress. Results found that participants under study showed low to moderate level of acculturative stress. The study also revealed that social support activities minimised the immigrants' level of acculturative stress. Among the support received, parental support of the immigrant adolescents was the most important indicator of reducing the acculturative stress level.

Ye (2006) in a study *"An examination of acculturative stress, interpersonal social support, and use of online ethnic social groups among Chinese international students"* studied the connections between acculturative stress, interpersonal social support, and use of online ethnic social networks using survey data gathered from Chinese foreign college students studying in the United States. According to the findings, students who were happier with their social networks felt less prejudice,

hatred, and other negative emotions related to change, but not less fear. Students who reported obtaining more online informational support from their ethnic social groups showed less acculturative stress. These students used online ethnic social groups. Students who reported receiving more emotional support online also expressed less acculturative stress related to perceived hostility. Satisfaction with interpersonal support networks and perceived online information support were found to be negatively correlated.

Agarwal and Chahar (2007) researched engineering and management students in India about the extent and types of role stresses present. The findings let out that students are confronting role overload, self-role distance, and role stagnation. Role stagnation is experienced more among male students than female students. However, between first-year students and their seniors or between management and engineering students, no conspicuous differences in any of the role stressors could be observed. The results are evocative of the social and educational environment, which is rampant in the country.

Gentry et al. (2007) in a study *"Gender differences in stress and coping among adults living in Hawaii"* comparatively examined stress, health-related stressors, financial stress, work-related issues, adaptive coping strategies, maladaptive strategies, avoidance strategies, more frequent and readiness to use stress management strategies between male and female. The sample consisted of 1518 participants. Results revealed that while social and health stressors were experienced by both sexes, women reported higher overall felt stress levels. Men felt more personal reasons to be stressed. The perceived capacity to handle stress was the same for both genders. Men were more likely to employ maladaptive and avoidance coping mechanisms, whilst women were more likely to use adaptive coping mechanisms. When it came to stress management, there were no particularly noticeable gender differences. Interventions can be created to assist people to manage stress better based on the findings of this study. While interventions for men may promote the use of adaptive coping mechanisms like exercise and aggressively tackling stressors, interventions for women may concentrate on promoting the use of adaptive coping mechanisms like prayer and talking to friends and family. According

to this study, gender disparities in stress levels and coping in Hawaii are comparable to those seen in earlier mainland investigations. More investigation into certain stressors and coping mechanisms may make it possible to develop solutions that are more thorough and efficient.

Msengi (2007) in a study *"Sources of stress and its impact on health behaviours and academic performance of international students at a comprehensive mid-western university"* aimed to look into the sources of stress, how it affected the health habits and academic performance of international students attending the mid-western institution, and how they dealt with stress. The survey included 230 international students. The Sources of Stress, Health Behaviours, and Academic Performance Scale for International Students were used to gather the data. The t-test, ANOVA, chi-square, and bivariate correlation were among the statistical techniques used for data analysis. The findings showed that academic pressure, homesickness/loneliness, alienation/discrimination, communication/language challenges, and financial difficulties, were the main sources of stress for international students. The most often mentioned stress-relieving activities were making friends, courting American students, and engaging in religion. There were significant gender disparities in the amount of stress experienced, with male students generally reporting less stress than female students. International students did well academically generally, with a mean GPA of 3.4, and overall health behaviours were good among them. International students claimed that stress served as a motivator for good academic performance and healthy lifestyle choices. It was suggested that rigorous orientation programmes and training in cultural competency for faculty, staff, and students would assist promote engagement and understanding among the university community and thereby smooth the acculturation process for overseas students.

Poyrazli and Lopez (2007) conducted a study entitled *"An Exploratory Study of Perceived Discrimination and Homesickness: A Comparison of International Students and American Students."* The study was conducted in USA with a sample of 439 college students (198 international and 241 American students). The study examined the influence of homesickness and perceived discrimination on certain

variables such as English proficiency, age, and years of residence. The major findings revealed that the experiences of homesickness vary with differing age, experiences of discrimination, and the level of English proficiency. The difference in race or ethnicity was reported to predict high level of perceived discrimination. International students who have stayed for a longer duration of years were also found to report high level of perceived discrimination. European international students studying in America were found to experience reduced discrimination than those from other regions of the world.

Wallace and Lemaire (2007) in their study *"On physician well-being"* found elements that are both beneficial and detrimental to physicians' wellbeing at a Western Canadian university's Department of Medicine. In-depth and exploratory interviews were carried out with 54 doctors to find out what influences their wellbeing. The participants described how some aspects of their jobs are demanding and have a negative impact on their well-being. The extent to which the parameters found in the interviews are significantly connected to physicians' well-being was evaluated using multivariate analysis. The results highlight the significance of co-worker support, both in terms of its direct relationship to doctors' wellbeing and its role in mitigating the unfavourable consequences of work pressures. Understanding the elements relating to physician well-being has numerous major consequences for physicians and the organisations that employ them. Additionally, research appears that patient interactions are a significant source of both stress and satisfaction for doctors in their day-to-day employment.

Eaton and Bradley (2008) looked at how gender and negative affectivity affected how stressors were perceived and which coping mechanisms were chosen in a study *"The role of gender and negative affectivity in stressor appraisal and coping selection."* By requiring participants to rate the stressfulness of identical hypothetical circumstances, different exposure to stressors was controlled. As was expected, women perceived the circumstances as being more stressful than males, and participants' negative affectivity was associated with higher perceptions of stress. Even when perceived stress was under control, women were more likely than men to support the use of emotion-focused coping techniques. Both avoidance-focused and

emotion-focused coping were predicted by negative affectivity, although only the latter association remained significant after accounting for stressor assessments. The effects of the gender-negative affectivity interaction were not noteworthy. Discussion is carried out regarding the implications for stress prediction and management.

Lee (2008) conducted a study on 12 international students entitled "*Stress and Coping Experiences of International Students with Language Barriers during the Acculturation Process.*" This study employed grounded theory techniques to examine and understand the stress and coping mechanisms of international students in relation to language barrier during their acculturation process in the USA. It also aimed and to understand the development of acculturation related stress, how students cope with the stress, and the process of adaptation. The study have considered some important steps to develop a theory to understand these international students, and how their problems can be addressed focusing on language barriers. The study identified five main results which revealed the students' emotions, perceptions and experiences concerned with language barrier. This included perceived stressors, stress responses, stress reducers, coping strategies, and adaptation. The first phase examined the barriers caused by language in the process of adaptation among the students. Result indicated that students reported adjustment due to language deficiency coupled with shame and embarrassment. The second phase of the study predicted that the growing awareness of the environment and psychological stress-moderating variables lead to the students' comprehension that language issues is a temporary learning problem which may get better with practise and time, rather than as a source of personal failure or shame. The third phase emphasised that students reached successful adaptation by developing their own coping mechanisms and regard language acquisition period as a chance to grow and communicate better. This perception is achieved by observing similar behaviours of students in different countries (normalisation) and considering advice from students and teachers from the same country. Students reported that successful adaptation could be achieved by both improving their English language efficiency, and reconsidering their approach towards language. This enabled students to improve their language skills and achieve personal growth.

Kim (2009) in a study *"Acculturative stress, social support, and physical activity among international students in the United States"* sought to determine how much acculturative stress affects international students' levels of physical activity, how different types and sources of social support affect those levels, and how much social support influences the relationship between those levels of physical activity and acculturative stress. The sample included 215 Korean international students from Bryan-College Station, Texas. The findings showed that only the acculturative stressor of English language difficulty had a detrimental impact on physical activity levels. Physical activity levels were strongly correlated with social support. Last but not least, the support of Korean and American friends had a favourable impact on the degree of vigorous physical activity when it came to the relationship between acculturative stress and physical activity levels.

Soriano (2009) in a study *"Testing two models of acculturation and well-being of Asian college students"* examined the strategies used in the acculturation process in relation to well-being. Sample included 100 Asian college students. The findings revealed significant negative correlation existed between acculturation and acculturative stress among the variables examined. However, the study found that there is significant correlation between acculturative stress and depression (r = 0.44), state anxiety (r = 0.36), and trait anxiety (r = 0.50). The study established a finding that students who acculturate successfully have low level of acculturative stress.

Brock-Murray (2010) in a study entitled "*Comparing Racial Identity, Acculturative Stress, and Feelings of Alienation in African-American College Attendees and Non-attendees"* studied 32 students and 24 non-students. The study included non-student African-Americans living in mainly Black communities and African-American college students. The study compared the acculturative stress experiences, feelings of isolation, and racial identity development. The tools employed were Cross Racial Identity Scale (2000), Social, Attitudinal, Family and Environment Scale (1987), and The Alienation Scale (1980). The study found that the major source of acculturative stress was found to be pre-counter self-hatred on the rating identity scale. Further, college students were found to perceive more acculturative stress, multiculturalist-inclusive racial identity attitudes, and higher

levels of internalisation compared to the non-students. In addition, there was no significant difference found in relation to alienation.

Dawson and Panchanandeswaran (2010) studied 283 Dominican immigrants in a study *"Discrimination and acculturative stress among first-generation Dominicans."* The study investigated the association between discriminating encounters and acculturative stress levels. After adjusting for demographics, acculturation, and transnationalism, the results of linear regression analysis showed that experiences of frequent racial discrimination and significant racist incidents were significant predictors of acculturative stress. Given the evidence of the detrimental impact of discriminatory experiences, the findings from this study have implications for interventions with this understudied and underserved population.

Otlu (2010) in a study entitled *"Impact of Acculturative Stress and Social Support on Academic Adjustment of International Students"* studied 170 (Male-135, Female-35) international students studying in five state universities in the state of Ankara, Turkey. It aimed to investigate the adjustment scores of international students. The study was carried out to find the association of students' adjustment in relation to cultural distance, acculturative stress, perceived social support, coping strategies and gender. Major findings indicated that perceived low level of acculturative stress, perceived cultural distance and high use of positive coping skills resulted to better adjustment to college. Other findings showed that acculturative stress, positive coping skills, and cultural distance influence international students' college adjustment scores; however, factors such as negative coping skills, gender, perceived social support, passive coping skills does not influence the college adjustment.

Vergaraa et al. (2010) in a study *"Emotional Intelligence, Coping Responses, and Length of Stay as Correlates of Acculturative Stress among International University Students in Thailand"* investigated 216 international students from seven universities in Thailand. The sample consisted of undergraduate students. It aimed to find out the correlation of acculturative stress in relation to emotional intelligence, and coping strategies. It also aimed to find out the major predictors of acculturative

stress, and to find if there is varying impact on the different length of stay of the students. The researcher prepared a questionnaire consisting of demographic information, length of stay in Thailand, and the different stressors that students undergo as a result of acculturation in the host country. It also used Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students, Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory, and Coping Responses Inventory. Major findings revealed that the different acculturative stress experienced by students included in areas such as academic, culture, daily living, family, finance, interpersonal relationship, language and feeling of loneliness. The findings also indicated that participants' experience of acculturative stress was mainly caused by homesickness, perceived discrimination, and change in culture. In the study, passive coping strategies and active coping strategies predicted low levels of acculturative stress. In addition, the varying years of stay, and emotional intelligence were also found to predict low levels of acculturative stress. Meanwhile, the students' level of acceptance and emotional intelligence influenced the level of acculturative stress.

Abdulghani et al. (2011) conducted a cross-sectional study entitled "*Stress and its effects on medical students: A cross-sectional study at a college of medicine in Saudi Arabia*" to examine the medical school-related stress that exposes students to the psychological disturbance that may have detrimental effects. The study evaluated medical students' psychological discomfort; identify stresses; and the relationship between these stressors and academic performance. The sample of the study consisted of 219 medical students enrolled in basic science and clinical clerkship training at Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. The Mental Health Inventory (MHI-38) and an additional questionnaire were used for the collection of data required. The study revealed that male students had higher rates of anxiety, despair, and grief than females.

Ayoob et al. (2011) studied Kashmiri students in their study *"Length of stay, acculturative stress, and health among Kashmiri students in Central India."* Their study found that the different duration of stay in the host state influenced the acculturative stress experiences. Moreover, students who have stayed for a lesser period of time in Central India experienced poor general health and high

acculturative stress. It was also found that if no proper guidance is given, Kashmiri students are liable to acquire psychological symptoms and psychosocial stress.

Cetinkaya-Yildiz et al. (2011) aimed to examine the psychological distress of international students in a study entitled *"Psychological Distress among International Students in Turkey."* The study included 334 foreign students from several public institutions in Turkey as the samples to predict their psychological distress. The standard multiple regression analysis was used to check the influence of different attributes on the psychological distress of international students. These attributes were namely, individual characteristics, students' interaction, discrimination experienced, Turkish language proficiency, perceived cultural distance, social life integration, and life satisfaction. The findings showed that factors including life happiness, social integration, language ability in Turkish, and duration of stay in Turkey explain 32.8 per cent of the variation in the psychological distress levels of international students. It is concluded that several personal features and circumstances are associated with the psychological suffering of international students. As a result, international students need to complete a preparation procedure or programme back home. The host nation must then offer a guidance and orientation programme.

Desa et al. (2011) assessed the acculturative stress among international postgraduate university students in a study *"Acculturative stress among international postgraduate students at UKM."* The sample included 24 postgraduate students (16 men and 8 women) from the School of Psychology and Human Development at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The t-test was used to gauge the degree of stress among various age and gender groups. Results showed that environment and attitude were the two main causes of acculturative stress. Nevertheless, there was no discernible difference in acculturative stress levels between genders or age groups. To execute stress management techniques, it is essential to have some knowledge and understanding of the sources of stress among foreign postgraduate university students. Stress can lower motivation and academic performance.

Hendrickson et al. (2011) analysed the development of friendships, their importance in studying abroad, and the development of unusual friend groupings in a study *"An analysis of friendship networks, social connectedness, homesickness, and satisfaction levels of international students*." Results found that international students frequently have more friends from their home country, according to study, but there is also a link between having more friends from the host country and feelings of pleasure, happiness, and social connectivity. By analysing friendship network ratios, the current study seeks to further analyse these connections through a social network lens.

Tafoya (2011) studied the association of acculturation and acculturative stress in a study *"The Relationship of Acculturation and Acculturative Stress in Latina/o Youths' Psychosocial Functioning"* on a sample of 206 Latina/o adolescents from three public high schools in the Western United States. It further examined the influence of acculturation and acculturative stress on depression, self-esteem, and substance use related problems of the Latina/o adolescents. The tools used in the study included the Centre for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (1977), Brief Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican-Americans-II (2005), the short version of the SAFE, adaptation from The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (1997), and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Stress due to the acculturation process is found to strongly influence the psychosocial functioning. Major findings of the study revealed that there is significant gender difference in the acculturation process in relation to psychosocial functioning; males are found to have more issues in their psychosocial functioning as a result of acculturative stress. It was further found that the experiences of acculturative stress predicted students' low self-esteem and higher depression. Acculturative stress strongly influenced the level of depression among the students.

Junhyoung et al. (2012) in their study *"Acculturation, Stress, and Depressive Symptoms among Korean Immigrants in the United States"* examined the Korea immigrant adolescents in USA. It aimed to investigate the coping strategies adopted by the participants in the processes of adaptation and acculturation. Findings of the study indicated that in order to cope with the different stressors, participants seek for

social support, engage in meaningful activities to distract themselves from the stressors, and these resulted to positive emotions in dealing with their daily stressors. Creating and adopting their own coping strategies helped immigrant adolescents to overcome their issues, and successfully adjust to the host country.

Sirin et al. (2012) investigated the progression of internalising mental health symptoms in this three-wave longitudinal study such as anxiety, depression, and somatic symptoms in a study *"The role of acculturative stress on mental health symptoms for immigrant adolescents: A longitudinal investigation."* The study was conducted in the USA and the sample consisted of 332 first- and second-generation immigrant teenagers who reside in cities made up the participants, where 44 per cent were male. The participants' racial and ethnic backgrounds and generational makeup generally mirrored those of American urban centres. The results of individual growth curve modelling indicate a notable decrease in internalising mental health issues over the high school years. At the same time, increased acculturative stress exposure predicted noticeably more somatic, withdrawn, anxious, and depressive symptoms. Differences in internalising mental health issues by gender and generation status were also noted.

Thurber and Walton (2012) examined the transition of college to university students in a study *"Homesickness and adjustment in university students."* The finding indicated that students frequently describe feeling depressed and anxious, acting withdrawn, and having trouble focusing on things unrelated to their homes. Intense homesickness is a concern for both domestic and overseas university students. In addition to causing new mental and physical health issues, it can exacerbate pre-existing mood and anxiety disorders and even cause withdrawal from school in rare cases. The study indicated that students struggling with homesickness can benefit from effective preventative and treatment techniques, which can lead to a positive, fulfilling, and fruitful school experience.

Thaker (2013) studied *"Acculturative Stress and Coping Stress and Coping Strategies Used by Asian Indians Living in the United States: A Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry."* The research findings were analysed using mixed method. It

was found in the quantitative findings that young participants in moving to new place reported their difficulty in coping with the acculturative stress. Participants from large Indian city found it less stressful to adapt to large US city. At the same time, it is less stressful for participants from small city to move to large metropolitan cites. Meanwhile, older participants reported the belief of easier adaptation if they had been younger when they moved to the USA. The qualitative result of the study found that adaptation process and issues is more difficult for the older participants. Result from the tool, SAFE-R indicated that the level of acculturative stress does not have an influence on gender. At the same time, interview of participants revealed that females reported more stress in the process of acculturation, and use a wide range of strategies for coping with the challenges faced. More duration of stay proved to reduce the level of acculturative stress in this study. This is attributed to the ability to have successful communication and relationship with the residents, employment, and ability to figure out transportation facilities. In addition, unemployed participants reported more stress than the employed.

Waghachavare et al. (2013) conducted a study "*A Study of Stress among Students of Professional Colleges from an urban area in India*" where student stress and its relationships to various academic, social, and health-related variables were evaluated. The study included 1200 dental, medical, and engineering students from different professional colleges. Findings revealed that 299 (24.4%) students reported feeling stressed. Further, 112 (20.4%) males and 187 (27.7%) females reported experiencing stress, and there was a statistically significant correlation between the two. Stress and the different courses of study were statistically significantly associated. By using binary logistic regression, stress was significantly predicted by medical studies, lifestyle and health factors, and academic aspects. Students from all three of the research domains experienced stress. One of the main sources of stress was also found to be academic issues.

Azizah et al. (2014) in a study entitled "*Acculturative Stress among International Students*" studied the acculturative stress of international undergraduate students. The sample consisted of 378 international students from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). The tool used in the study was ASSIS by

Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994). Statistical analyses were done using SPSS software. Data were analysed using One-way ANOVA with Tukey's post hoc test and Pearson Bivariate correlational analysis. The results indicated that the students' level of acculturative stress does not influence the duration of stay, and among gender. Meanwhile, the study indicated that non-English speaking international students experience more issues, resulting to high acculturative stress in the process of acculturation.

Bernal (2014) in a study entitled *"Acculturation, acculturative stress, social status, and well-being among English language proficient immigrants"* investigated issues regarding immigrants' well-being as they acculturate to and manage acculturative pressures in the USA. The study looked at the potential impact of subjective social status on the processes of acculturation and acculturative stress. According to a study of the research, it was anticipated that the perceived social status of immigrants would influence their level of well-being and that it would also regulate the relationship between acculturation, acculturative stress, and well-being. To test this theory, 211 adult immigrants were enlisted using the Mechanical Turk website. The final sample had a higher level of Americanization than native culture, and around half of the individuals identified as non-Latino White/Caucasian. Overall, the findings showed that acculturative stress had a detrimental effect on both quality of life and psychological health. The quality of life and psychological health were likewise favourably correlated with increased acculturation. Additionally, regression analysis showed that the relationship between acculturative stress and well-being was mediated by subjective social status. The findings provide a fresh insight into that subjective social status is important for immigrants' well-being. Future studies ought to focus on communities that have less acculturation to American culture and investigate the variables that influence immigrants' subjective experiences of status.

Chung and Epstein (2014) in a study *"Perceived racial discrimination, acculturative stress, and psychological distress among Asian immigrants: The moderating effects of support and interpersonal strain from a partner"* examined the relationship between Asian immigrants' experiences of acculturative stress and perceived racial discrimination. Further, the degree of psychological distress was

studied in this study, as well as the roles of partner support and strain as moderators. The sample consisted of 1012 Asian immigrants. The result through multiple regression models indicated that acculturative stress and perceived racial prejudice are linked to higher psychological distress. Additionally, the negative relationship between perceived racial discrimination and psychological discomfort was made worse by interpersonal tension from a partner, while interpersonal support did not function as a moderator. The results imply that in addition to parenting and individual functioning, couple relationships should be a focus of intervention programmes aimed at assisting Asian immigrants coping mechanisms with acculturative stress and discrimination.

Li et al. (2014) in their study reviewed 18 quantitative studies of psychological well-being on international students. The study entitled "*East Asian International Students and Psychological Well-Being: A Systematic Review*" included published papers in peer reviewed journals from the year 2000 to 2011.The major findings are classified into three results. First, among the 18 researches conducted, 13 researchers have taken up Chinese international students to represent East Asian and Asian international students. Secondly, the studies reviewed stated that studies conducted on psychological well-being has strong correlation with students' attitude towards getting social and professional support, language barrier, fluency in English language, duration of stay in the new place, depression, and acculturation. The third major finding revealed that among the psychological well-being studied, the most predominant variables included depression (n-6), and acculturation (n-5).

Mahmood (2014) in a study *"An Analysis of Acculturative Stress, Sociocultural Adaptation, and Satisfaction among International Students at a Non-Metropolitan University"* aimed to examine the acculturative stress and socio-cultural adaptation in the process of acculturation. The sample consisted of 413 international students from a non-metropolitan university in the USA. The study investigated the influence of acculturative stress and socio-cultural adaptation on college satisfaction and various variables such as age, gender, origin of the country, duration of stay, and fluency in language. The findings of the variables examined

revealed that students who struggle with English language have increased difficulty in acculturative stress, socio-cultural adaptation, and college satisfaction. Moreover, significant gender difference is found where female students exhibited increased levels in both socio-cultural adaptation and college satisfaction. Meanwhile, male international students are found to have increased acculturative stress and lower levels of college satisfaction.

Nasirudeen et al. (2014) in their study *"Acculturative Stress among Asian International Students in Singapore"* examined the acculturative stress level of the students. They also aimed to identify if acculturative stress has its impact on language fluency. Major findings of the study indicated that the major sources of acculturative related stressors experienced by the students are language barrier, financial constraints due to high expenses in staying away from home, and the inability to interact socially due to low English language proficiency, thereby leading to feeling of homesickness and isolation.

Stewart et al. (2014) in their study "*The Relationship between Racial Identity and Acculturative Stress among African American Students in Counsellor Training Programs"* studied the acculturative stress and racial identity of students. The sample consisted of African Americans pursuing post-graduate and doctoral research scholars attending accredited Counsellor Education programs across the United States with a total of 116 students. The researcher prepared information of the students' demographic including age, gender, race, and educational levels. The tools employed included Cross Racial Identity Scale (2000), and the Acculturative Stress Scale (1996). Major findings of the study revealed that an increase in acculturative stress predicted high score on the Cross Racial Identity Scale among the Black community. It further indicated that the awareness of racial identity and acculturative stress experienced by the students is of paramount importance in organising counsellor education programmes in order to minimise the acculturative stress experiences. An increase in students' acculturative stress experiences is also found among graduate students.

Akhtar and Kröner-Herwig (2015) conducted a study about acculturative stress among international students in context of socio-demographic variables and coping styles in a study *"Acculturative stress among international students in context of socio-demographic variables and coping styles."* The total sample was 652 international students (Female are 53% and Male is 47%; mean age and SD are 25.77 years and 3.79 respectively). This study was conducted in Germany on how different socio-demographic variables and coping styles influenced the level of acculturative stress. For this the researcher prepared a socio-demographic questionnaire, and conducted online surveys using acculturative stress scale for international students, and problem-focused styles of coping. Findings indicated that students with high German language fluency and who had inter-culture travelling experience are found to have lower level of acculturative stress than other international students without prior travelling experience. Students from Africa, Asia, and Latin America are found to have higher acculturative stress than students from European countries. High level of acculturative stress is found among students who engage in suppressive coping and reactive coping to deal with the acculturation related stressors.

Jean-Paul (2015) surveyed 122 international students (Male-53 and Female-69) in a study entitled *"Acculturative Stress and self-reported English Fluency in International Students in Ireland: A Quantitative Study."* The population of the study is international undergraduate and graduate college students from third level institutions in Dublin. In order to measure the students' acculturative stress and language efficiency, ASSIS by Sandhu and Asradabi (1994) and the Self-reported Fluency of English Scale were used. The results showed that Asian international students experienced greater acculturation related stressors than European international students. In relation to gender, there was no significant gender difference found among the students on the two measured variables. Furthermore, low level of acculturative stress was found on students equipped with high English language proficiency.

Ra and Trusty (2015) conducted a study among 220 Asian international students in the USA in their study titled *"Coping Strategies for Managing*

Acculturative Stress among Asian International Students." The study aimed to identify the effectiveness of the coping mechanisms used by the students in dealing with the acculturative stress. Data analyses were done using hierarchical multiple regression. Major findings of the study revealed that the use of different coping strategies such as task-oriented, emotion-oriented and avoidance-oriented coping strategies has an impact on the students' level of acculturation and acculturative stress. Further, the finding also suggested that emotion-focused coping was significantly and positively associated with cultural stress.

Gokul and Jayalakshmi (2016) surveyed the stress levels experienced by students enrolled in various professional programmes in a study entitled *"The mental stress levels of students studying in different professional courses."* Students taking many classes frequently experience mental stress, which can have several negative consequences like binge eating, high blood pressure, insomnia, despair, and suicidal thoughts. Students who are under stress may also abuse drugs and alcohol, which makes them socially isolated and vulnerable to self-harm. Students experience stress for a variety of reasons, including pressure from parents, worry about the future, financial difficulties, academic competition, etc. This survey is being undertaken to identify the courses that cause students to experience high levels of mental stress to help with counselling management and to identify the causes of the high levels of stress so that it can be decreased or avoided.

Lee et al. (2016) in a South Korean-based study *"Neo-Racism and neo-nationalism within East Asia: The experiences of international students in South Korea"* compares the perceptions of prejudice held by Chinese foreign students with those held by other international students from the Asian region. According to survey results using the theory of neo-nationalism, Asian students experienced more challenges and unfair treatment than students from Europe, North America, and other regions. The respondents also indicated anti-Chinese prejudice that manifested as aggressive behaviour, difficulties finding housing, and discriminatory hiring practices.

Lee (2016) in his study *"Acculturation Strategy, Acculturative Stress and Academic Performance in First-Year Chinese International Students at an American College"* established a paradigm for acculturative stress, stress-related variables, and academic achievement using a quantitative correlation design using cross-sectional survey. The sample included 128 (Male-60 and Female-68) Chinese international students. The tools used to measure the variables were Bai's Acculturative Stress Scale for Chinese Students in the United States (2015), and Barry's East Asian Acculturation Measure (2001). The study utilised a quantitative correlational design using cross-sectional survey data to provide a paradigm of acculturative stress, stress-related explanatory variables, and academic performance in first-year Chinese international students. Major findings of the study revealed that the students' acculturation strategy and level of acculturative stress strongly influence the academic outcome. Certain variables measured such as family financial status, parents' educational background, proficiency in Chinese dialects, roommate's nationality, number of residential friends, previous visits to the United States, and high school GPA were to highly influence the level of acculturative stress.

Monica and Supriya (2016) in their study *"Acculturative stress: Effect on academic performance of rural migrant students"* examined the association between acculturative stress and the students' academic achievement. The study was conducted on students residing in the rural areas from Tamil Nadu and students residing in urban area of Chennai. Major findings of the study indicated that the level of acculturative stress is influenced by the students' varying age. Moreover, it also found that the different streams of study and the varying reasons for migration have significant association with acculturative stress. In relation to academic achievement, students with reduced level of acculturative stress were found to have higher academic outcomes.

Cheng (2017) in a study entitled *"An exploration of the relationship between religion and spirituality and acculturation stress among international students in the western Massachusetts"* sought to examine the influence of students' acculturative stress on religious engagement and spirituality. The researcher prepared demographic information enquiring the gender, age, country of origin, courses of study, and source

of financial support. The tool of the study used was ASSIS developed by Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994). Other tools included Religion and Spirituality scale (2014). Measures in this study were analysed using one-way ANOVA. Correlation of the variables was done using Pearson's correlation co-efficient. Significant differences were computed using t-test. Data was collected from 38 international students studying in Smith College and Mount Holyoke College in western Massachusetts. The study revealed that more than 55 per cent of students affiliated themselves to some religion. Among the students, 63 per cent specified that they either practice prayers and meditation or attend church services. It was also revealed that over 45 per cent students may require assistance such as psychological intervention and counselling. Participants were reported to have high levels of acculturative stress.

Ma (2017) examined international students in a study entitled *"Acculturation Stress and Depression among First-Year International Graduate Students from China and India at the University of South Carolina."* The sample consisted of 55 Chinese and Indian international students. It aimed to determine the influence of the cross-cultural related stress on the students' level of depression. It further examined the significance of social support and identified the impact it had on the students' level acculturative stress and depression over a one year period using pre-test and post-test. The major findings indicated that acculturative stress was a significant predictor of depression among the students. Meanwhile, social support received by students does not influence the levels of depression and acculturative stress. However, results also showed a significant increase in social support between Time 1 and Time 2. From the qualitative study using FGD, students mentioned their issues such as fear of mistakes, lack of diversity on campus, and micro-aggression.

Mehta and Beri (2017) conducted *"Acculturative Stress among International Students in Relation to Gender, Age and Family Income"* among undergraduate international students in Chandigarh, India. The variables measured included age, gender, and in relation to family income. The researchers used a self-developed and standardised acculturative stress scale; findings indicated that there are significant differences in relation to family income and gender. Meanwhile, there was no

significant difference found concerning with acculturative stress and the varying age of the students.

Pitre (2017) conducted a study entitled *"International Students Career Development: Acculturative Stress and Career Outcomes"* on 172 students. The sample consisted of 103 male and 69 male international students studying in different universities across USA. The tools employed were ASSIS, Work hope scale (2006), the career futures inventory-revised Career aspiration scale – revised (2016), Getting ready for your next job (2010). The study aimed to determine the influence of acculturative stress on career outcomes. It included the students' occupational awareness, students' career outlook, different career agencies, and career aspirations measuring the students' achievement, educational and leadership. Major findings revealed that in relation to homesickness, students exhibit high negative career outlook. However, low levels were found in the measured variables such as achievement, educational, and leadership aspirations, as well as job search self-efficacy and career agencies. Students were found to have difficulties with hate and fear, and discrimination experienced in the process of acculturation.

Poulakis et al. (2017) in a study *"Acculturative Stress and Adjustment Experiences of Greek International Students"* examined the international students' adjustment in the process of acculturation. The sample included eight Greek graduate and undergraduate college students. The study was conducted in USA. The study used qualitative method for data collection; semi-structured interviews were conducted with the students. The results revealed that all students seek help and support from family and friends in the process of adjusting and adapting in the new place. Majority of the students also reported their struggles and difficulties in the learning process of the new institutions. Many students prefer addressing adjustment disorders and cultural stress head-on while greater number of students indicated their reluctance and unwillingness to seek help from professionals such as counselling or psychological services to discuss cultural stress and adjustment issues.

Tiwari et al. (2017) in their study explored 17 peer reviewed studies to determine the association between acculturative stress and the coping strategies of

foreign students. The review of these studies was undertaken during the year 2000 - 2015. The sample consisted of foreign students from Caribbean, Chinese, Korean, African, Arabian, Somali, Hong Kong, Latino, Polish, Mexican, Norway and Asian countries. On examining 17 empirical papers, a significant relationship was identified between acculturative stress and students' use of coping mechanisms. Majority of the studies also indicated that problem focused coping strategies were the preferred and considered more effective compared to emotional focused and avoidance focused coping strategies.

Wang (2017) in a study entitled *"Chinese International Students' Health and Well-being in UK Universities"* examined the beliefs that students have in relation to health, and the experiences that students have on their well-being. The sample included Chinese international students with a total of 302 studying in the UK. The researcher designed well-being survey for the Chinese international students and conducted an online survey. The researcher carried a mixed method for the study. The quantitative data were analysed using multiple regression tests and hierarchical regression. It also employed Pearson's product moment correlation tests. The major findings are, first, the high stress due to academic predicted declining or low level of well-being. Secondly, in the process of acculturation, the level of psychological adaptation, the ability to adapt in a new socio-cultural environment, cultural health belief, and support received from friends and family predicted high well-being on the students. Thirdly, the ability or difficulty in adapting to a new socio-cultural environment highly influences the students' adaptation psychologically. The fourth findings indicated that the support received from peers and family influence the students' level of well-being and adaption to socio-cultural environment. The qualitative data findings revealed that the students' well-being and health experience is influenced by certain variables. The variables found included academic stress and anxiety, psychological adaptation, socio-cultural adaptation, and culturally specific health beliefs and well-being practice. It also included students' understanding on social support, and the worry for the health of female students.

Yi (2017) undertook a study entitled "*Acculturative stress, meaning-in-life, collectivistic coping, and subjective well-being among Chinese international*

students: A moderated mediation model." The study sample consisted of Chinese international students from Iowa State University and University of Michigan, with a total of 419 students. The study aimed to study the students' acculturative stress in relation to subjective well-being, meaning in life, and the collectivistic coping strategy. The major findings of the study revealed that the use of Chinese relational coping do not reduce the students' acculturative stress and do not improve the sense of students' meaning in life. However, it was found that the use of Chinese relational coping minimises the harmful direct effect of acculturative stress on negative affect.

Zhang and Jung (2017) conducted a study entitled *"Multi-Dimensionality of Acculturative Stress among Chinese International Students: What lies behind their struggles?"* The study was conducted in USA on international Chinese students with a total of 262. The sample consisted of 120 female and 142 male students. The average age of the participants is 23 years. The tools of the study included Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (1988), and ASSIS (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). The findings revealed that acculturative stress of the students is influenced by the level of English language proficiency, and the educational levels. Significant negative correlation is found between acculturative stress and certain variables. The increase in English language proficiency resulted to decline in students' discrimination experiences, homesickness, fearfulness and stress. Significant difference is found on the educational levels; undergraduate students experienced more discrimination and fear compared to the higher level graduate students. Support from parents and family is reported to be more effective than the support they get from the schools and colleges.

O'Reilly (2018) conducted a study in Dublin, Ireland entitled *"Acculturative stress in English language learners, predicting psychological well-being and buffered by social support."* The study investigated 106 English language learners which included 53 males and 53 females. The researcher prepared demographic data sheet and also employed Psychological General Well-Being Index, ASSIS, and Index of Sojourner Social Support. Result showed that acculturative has significant influence on the students' psychological well-being. High acculturative stress was found among the students from South American countries, specifically students who

are in mid 20s and 30s with a longer duration of stay. The study also indicated that groups of students are prone to exhibit psychological distress and requires professional help. However, support from friends and families are found to reduce the stressors.

Sinha and Latha (2018) in a study "Coping response to same stressors varies with gender" aimed to ascertain the incidence of stress in young adults and the typical coping mechanisms employed by both men and women. The tool of the study included a pre-structured, pre-tested questionnaire to identify gender differences in coping mechanisms and Cohen's perceived stress scale to evaluate the prevalence of stress. Findings revealed that about 84.7 per cent of respondents reported feeling moderately or severely stressed, and coping techniques revealed that women were more emotionally centred while men were more problem-focused. It was suggested that to educate and assist young adults in reducing stress, mentors and the institution should be aware of the stressors and unhealthy coping mechanisms they use.

Thomas and Sumathi (2018) conducted a study on 270 international students in India entitled *"Acculturative Stress and Mental Health among International Students: An Empirical Evidence."* The study focused on the mental health issues of the students. Data were collected using a questionnaire-based survey procedure and scales were adapted from existing studies. Analysis of the data was carried out by structural equation modelling using partial least square method. Major findings of the study revealed that international students face numerous issues in the process of acculturation. Moreover, majority of the students exhibit psychological distress. The different dimensions of acculturative stress were found to be strongly influenced the mental health of the students. With the increase in the acculturative stress, the poorer the mental health of the students. In order to reduce the acculturation related stress issues, the result indicated the crucial need of assistance and counselling to international student.

Alharbi and Smith (2018) peer reviewed a study entitled *"Review of the Literature on Stress and Wellbeing of International Students in English-Speaking Countries."* The study is determined to report the major sources of stress, the role of

individual differences, the chronology of their stress levels and wellbeing over time among the international students. It also aimed to identify the research gaps in the literatures studied. PubMed and Psych Info were scrutinized for the English peer-reviewed articles by employing eight search terms. The review paper included English-speaking countries such as Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, UK, and USA. The studies were articles published during the year 1806 to 2017. The study found that the sources of acculturative stress disclosed mixed findings in several areas as a result of variation in the samples. The differing home countries and ethnicity of the universities and socio-cultural context differences resulted to mixed findings among the international students studied.

Bhowmik et al. (2018) in a study *"Acculturative stress and coping strategies among Mainland Chinese university students in Hong Kong: A qualitative inquiry"* explored the experience of acculturative stress and coping mechanisms of students. The sample consisted of 32 Chinese universities in Hong Kong. Result revealed that the main sources of acculturative stress faced by the students included language deficiency, food issues, difficulty in managing transport, lack of affordable and vacant transportation, experiences of prejudice and discrimination, and difficulty adapting to the new culture. A further investigation revealed that students use varieties of both adaptive and maladaptive coping mechanisms to cope with the different acculturation related stressors.

Bushong (2018) closely scrutinised the acculturative stress experiences and non-academic factors that negatively influenced psychological well-being of veterinary students in a study *"Understanding Acculturative Stress in Post-Graduate, International Veterinary Students: A Mixed-Methods Study."* The sample consisted of 75 veterinarian graduates from different international veterinary programs focusing on isolated locations. Quantitative data finding indicated that students have low levels of acculturative stress. In contrast, qualitative study revealed that students reported many experiences of issues and discrimination caused by the change in culture and geographic location. The study also found that despite the high academic and non-academic stress levels, however, the students were satisfied with the decision to seek veterinary education in a geographically isolated location.

Friday (2018) conducted a qualitative study entitled *"A Study of Factors Contributing to Acculturation Stress for International Graduate Students in a Small Non-Profit Graduate School."* The researcher interviewed 9 international students studying in graduate school in Washington D.C. The sample included students from Cameroon, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Sudan and Zimbabwe. The study identified inter-rater reliability to be appropriate for analysing the responses of the participants. Results were classified into five main areas. First, it was found that academic intensity and stress contributed to acculturative stress. Secondly, the fast-paced culture of the new place makes it difficult for students to rapidly adjust. The third revealed the students' difficulty in English language fluency. The fourth major source of stress was found to be the high cost of living. The fifth indicated that the students struggle due to lack of resources in adapting to the new place. The study identified that in order to minimise the acculturative stress, the major concern areas where international students need assistance is to provide additional resources for adapting to the new place. Other concern areas included arranging housing and accommodation for the international students.

Gebregergis (2018) studied the *"Major Causes of Acculturative Stress and Their Relations with Socio-demographic Factors and Depression among International Students"* in China. The study was administered to a total of 506 international university students. The tools used for the study were ASSIS (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994) for acculturative stress and Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale to measure the level of depression. Major findings of the study indicated that the major causes of acculturative stress were found to be the change in culture, experiences of discrimination, and the feeling of homesickness. Furthermore, high or low acculturative stress experienced by students influence the high or low level of depression respectively. In addition, it was found that the students' acculturative stress score was influenced by the differing age, educational level, Chinese language proficiency, marital status, friendship established with domestic students, prior travel experience and source of financial support.

Hansen et al. (2018) conducted a study in the USA entitled *"Assessing Acculturative Stress of International Students at a U.S. Community College."* The

sample included 243 international students of Manhattan community college. To measure the acculturative stress of the students, Stephenson Multi-group Acculturation Scale and SAFE were used. The study aimed to examine the influence of acculturative stress on certain variables. The variables included students' differing age, language fluency, and the culture and country of origin. Findings indicated that students still involved in their own culture have struggles in adjusting to the new culture in the US culture. On the other hand, engaging in the US culture resulted to less acculturative stress experiences. Students who migrated to the US with families and those using English as first language experience mild level of acculturative stress. In order to successfully adapt to the new college environment, social support from peers, family and institution is required.

Xue (2018) in a study "*Factors that Contribute to Acculturative Stress of Chinese International Students*" examined the issues and experiences of international students. It further aimed to identify the different causes of acculturative stress of Chinese international students. The study identified that students' acculturation related stressors stemmed from deficiency in English language, inability to adapt to the culture of the host country, academic stress, experiences of discrimination, and the inability to make friends with the local students.

Ladum (2019) in a study entitled *"Cultural Distance, Acculturative Stress, Social Support, and Psychological Adaptation of International Students"* investigated the acculturative stress, social support, and psychological adaptation. The study was conducted on international students in Cyprus, Turkey. Results of the study revealed that the Turkish students gave more positive emotional responses compared to international students. Social support was not found to minimise the students' emotional responses and acculturative stress. The study has also found that financial constraints, lack of social network, and unmet expectations resulted to high acculturative stress.

Zhao (2019) conducted a study entitled *"Exploring the Moderation Mechanisms of the Association between Acculturative Stress and Social Self-Efficacy among Asian International Students.* The sample included 216 Asian students

studying in the USA. The level of acculturative stress was measured using ASSIS and Index of Acculturation (2000). Other tools used included the Social Self-Efficacy Scale (1983), Self-Esteem Scale (1992), and Culture Intelligence Scale (2007). To find out the association between acculturative stress and coping strategies employed by the students, Collectivist Coping Styles inventory (2006) was also used. Result of the study found that there is negative relationship between students' social self-efficacy and stress resulting out of acculturation. Further, students who are found to have high cultural intelligence are not affected by the acculturation related stressors in relation to their social-efficacy. Meanwhile, among students with high collective self-esteem, significant correlation is found between the level of acculturative stress and social self-efficacy.

Falavarjani et al. (2020) carried out a study "*Exploring the Effects of Acculturative Stress and Social Support on the Acculturation-Depression Relationship in Two Countries of Similar Social Status*" on 154 Iranian international students studying in different universities in Malaysia. The result of the study specified the findings in the following points. First, home cultural identification and depression highly influenced the acculturative stress level of the students. Secondly, engaging on home culture in a new culture influences the level of depression. The third finding revealed that the more social support received by the students, the level of depression reduces. The fourth finding indicated that social support obtained from home culture also increases the feeling of home culture orientation. The last finding revealed that social support from home country and domestic students do not reduce or have an impact on the association between acculturation and depression. It was also reported that foreign students were prone to negative health outcome when the stress experienced escalated.

Graves et al. (2021) in a study "*Gender differences in perceived stress and coping among college students*" focused on stress, coping strategies, and gender disparities among undergraduate students. The sample consisted of 448 undergraduate exercise science course students enrolled in the university. Three separate undergraduate exercise science courses enrolled university students (n= 448) were evaluated. Four weeks before final examinations, in the twelfth week of the

course, two tests- the Perceived Stress Scale and the Brief Cope were given. The statistical technique performed to look for variations between the sexes in stress levels and coping mechanisms was a t-test. Results revealed that on the whole, women reported feeling more stressed than men did. Both the individual coping strategies employed and the coping dimensions showed gender variations. The emotion-focused coping dimension and the employment of four coping techniques were found to be more frequently endorsed by females than by males. Self-distraction, emotional support, instrumental support, and venting were among them. By shedding light on the degree of perceived stress and various coping mechanisms employed by undergraduate male and female students, this study contributes to the body of literature. In turn, students could require educational interventions to create strong, lifelong coping mechanisms. To safeguard the students' well-being in their lessons, instructors and other university representatives may want to emphasise and comprehend these various variables.

Wang et al. (2021) conducted a study entitled *"Adult attachment, personality factors, social support, and acculturative stress of international students"* in China during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was aimed to suggest and examine a moderated-mediation model which can shed light on the highlighting relation between cross-cultural adaptation, stress perceived, and psychological health; as well as the moderating impact of hopefulness and pliability among international medical undergraduates. The survey employed the Symptom Checklist 90, the Cross-Cultural Adaptation Scale, the Perceived Stress Scale, the Life Orientation Test-Revised, and the Resilience Scale. These questionnaires were filled out by a total of 453 students, including 233 men and 220 women, ages 18 to 28 by online means. Global Severity Index of the Symptom Checklist 90 was substantially and adversely associated with cross-cultural adaptation, according to the results of the moderated mediation model testing, and the association was partially mediated by perceived stress. Perceived stress was negatively impacted by optimism and confidence in COVID-19 control. Additionally, resilience and optimism had a negative moderating influence on the perceived stress-related indirect impact of cross-cultural adaptation on psychological health. The results of this study point to the need for university educators to support

or use programmes that help students deal with stressors and increase optimism and resilience to help students to adapt a new culture and uphold sound mental health amidst the COVID-19 epidemic.

2.2   Meta-Analysis of Related Studies

The present study is intended to investigate the Acculturative Stress, Coping Strategies and Well-being among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

For this purpose, the researcher has reviewed 78 related studies of acculturative stress, coping strategies, and well-being of immigrants and international students globally. Relevant studies reviewed in this study ranges from the year 1987 to 2021.

Out of the 78 studies reviewed, 63 of the studies reviewed were conducted using survey method, five (5) studies were qualitative method (Wallace, 2007; Lee, 2008; Lee, 2016; Poulakis et al., 2017; Friday, 2018), four (4) studies were mixed (qualitative and quantitative) method (Thaker, 2013; Ma, 2017; Wang, 2017; Bushong, 2018), four (4) studies were peer-reviewed studies (Li et al., 2014; Tiwari et al., 2017; Alharbi & Smith, 2018; Xue, F., 2018), and two (2) studies were conducted using quantitative method (Jean-Paul, 2015; Gebregergis, 2018).

Majority of the studies reviewed were conducted in the USA (46 studies). The other studies reviewed were conducted in India (9 studies), the UK (4 studies), Canada (3 studies), China (3 studies), Malaysia (3 studies), Turkey (3 studies), Ireland (2 studies), Germany (1 study), Saudi Arabia (1), Singapore (1 study), South Korea (1 study) and Thailand (1 study). The samples in the studies reviewed were studied on international students (48 studies), immigrants (15 studies), general population (5 studies), college students (4 studies), medical students (3 studies) and technical students (3 studies).

The reviews addressed the different types of stressors faced by international students and immigrants. From the studies reviewed, it evidently indicated that acculturation was an issue for international students and immigrants. The related

literatures reviewed on studies of acculturative stress, coping strategies and well-being can be summed up as follows:

➢ Acculturative stress resulted in adaptation and adjustment problems (Poulakis, 2017).

➢ The major sources of acculturative stress included language barrier (Lee, 2008; Li et al., 2014; Nasirudeen et al., 2014; Xue, 2018), higher levels of discrimination and homesickness (Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007; Vergaraa et al., 2010; Gebregergis, 2018; Xue, 2018; Falavarjani, 2020), more negative career outlook, low achievement, leadership, educational aspirations, job search self-efficacy (Pitre, 2017), and stronger negative impact on social self-efficiency (Zhao, 2019).

➢ Moreover, acculturative stress was found to be the major predictor of psychosocial functioning (Tafoya, 2011), influenced students' psychological well-being, depression, anxiety, and trait anxiety (Soriano, 2009; Li et al., 2014; Gebregergis, 2018), and more negative emotional reactions (Ladum, 2019). Further, students were predisposed to negative health outcomes (Falavarjani, 2020) and that resulted in poor mental health (Thomas & Sumathi, 2018).

➢ The coping strategies employed by international students and immigrants to reduce acculturative stress included individualistic approach of coping (Mena et al, 1987), social support (Thomas & Choi, 2006; Lee, 2008; Junhyoun et al., 2012; Ma, 2017; Poulakis, 2017; O'Reilly, 2018), learning language, self-reflection, normalising resulted in adaptation (Lee, 2008), engagement in meaningful activities, positive emotion (Junhyoun et al., 2012), suppressive coping and reactive coping among students with high level of acculturative stress (Akhtar & Kroner-Herwig, 2015), emotion-focused coping (Ra & Trusty, 2015), both adaptive and maladaptive strategies (Bhowmik et al., 2018), and problem-focused coping strategy (Tiwari et al., 2017).

➢ A study found that more than 45 per cent of students with high acculturative stress might be in need of counselling and psychological intervention in order to reduce and cope with acculturative stress (Cheng, 2017). It also indicated the necessity of proper counselling to students to reduce acculturative stress (Thomas & Sumathi, 2018).

These studies proved that acculturative stress does have negative impact on the process of adopting and adjusting to the new cultural environment. As can be seen, only few studies have been carried out within India - a country which is one of the most diverse lands with 29 states, each with their own unique languages, cultures, traditions, clothes, food, and religions. Students move from state to another across the country for better and higher education. As a result of this very uniqueness, one must be accustomed to become flexible and be willing to adapt and adjust to the regional differences. This dictates the need and importance to equip oneself with culture shock they may or may not endure, specifically for students. The review of literature studied revealed the limited researches and lack of awareness on the issues faced by non-resident students in the process of acculturation within north-eastern states. No study has been undertaken for the non-resident students in higher education institutes in Mizoram where many non-resident students across the country have now enrolled. Moreover, these evidences prove institutions' need to develop more culturally sensitive programs and adopt policies to sensitise students, staffs, faculties, and administrators towards the culture needs of the students, to overcome acculturative stress, and help improve the general well-being to successfully accomplish their goals. Hence, the need of the present study is justified.

The following chapter discussed the research methodologies carried out for the present study.

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Chapter III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the specific procedures and techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyse the information gathered in this study by the researcher.

Research methodology is considered to be the core of research and is the science of studying how research is to be carried out. It is concerned with the explanation of why a particular study is undertaken, how research problems are formulated, the types of data collected, the method used, and the technique used for analysis of data. It is necessary not just to identify the problems for this study but also helps in determining the best method and in getting solutions to the problems.

3.1   Method of Study

For the purpose of this research, a mixed-method approach is followed. Under this, an explanatory sequential design is considered to be the most appropriate choice for this study. It is a two-phase process, mixed-methods design where the qualitative findings assist in comprehending and supporting substantial quantitative findings.

QUAN→qual: *The first step includes gathering and evaluation of quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by gathering and analysing qualitative data*
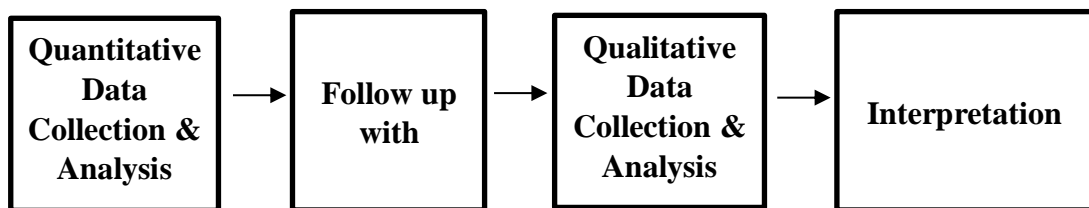
Figure 3.1   Explanatory sequential design for the present study

The first phase consists of quantitative data collection and analysis which are done using three scales: a self-constructed instrument, i.e., the Acculturative Stress Scale for Non-Resident Students in Mizoram, Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS-Adult), and The Friedman Well-Being Scale (FWBS) as well as the Socio-Demographic Information Form developed by the researcher for non-resident

students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. This is followed up with the second phase, i.e., the qualitative phase. Following Phase Two, the quantitative data is analysed alone. Although the qualitative questions are centred on the questions posed in the quantitative measurements to explain the quantitative outcomes, they do not develop directly from the quantitative results. In other words, quantitative survey collected and analysed in the first phase inform the development of a qualitative observations in the second phase of study. In this study, the qualitative data collection and analysis is conducted using six sessions of Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

3.2   Population and Sample

The population in the present study are non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. The researcher selected four higher education institutions in Mizoram, namely Mizoram University (MZU), National Institute of Technology-Mizoram (NIT-Mizoram), Zoram Medical College (ZMC) and Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences (RIPANS) for the study, using a stratified random sampling technique.

Table 3.1   Total Population of Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in different Institutes of Aizawl, Mizoram

Institutes	MZU	ZMC	NIT-Mizoram	RIPANS	Total
Total no. of non-resident Students	305	59	285	532	1181

Source: Statistical Cell, MZU; Academic Office, ZMC; Administrative Cell, NIT; Administrative Block, RIPANS. (MZU: 2018-19; ZMC: 2018-19; NIT: 2018-19; RIPANS: 2018-19 batches)

For Phase-One (Quantitative strand), the researcher, using stratified random sampling technique (Table 3.2), selected non-resident undergraduates, postgraduates, and research scholars from four higher education institutions, namely, MZU, NIT-Mizoram, ZMC, and RIPANS with a total of 456 students (Male-265, Female- 191). The age ranges from 17 to 41 from 24 states across the country.

Table 3.2   **Sample for Quantitative Phase of Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in different Institutes of Aizawl, Mizoram**

S.N.	Higher Education Institutions	Under-Graduates		Post-Graduates		Research Scholars		Total
	Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Mizoram University (MZU)	54	23	50	43	19	12	**201**
2	Zoram Medical College (ZMC)	12	14	-	-	-	-	**26**
3	National Institute of Technology Mizoram (NIT-Mizoram)	66	19	1	-	19	1	**106**
4	Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences (RIPANS)	41	73	3	6	-	-	**123**
	TOTAL							**456**

The stratified random sampling technique is also used for Phase-Two (Qualitative strand-Focus Group Discussion) with a total of 46 non-resident students (Table 3.3) from the four higher educational institutions.

Table 3.3   Sample for Qualitative Phase (Focus Group Discussion) of Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in different Institutes of Aizawl, Mizoram

S.N.	Higher Education Institutions	Under-Graduates		Post-Graduates		Research Scholars		Total
	Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	Mizoram University (MZU)	-	-	5	2	6	-	**13**
2	Zoram Medical College (ZMC)	6	7	-	-	-	-	**13**
3	National Institute of Technology Mizoram (NIT-Mizoram)	8	1	-	-	5	2	**16**
4	Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences (RIPANS)	3	-	1	-	-	-	**4**
	TOTAL							**46**

3.3   Tools of the Study

To measure the acculturative stress, coping strategies, and well-being of the non-resident students, the following variables were assessed using:

1.   Acculturative Stress Scale for non-resident students

2.   Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS-Adult) and

3.   Friedman's Well-being Scale (FWBS)

3.3.1   Acculturative stress scale

The Acculturative Stress Scale for non-resident students was developed by the researcher using the 5-point Likert rating since there was no ready-made standardised tool for the target population of the study. It ranged from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Strongly Disagree (2) and Disagree (1) with respective weights. It consisted of twenty-nine five-point Likert statements assessing the six different dimensions of Acculturative Stress such as "homesickness", "food preferences", "social behaviour and language", "cultural values", "perception of prejudice and racial discrimination", and "isolation." The first section of the questionnaire consisted of consent form where consent was taken from the students to participate in the study. It also consisted of socio-demographic data to maintain information about the participants, which included age, gender, educational qualification, institution, state of domicile, length of stay, and their present type of accommodation in Mizoram (Appendix B).

The number of items for each dimension is given as follows:

Table 3.4   Dimension-wise items in the Acculturative Stress Scale

Dimensions	Nature of items	Items no.	No. of items
Homesickness	Negative	1, 2	2
Food preferences	Negative	3, 4, 5	3
Social Behaviour and Language	Negative	6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11,12, 13, 14	9
Cultural Values	Negative	15, 16, 25	3
Perception of Prejudice and Racial Discrimination	Negative	17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24	8
Racial Discrimination and Isolation	Negative	26, 27, 28, 29	4
		Total	**29**

*All statements are framed in one direction so as to avoid confusion and ambiguity.

3.3.1.1 Acculturative stress scale development, construction and standardisation.

To frame the questionnaire, relevant topics on articles, researches and literatures were studied. The researcher first studied and identified the common problems and issues faced by non-resident students by interviewing the non-resident students. The first draft of the gathered questionnaire consisted of 70 statements. Each of the 70 statements was carefully analysed so as to consider their relevancy and inclusion in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was then divided into six (6) dimensions. After which, 22 statements were excluded resulting to 48 statements. This was reviewed by eight professors and faculties who were experts in the field; they were from different universities within and outside the state. The items were then revised according to the recommendations given by the experts to avoid confusion and ambiguity in the statements. A total of 16 items were discarded, three items were rephrased, and two items were added resulting to 34 statements.

Item Analysis

The 34 statements were then pilot tested with 51 non-resident students of Mizoram University. The respondents included undergraduates (6), postgraduates (27), M. Phil (5), Ph. D. (12), and Post-Doctoral Fellow (1) of Mizoram University. Item Analysis was carried out on the initial 34 statements from the responses given by 51 students. The total scores of all students were arranged in descending order where 27 per cent of the top scores and 27 per cent of the bottom scores were taken for analysis. The t-value was also calculated for each of the items using the t-test formula for independent group.

Table 3.5   **t-test of upper 27 per cent and lower 27 per cent of 34 items**

A	B	C	D	E	F	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	0.69	3.78	0.51	1.57	9.54	18	0.61	-3.28	0.49	1.35	9.17
2	0.26	4.07	0.36	1.85	18.4	19	0.51	4.5	0.51	1.57	15
3	0.51	4.57	0.61	2.71	8.7	20	0.36	4.85	0.82	1.92	12.1
4	0.51	4.5	0.46	1.71	14.9	21	0.63	3.35	0	1	13.9
5	0.63	4.35	0.42	1.78	12.6	22	0.66	3.14	0	1	12.1
6	0.36	4.14	0.42	1.78	15.8	23	0.75	3.57	0.36	1.14	10.8
7	0.46	4.71	0.61	2.07	12.8	24	0.91	3.07	0	1	8.45
8	0.64	3.57	0.26	-1.07	13.4	25	0.65	3.5	0	1	14.4
9	0.92	3.35	0	1	9.49	26	0.49	3.35	0	1	17.7
10	0.75	3.57	0.51	1.5	8.45	27	0.85	3.5	0	1	10.9
11	0.36	3.14	0	1	22.1	28	0.63	3.64	0	1	15.6
12	0	5	0.82	2.07	13.2	29	0.69	3.78	0	1	14.9
13	0.46	4.71	0.72	2.71	8.65	30	0	5	0.66	2.14	16.1
14	0.51	3.42	0.36	1.14	13.6	31	1.07	3.07	0	1	7.23
15	0.75	3.57	0	1	12.7	32	0.74	3.35	0.51	1.42	7.97
16	0.63	2.64	0	1	9.7	33	0.61	3.71	0.36	1.14	13.5
17	0.51	3.57	0	1	18.7	34	0.51	3.42	0.42	1.21	12.4

Note: A- Item No; B- SD of upper 27%; C- Mean of upper 27%; D- SD of lower 27%; E- Mean of lower 27%; F- t-value
df- 49; Critical value at 0.05- 2.01; Critical value at 0.01- 2.68

Analysis of data-vide table 3.5 shows the t-values for each of the items. With the df=49, the table values at 0.05 and 0.01 are found to be 2.01 and 2.08 respectively. The t-values found for all the items reveal that there are statistically significant differences between the scores of students in the upper 27 per cent and lower 27 per cent at both 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that the scores of students in the upper and lower 27 per cent significantly differ from one another and that they can all be retained.

Establishment of correlation and reliability

1)   Item-total Correlation

In order to further improve the scale and to ensure good discrimination from the students' scores of upper 27 per cent and lower 27 per cent on the items, item total correlation, which measures the reliability of a multi-item scale, was carried out using SPSS. The test of correlation was computed to examine any item in the set of test was inconsistent with the average behaviour of the other values, and thus could be discarded.

Correlation for corrected item-total was computed to determine the relationship of the item with the total scores of the remaining items in the scale, which was assumed to measure the same attribute as the item score. The acceptable correlation was considered to range between 0.30 to 0.70 (Cronbach, 1951).

2)   Cronbach Alpha

In order to measure the internal consistency of the scale, Cronbach (1951) coefficient alpha was used. Alpha values ranges ranged between one and zero; the greater the value, the more reliability of the scale and less the value is the lesser reliability is a thumb rule; therefore, Cronbach alpha was applied to the initial 34 statements of 51 non-resident students. Further, Cronbach alpha, if deleted, which was employed, played an important role in predicting the reliability of an item. This depicted the need to either rephrase, delete, or retain an item to be included in the scale.

Table 3.6   Interpretation of Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach α Range	Internal Consistency Label
0.49>α	Unacceptable
0.69>α ≥ 0.50	Poor
0.69>α ≥ 0.60	Questionable
0.79>α ≥ 0.70	Acceptable
0.89>α ≥ 0.80	Good
α ≥ 0.90	Excellent

Table 3.7   Overall reliability of the scale using Cronbach alpha

Cronbach α	Cronbach α Based on Standardized Items	No. of items
0.894	**0.895**	29

Using Cronbach coefficient alpha, the overall reliability of the scale is **0.89** for the final 29 items of the scale. This indicates that the overall scale is considered to have good reliability on the context of what is to be measured.

Table 3.8   Reliability of different dimensions of the scale using Cronbach coefficient alpha

No. of Dimensions	Dimensions	No. of Items	Cronbach α
1	Homesickness	2	0.71
2	Food Preferences	3	0.85
3	Social Behaviour and Language	9	0.71
4	Cultural Values	3	0.70
5	Prejudice and Racial Discrimination	8	0.86
6	Isolation	4	0.84
	Total	**29**	

To determine the reliability of each dimension, Cronbach coefficient alpha was also carried out. The above table reveals the reliability for each dimension. The alpha ranges from 0.70 to 0.86 across the different dimensions. This indicates that the items in the dimensions have acceptable and good reliability.

Procedure of Item-Total Correlation and Reliability using Cronbach Alpha

The initial 34 items on sample of 51 students were tested dimension-wise to determine the Item-Total correlation within each six (6) dimensions.

The total five items had very low correlation with the remaining items in their respective dimensions, i.e., from homesickness, the item-2, food preferences, the items 7 and 8, social behaviour and language, the items 12 and 13, and were needed to be rejected. This is shown in the following table.

Table 3.9 Summary of item-total correlation, mean, standard deviation, corrected total-item correlation, and Cronbach coefficient alpha before and after deletion of items

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Homesickness	1	6.71	2.76	2.17	0.97	0.38	1	0.54	0.56	0.71
	2	6.37		2.63		0.20	2			
	3	5.86	3.1	2.04	0.87	0.56	1	0.54		
Food Preferences	4	11.8	3.02	8.04	1.14	0.66	1	0.83	0.7	0.85
	5	11.9	2.92	8.01	1.09	0.72	1	0.77		
	6	11.9	2.94	9.38	1.08	0.46	1	0.58		
	7	11.3		11.3		0.15	2			
	8	12.4		10.4		0.31	2			
Social Behaviour and Language	9	24.4	2.06	24.2	1.02	0.40	1	0.39	0.66	0.71
	10	23.9	2.59	25	0.96	0.35	1	0.4		
	11	24.7	1.8	25.4	0.98	0.29	1	0.3		
	12	22.6		26.9		0.04	2			
	13	22.8		26.9		0.16	2			
	14	24.1	2.31	24.4	0.96	0.41	1	0.37		
	15	24.5	1.98	21.9	1.14	0.57	1	0.56		
	16	25	1.45	27	0.8	0.2	1	0.21		
	17	24.3	2.2	23.9	1.07	0.4	1	0.4		

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
	18	24.1	2.3	23.9	0.9	0.5	1	0.5		
	28	24.3	2.2	26.1	1.1	0.2	1	0.2		
Cultural Values	19	3.18	-	1.27	-	-	1	0.6	0.7	-
	20	3.61	-	1.23	-	-	1	0.5		
	30	3.73	-	1.18	-	-	1	0.4		
Prejudice and Racial Discrimination	21	2.22	-	0.98	-	0.5	1	-	0.9	-
	22	1.78	-	0.98	-	0.7	1	-		
	23	2.29	-	1.04	-	0.5	1	-		
	24	1.98	-	0.92	-	0.6	1	-		
	25	2.08	-	1.09	-	0.7	1	-		
	26	2.16	-	0.98	-	0.6	1	-		
	27	2.16	-	1.13	-	0.8	1	-		
	29	2.08	-	1.19	-	0.6	1	-		
	31	1.9	-	1	-	0.7	1	-	0.8	-
Isolation	32	2.55	-	0.92	-	0.7	1	-		
	33	2.37	-	1.07	-	0.7	1	-		
	34	2.24	-	0.92	-	0.6	1	-		

Note: A - Dimensions; B - Item No; C - Mean before deletion of item/s; D - Mean after deletion of item/s; E - SD Before deletion of item; F - SD after deletion of item; G - Corrected Item-Total Correlation before deletion of item/s; H - Decision; I - Corrected Item-Total Correlation after deletion of item/s; J - Cronbach α before deletion; K - Cronbach α after deletion; Decision interpretation (H): 1=Retained items; 2= Rejected items

The above table 3.9 shows each of the item's Mean, SD, corrected Item-Total Correlation, Cronbach coefficient alpha before and after deletion of items respectively. From the table, it can be seen that item 2 (homesickness), 7 and 8 (food preferences), 12 and 13 (social behaviour and language) had very low corrected item-total correlation with the other items in their respective dimensions. These five (5) items were rejected while the rest of the items were retained resulting in 29 items in the Acculturative Stress Scale.

Thus, the Acculturative Stress Scale having 29 items was finalised.

Scoring

The scale consisted of 29 items. Each item had five alternate responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The points given were Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The maximum possible score was 145, and the minimum possible score was 29. The range of the scale was 29-145; the higher the score, the more the stress resulting from acculturation.

Norms

The interpretive guideline for Acculturative Stress Scale (ASS) was prepared as under:

Table 3.10   Interpretation for the score of Acculturative Stress Scale

Range	Guideline
100 - 145	High
50 - 100	Mild
Lower than 50	Low

3) *Spearman-Brown Split-half reliability*

For the measure of internal consistency, split-half reliability was also calculated for all 29 items by splitting into odd-even items using Spearman-Brown Correlation Coefficient. The correlation was found to be 0.90 indicating a high and an excellent reliability of the scale.

Table 3.11   Split-half   Reliability   using   Spearman-Brown   Correlation Coefficient

Split-half Spearman-Brown Coefficient	No. of items	No. of students
0.90	29	51

Table 3.12   Reliability Statistics of Split-half Reliability using Spearman-Brown Correlation Coefficient

Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	0.75
		Number of Items	15[a]
	Part 2	Value	0.84
		Number of Items	14[b]
	Total number of Items		29
Correlation Between Forms			0.82
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		0.90
	Unequal Length		0.90
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			0.89

a. The statements are: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29
b. The statements are: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28

Table 3.13   Reliability Statistics of Split-half Reliability (odd-even) using Spearman Brown Correlation Coefficient

	Mean	Variance	Sd	No. of items
Part 1(Even)	37.60	52.96	7.27	15[a]
Part 2 (Odd)	32.84	74.05	8.60	14[b]
Both Parts	70.45	230.61	15.18	29

a.   The statements are: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29
b.   The statements are: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28

Validity

Validity of the scale was judged by experts' opinion method. As mentioned earlier, the opinions of eight professors and faculties from different universities within and outside the state were sought. Necessary revisions and modifications of the statements were made according to their recommendations and suggestions. The experts rated the statements as highly valid to the context of the research to be carried out.

After careful analysis, some items were revised and eliminated, while new items were also added so as to avoid repetition and ambiguity of the scale. All statements were framed in one direction so as to avoid confusion and ambiguity. The final scale resulted in 29 items on a five-point Likert-type, with two to nine items under each dimension.

Scoring

The scale consisted of 29 items. Each item had five alternate responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The points givens were Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The maximum possible score was 145, and the minimum possible score was 29. The range of the scale was 29-145; the higher the score, the more the stress resulting from acculturation.

Norms

The interpretive guideline or the for Acculturative Stress Scale (ASS) was prepared as under-

Range	Label
100 - 145	High
50 - 100	Mild
Lower than 50	Low

3.3.2 Coping inventory for stressful situations

For assessing and predicting the student's preferred coping strategies, the Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS-Adult), which was developed by Endler and Parker (1999), Second Edition, was used (Appendix C).

CISS-Adult is a self-report paper and pencil measure of coping, consisting of 48 statements. The statements included sixteen items each for task-oriented coping, emotion-oriented coping, and avoidance-oriented coping. Respondents are asked to rate each of the 48 items on a five-point Likert-type rating scale ranging from Not at all (1) to Very much (5). Respondents were asked to indicate how much you engage in these types of activities when you encounter a difficult, stressful, or upsetting situation. The multidimensional approach to the assessment of coping with stressful situations provides great precision in predicting preferred coping strategies.

3.3.3 Friedman's well-being scale

To identify the level of well-being of the students, Friedman's Well-being Scale (FWBS) developed by Friedman (1992) was used. The FWBS consists of twenty bi-polar adjectives. It can be scored for an overall measure of well-being, i.e., the Composite, and for five sub-scales: emotional stability (10 items), self-esteem/self-confidence (3 items), joviality (3 items), sociability (3 items), and happiness (1 item). In this study, the overall measure of well-being i.e., Friedman Well-Being Composite (FWBC) is used (Appendix D).

3.3.4 Focus group discussion

The researcher prepared pre-coded themes for focus group discussion (self-constructed interview schedule) in accordance with the students' quantitative responses. The discussions were conducted on homogeneous groups of students in which the themes included students' experiences with the locals, and institutes in Mizoram. It also included themes on coping strategies, academic and well-being of the students (Appendix E).

3.4   Procedure of Data Collection

In this present study, higher educational institutions in Mizoram-Mizoram University (MZU), Zoram Medical College (ZMC), National Institute of Technology Mizoram (NIT-Mizoram), and Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences (RIPANS) were selected using purposive sampling technique.

For the quantitative data collection, a self-developed and standardised acculturative stress scale for non-resident students, Coping Inventory for Stressful Situation (CISS-Adult) developed and standardised by Endler and Parker (1999), and Friedman's Well-being Scale (FWBS) developed and standardised by Friedman (1992) were used for this study. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation, institutions were closed for two years where classes were conducted using online mode; therefore, data were collected using online questionnaire via Google form. Consent was first taken from the participants using phone calls. Students who agreed to participate were then sent the Google Form questionnaire via WhatsApp. Proper instructions on how to fill out the online questionnaire were given to each of the participant. Participants took approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaires. Students were thanked for their input and co-operation.

For the second phase of data collection, i.e., qualitative phase, six FGDs were conducted using Zoom Meetings Teleconferencing application (Table 3.14). Students were invited for the discussions individually through phone calls where proper information on the themes and how the discussion would be carried out were conveyed. Consent was taken from the students through phone call as well as through signed written consent form. Sessions were scheduled according to the

conveniences of the students and the institutions. Six sessions were conducted for homogeneous groups: under-graduate, post-graduate, and research scholars for each of the four institutions. The first and second sessions consisted of 7 Ph. D students from National Institute of Technology Mizoram (NIT-Mizoram) and 6 Ph. D students from Mizoram University. The third session consisted of 13 under-graduate students from Zoram Medical College (ZMC). The fourth and fifth sessions consisted of 9 under-graduate students from the National Institute of Technology Mizoram (NIT-Mizoram) and 4 under-graduate students from the Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences (RIPANS). The sixth session consisted of 7 post-graduate students from Mizoram University (MZU). A total of 46 students participated in the six sessions. In these sessions, students were asked to share their overall experiences staying in Mizoram. Discussions on experiences in Mizoram as non-resident students, the issues and challenges in trying to adjust to the new place, experiences with the locals, hostels, and their institutions were carried out. Students were also asked to freely discuss the different stressors that arose out of acculturation, their ways of coping, and how it affected their well-being. Suggestions to improve the welfare of the non-resident students within and outside the institutions were also given by the students. The duration of each session lasted for around one and a half hour. This is presented in the following table.

Table 3.14   Six sessions of Focus Group Discussions

Sessions	Date	Institutes/Course	No. of participants	Duration
1st Session	20/11/21	NIT- Ph. D	7	1 hour and 30 minutes
2nd Session	21/11/21	MZU- Ph. D	6	1 hour and 30 minutes
3rd Session	26/11/21	ZMC- UG	13	1 hour and 30 minutes
4th Session	27/11/21	NIT- UG	9	1 hour and 30 minutes
5th Session	28/11/21	RIPANS- UG	4	1 hour and 30 minutes
6th Session	03/12/21	MZU- PG	7	1 hour and 30 minutes
		Total	46	

3.5   Statistical Techniques for Analyses

3.5.1 Quantitative data analysis

For determining the effect of acculturative stress on gender and type of courses, the coping strategies on gender and type of courses, and the well-being on gender and type of courses Z-test was used. Furthermore, to study the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of non-resident students, a Z-test was also employed.

To determine the level of acculturative stress, coping strategies, and well-being across the different educational levels and length of stay, one-way ANOVA with post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) for unequal sample sizes using SPSS was employed.

To find the correlation of the scores of acculturative stress and well-being, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used. Pearson's correlation coefficient matrixes were computed to find the relationship among the dimensions of acculturative stress and the dimensions of coping for stressful situation. To determine the relationship between the scores of acculturative stress and coping; acculturative stress and well-being; and between the scores of coping and well-being, Pearson correlation coefficient matrixes were also computed.

3.5.2 Qualitative data analysis

Thematic qualitative analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) is used to analyse the qualitative data collected using focus group discussion. The steps followed for analysis are:
- Step 1: Familiarization
- Step 2: Coding
- Step 3: Generating themes
- Step 4: Reviewing themes
- Step 5: Defining and naming themes
- Step 6: Writing up

After these steps are followed, the appropriate data are included in the quantitative results to support the findings.

The findings of the collected data using the research methodologies mentioned in this chapter are presented in the following chapter.

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Chapter IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1   Analysis and Interpretation of Objective 1

4.2   Analysis and Interpretation of Objective 2

4.3   Analysis and Interpretation of Objective 3

4.4   Suggestions for Students and Higher Education Institutions of Objective 4

Chapter IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY

This chapter includes the systematic and critical examination of the data gathered in accordance with the objectives specified by the researcher. It includes the process of employing appropriate tools and techniques to bring order, structure, assign meaning to the data, to transform the data into useful and valuable information and arrive at relevant conclusion. It occupies the critical part of the study where the researcher makes meaningful deductions and conclusion from the result findings. The significance of the study is based on the ability to apply the results and findings to answer the main objectives of the research, which can prove significant and useful.

In this chapter, the collected data from both the quantitative and qualitative research is presented, analysed, and interpreted in a systematic manner. To analyse the quantitative data, statistical methods used are as follows:

- For determining the effect of acculturative stress on gender and type of courses, the coping strategies on gender and type of courses, and the well-being on gender and type of courses Z-test was used. Furthermore, to study the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of non-resident students, a Z-test was also employed.

- To determine the level of acculturative stress, coping strategies, and well-being across the different educational levels and length of stay, one-way ANOVA with post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) for unequal sample sizes using SPSS was employed.

- To find the correlation of the scores of acculturative stress and well-being, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used. Pearson's correlation coefficient matrixes were computed to find the relationship among the dimensions of acculturative stress and the dimensions of coping for stressful situation. To determine the relationship between the scores of acculturative stress and coping; acculturative stress and well-being; and between the score

of coping and well-being, Pearson correlation coefficient matrixes were also computed.

The second phase of data collection consists of qualitative data collection through FGD. Six FGD sessions were conducted for homogeneous groups: UG, PG, and research scholars for each of the four institutions. Analysis was carried out using thematic analysis; this is included in this chapter to understand and support significant quantitative results.

The following table present the descriptive statistics of acculturative stress, coping strategies and well-being of the study.

Table 4.1   Normality check and Descriptive Statistics

	AS	CS	WB
Mean	71.48	167.80	52.88
Standard Error	0.80	1.02	1.16
Median	70	168	52
Mode	68	157	52.50
Standard Deviation	17.20	21.90	24.82
Sample Variance	295.89	480.03	616.10
Kurtosis	0.13	0.45	369.92
Skewness	0.53	-0.34	18.25
Range	102	148	534
Minimum	35	77	21
Maximum	137	225	555
Count	456	456	456

Note: AS- Acculturative Stress; CS- Coping Strategies; WB- Well-Being

4.1   Analysis and Interpretation of Objective 1

Objective 1   To study the significant sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in relation to their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses in Mizoram

4.1.1   Sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students

In order the find out the possible sources of acculturative stress of the non-resident students, the researcher requested four hundred fifty-six (456) students pursuing their higher education in Mizoram. According to the multiple responses, the major sources that could be gathered were prepared in a table as under:

Table 4.2   Sources of Acculturative Stress of non-resident students (n=456)

Sl. No.	Sources of Acculturative Stress	No. of responses	Percentage
1	Language	275	60.30
2	Food preferences	193	42.32
3	Making purchases	130	28.50
4	Transportation	121	26.53
5	Biasness and racial discrimination	106	23.24
6	Lack of proper management of basic hostel facilities	105	23.02
7	Lack of interest and motivation in academics	91	19.95
8	Accommodation	71	15.57
9	NIT temporary location including hostel	62	13.59
10	Homesickness	49	10.74
11	Inability to make new friends	47	10.30
12	Pandemic Covid-19	26	5.70
13	Future career and work	17	3.72
14	No issue	88	19.29

Table 4.2 revealed the major sources of acculturative stress as reported by the students. Majority of students reported the issue of language in this new geographical area. This was followed by difficulty in adjusting to food items as well as different time schedule for meals provided in hostel. Students of NIT-Mizoram, reported many problems related to the temporary location of the institute. Among the students, 23.24 per cent reported the feeling of bias treatment and racial discrimination. Difficulty in adjusting to hostel and finding accommodation, inability to make new friends, and homesickness were also reported by the students. The students also reported on the stress they had for their future career and finding job, as well as lack of interest and motivation in studies. Students also shared that they faced many issues due to the pandemic Covid-19. Other sources of stress reported were issues with supervisor and change of weather in the new environment.

Stress is considered as a necessary facet in one's life. Once reaching college and higher studies, students in search of higher educational institutions need to move from one place to another across the country. They have to go through new experiences, possibly a more demanding and rigorous workload, and numerous responsibilities in new social and environmental settings. They have to learn ways of adapting to new cultural norms of the new place they enrol themselves in. They may encounter multitude of stressors in the process of adapting to the new place. The stressors that arise can be healthy and can bring challenges and opportunities with the right dose. However, it can disrupt their functioning and well-being if the stress is excessive. It can harm the students' academic performances, relationship with friends, family, and teachers, as well as their personal development. It is, therefore, necessary to identify the major sources of stress of students in order to manage and make plans in reducing them.

The major sources of stress reported by students resulting out of acculturation are discussed as follows.

Language

Majority of students interviewed reported that among the multiple issues they faced was language barrier. An insufficient or no knowledge of the local language was considered to be one of the most stressful sources of cross-cultural adaptation (Poyrazli et al., 2001). Mizo being the local language in Mizoram, little or lack of knowledge in it was an issue for students coming from other states of the country. In this study, 60.30 per cent of the non-resident students expressed their communication issue in not knowing the Mizo language. This led to numerous negative consequences and interfered with the students' relationship with friends and teachers, and academic achievement as well. It resulted in the feeling of isolation and low self-esteem. It added more stress in their attempts in adjusting themselves to new settings. Studies had also found that language barrier hinders adaptation process and increase stress (Lee, 2008), and is one of the contributing factors of acculturative stress (Nasirudeen et al., 2014; Bhowmik et al., 2018; Friday, 2018) on international students.

The concept of adjustment in relation to the new teaching-learning environment is one major concern to consider when a student moves or relocates to a new educational environment and teaching-learning process. The students may and are likely to face issues in following and comprehending classroom instructions, inability to participate and interact in classroom discussions in order to have fruitful and favourable academic performances. Common language by the teachers and classmates plays an important role in helping students attain better academic performances and achieving their goals. A student has also expressed his experience on this stating:

> *"I feel stressed when I am discriminated for being a minority here in Mizoram. Once, I was insulted for asking one of my teachers to explain the mathematical problems in English instead of Mizo. I suggest there should be equality in teaching and learning, no matter whether the students are from minority community, or from other states."*

Another problem reported under language barrier was that important circulars and information on official social media applications (WhatsApp and telegram

groups) were often carried out in Mizo. These were difficult to follow by non-resident students. Apart from these, making purchases, getting direction and information, hiring bus and taxi for transportation were also areas where students faced problems due to language issue. To reduce these communication issues, some students suggested Mizo language class in institutions for non-resident students to learn the basic local language.

From the findings, it should be clearly noted that while majority of students found language barrier as a major issue, they understood that the issue was inevitable in their situation and were slowly adapting with the anticipation that the language issue might be disregarded in months or years' time with more experiences and longer duration of stay. One student said thus:

> *"For me, the experience in Mizoram is very good. Sometimes I find language difficulty. However, it is only up to me. I have to learn the language and ways to cope with it. Other than that, I enjoy staying in Mizoram as my supervisor is very cooperative and understanding. I do not face much problem since I have made new friends and they are all very supportive."*

It may be indicated here that improvement in language and learning to cope with the issue may gradually reduce the issue for some students. It was also found in a study that as students' efficiency in English language increased, the feelings of perceived discrimination, fearfulness, homesickness, and stress decreased (Zhang & Jung, 2017). Many students expressed that the locals were kind and understanding in helping them out despite the communication issue, and expressed their desire to make more local friends during their stay here.

Food preferences

Another major issue that non-resident students face is food preferences. Adapting to new dietary behaviour can be challenging to students when they move to a new place. Among the many other stresses resulting out of acculturation, making changes to eating patterns and food preferences is found to be one of the challenges to overcome.

Among the students studied, 42.32 per cent indicated that change in food timing and food items were the problems that they found difficult to adapt to.

Rice is the staple food of Mizoram. It is usually served for both breakfast and dinner in most hostels and paying guests without any another option (specifically roti). Students found it difficult to adjust to this staple food and the items provided with it since they were not used to them from where they came from.

An institute hosteller expressed:

"Food is really a concern. Food lacks green vegetables, and the way food is prepared is not healthy."

Few students who held strong religious, personal and cultural values, such as vegetarian and who take halal food also found it difficult to adjust to limited access to such food items in hostel and paying guests. The easy accessibility of affordable fast foods and snack-type foods also resulted in increasing unhealthy intake by the students. Further, financial constraints barred students from purchasing both healthy and fast foods from outside on a daily basis. An UG student said:

"I usually buy affordable fast food and snacks when hostel food is not satisfactory. I spend a lot on food and snacks."

Apart from this, the early timings of meals were also issues for students. Experience of daily stressors can impact health, including eating behaviour. There is also scientific evidence of a relationship between stress and health where it suggests that stress is associated with either decreased or increased eating habits depending on the studied population, food group, and type of stressor (Ansari & Berg-Beckhoff, 2015). According to prior researches, it has also been found that university students with stress tend to increase their intake of calorie and fat foods (Unusan, 2006). Prolonged consumption of health-hampering food can cause major concern for students. One student stated thus:

"Improper diet and high consumption of readily available fast food have given me health issues where I had to seek medical help."

This indicates the need to address the severe problems of students' food intake, the choices they make regarding the food they take and the amount; all these can affect the experience of acculturative stress.

Making purchases

For many college students, new educational and social environments can lead to stress (Misra & Castillo, 2004). Another source of stress perceived by the students in the process of acculturation is making purchases. This included purchases for clothing, food items, personal and academic essentials. The main problem that non-resident students faced is difficulty in communicating with shopkeepers as a result of language insufficiency. Students also reported problem of unavailability of shops and stationeries near their hostels and institutes.

Transportation

Apart from accommodation, lifestyle acculturative stressors may also include transportation. Non-resident students in Mizoram University reported difficulty moving in and around the campus. As departments are mostly situated far off from each other, they reported the crucial need of services of hireable vehicles (auto-rickshaw, taxi, or any other mode of convenient transport services) within and around campus. Students of NIT, too, reported problem with transportation: they had to commute to and fro hostel and institute, which are far off from each other, leaving them to waste many hours of their daily time. They also reported that due to their different looks, and their insufficiencies in understanding the local language, they were charged more taxi fares than the locals. A study by Bhowmik et al. (2018) found that one of the major sources of acculturative stress among university students was transportation.

Bias treatment and racial discrimination

On arrival to a new place, students have to face many challenges as discussed including perception of bias treatment and racial discrimination. In this study, discrimination refers to the different treatment of a person or group belonging to a particular group with common characteristics. The most studied types of racial

discrimination on immigrants and international students are based on race and ethnicity. It has been found that experiences of daily racial discrimination and major racist events are significant predictors of acculturative stress (Dawson & Panchanandeswaran, 2010; Alharbi & Smith, 2018) and are associated with greater psychological distress (Chung & Epstein, 2014).

As high as 23.24 per cent of the non-resident students in this study, reported bias treatment and discrimination due to their race, ethnicity and culture. However, majority of the students reported that they had not experienced bias treatment and discrimination due to their being non-resident students. They mentioned that everyone was hospitable, helpful, and honest.

Opinion of students mentioned the following:

> *"Mizoram is the safest place for non-resident students, and there is no bias treatment or discrimination on the ground of race and ethnicity; we are never taunted by group of people while walking the streets and the place is very safe for girls."*

Although language makes adapting difficult in the first few months, students mentioned that they could cope with the language deficiency gradually by learning basic communicative local language. However, some students shared contradictory experiences. A student shared:

> *"Sometimes we feel excluded as they talk in Mizo even in group activities; they are doing it sub-consciously, however, without realising it, and have no bad intention.*"

In this study, non-resident research scholars seemed to have more experiences regarding bias treatment and discrimination because they had stayed in the state for a longer period of time, and had numerous interactions with the locals during their field trips.

A Ph.D. scholar who had already stayed in the state for 6 years stated thus:

> *"I have experienced many bias treatments during my field trips, but as far as my understanding goes, I feel the majority of such incidents resulted out of language and communication problems; research scholars gradually adjusted and adapted ourselves to these."*

Lack of proper management of basic hostel facilities

Proper and secure living conditions have huge impacts in the process of acculturation especially in students. Students' family environment is replaced with the hostel environment. In this new environment, they come across many stressful situations such as homesickness, forging new relationships with other residents or staff members, hostel facilities, managing finances, difficulties with certain rules and regulations, and even sleep habits. Sometimes they may be able to control the situation but when they are unable to do so, they feel stressed. Hostel is not simply a place for living, it is a centre of education where they not only learn the theoretical material but also how to enhance their personal abilities and live independently (Mishra, 1994). At the same time, hostel provides opportunities for socialisation among students and an increased empathy, altruistic behaviour, and emotional stability (Mimrot, 2012). Moreover, improper or lack of basic facilities required for optimal functioning can have great impact on students' personal and academic growth. Among the students interviewed, 23.02 per cent mentioned the lack of basic facilities required for students in their hostels. They reported poor management and delayed action when problems were brought to the concerned authorities. Students suggested periodical supervision and proper management to oversee the functions and needs of the students in the campus hostels. A study has also confirmed the same stating that, one of the contributing factors of acculturative stress is lack of resources among international students (Friday, 2018).

Lack of interest and motivation in academic

Transition from college to higher education alone can be extremely challenging with increased workload, demanding tasks, busy schedules, close deadlines, new teaching-learning practices, and higher responsibilities vested on the students. In addition to this transition of educational level, when international students or non-resident students in this study, locate to a new place and attend new institutions, they are likely to have several concerns related to the new teaching-learning practices. Such problems can impact their understanding of classroom instructions, intimidation to actively participate in classroom discussions and other activities. The added pressure

to complete and succeed in the courses and the possibility of failure may stress students more. Further, the discussed multiple stress experiences in the process of acculturation may affect both their physical and mental productivity levels. All these may cause stress to students and may lead to lack of motivation and interest in studies. The effects of students' poor motivation may proliferate and lead to lower levels of engagement in academics, diminished energy levels and productivity, disinterest in communication with people around them, and decreased level of well-being. It has also been found that multiple stressors leading to high acculturative stress was predictive of low psychological well-being (O'Reilly, 2018).

Accommodation

Accommodation is one of the first things that come to mind when considering studying in a different state or abroad since living conditions can have an emotional impact on students. Accommodation is a very important factor in influencing students' well-being as it will be a place where they are able to relax and study, meet new friends, and build a sense of community with the locals. Good and proper accommodation can provide a sense of belongingness and security to students, alleviating, thereby, the stress and can help in achieving academic and personal life growth. Without proper and satisfactory accommodation, non-resident students, when moving to a new state for higher studies, may also face practical and lifestyle stressors resulting out of acculturation.

Students reported availability of only limited seats for campus hostel. They suggested more seat reservation for non-resident students. They expressed difficulty in finding houses to rent since they were non-residents. A student said thus:

> *"I struggled for three months trying to find a house to rent; during those days, there was no time to and a place for studies. I was denied accommodation several times for being an outsider."*

Students further mentioned financial problem they faced in finding affordable accommodation near their institutes.

NIT temporary location including hostel

NIT-Mizoram, was started in the year 2010. The institute is in the process of building its permanent campus at Lengpui, Mizoram. Presently, NIT Mizoram functions from its temporary campus and hostel at separate far-off locations at Aizawl, Mizoram.

Numerous issues relating to the location of hostels and institutions was stated where the time consumed in commuting to and fro these places caused great setbacks, such as not having ample time in library and laboratory, no time to gather their personal and academic essentials since the scheduled timing of the institution's buses did not permit them to do so. Moreover, they expressed their difficulty in managing personal and study time as dinner is served shortly after reaching hostel. Further, proper basic hostel facilities and study materials including libraries, book stalls, stationeries and essential needed for the students were not within easy reach.

Homesickness

Students locating to a new place can lead to acculturative stress. One of the stressors resulting out of this acculturation is the feeling of homesickness. Living away from loved ones can be challenging. Because of cultural differences, longing for families and friends, and ethnic food from home, and language difficulty can lead to feeling of isolation and may make it more difficult in adjusting to the new food, people, and place.

In this study, 10.74 per cent experienced homesickness. It was reported that language difficulty and the inability to make new friends, and lack of close friends to confide in the first few months led to loneliness and a feeling of homesickness. A student further reported that despite the feeling of such for the first few months, the feeling of homesickness reduced as time passed on. Many studies also found that homesickness and a feeling of loneliness are common and major issues in the process on acculturation for immigrants and international students (Vergaraa et al., 2010; Zhang & Jung, 2017; Alharbi & Smith, 2018; Gebregergis, 2018).

Inability to make new friends

Cross-cultural differences in students can be a problem for non-resident students in a new environmental setting. Developing new social support system from friends can help reduce acculturative stress and can make adjusting and adapting to the new place easier. However, establishing new relationships and friendships with other students and locals can be challenging for non-resident students. Among the students, 10.30 per cent of students reported the difficulty they had in making new friends with other students and locals.

An under-graduate student stated:

"People are homogeneous, and it is easier to make friends with Mizos who have stayed outside their state than with people who grow up here. It is hard to get into their group and difficult to become good friends but at the same time, they are helpful and polite."

They further reported that language barrier played a major role in their inability to make new friends. They got the feeling of isolation and marginalisation, and this prevented them from having a sense of belongingness in the new educational and environmental settings. Prior research has also found that less social support predicted higher acculturative stress (Ladum, 2019). It has also been found that social connectedness contributes to adjustment to the new place on international students (Alharbi & Smith, 2018) and getting social support from new friends and families has been found to be the most important coping strategy in the process of acculturation (Thomas & Choi, 2006; Lee, 2008; O'Reilly, 2018). Seeking help from friends is also found to positively increase physical activity levels (Kim, 2009). However, despite this issue, non-resident students expressed their desire to make friends with other students and locals, and were gradually adapting to the issue.

Pandemic Covid-19

The outbreak of the pandemic Covid-19 impacted everyone's life globally. It was a difficult adjustment for everyone especially for higher education students. In addition to the acculturative stress of the non-resident students, adjusting and coping with the problems it brings during this difficult time was a big challenge. Due to the unending

uncertainty and strict restrictions globally as well as within the country itself, students were in a state of confusion and stress in finishing their courses and in planning for their future. Online classes have now become the new mode of studying to maintain safety from the virus since institutions has been closed for a long duration of time.

With the unavoidable lockdowns and travel restrictions, students expressed difficulty in travelling home, in finance and in accommodation. They also faced problems in ease of access to computers and in network connections, especially for those staying in remote areas.

This difficulty was more acute for non-resident research scholars. Unavailability of transportation for field study and for attending university, inability to access libraries and journals for references, delay in data collection, and difficulty in connecting with other scholars were mentioned by the students. They also expressed that some of the issues they had could not be clarified using online mode with supervisor and experts. Research scholars from science stream faced issues regarding procurement of chemicals and instruments due to delay in or unavailability of shipping methods. As most science researchers' work is laboratory-based, their on-going work and future project were disrupted for many months. A research scholar said:

> *"Since my research sample had specific timing and short duration for fruition, I faced problem in sample collection and I had to wait for the next season; that delayed my work as well as my research period, too."*

Pandemic Covid-19 brought on students anxiety and stressed: they had to make up for the lost time, they faced delays in finishing their courses, it brought about uncertainty in deciding for their future and in securing employment at the end of their course.

Future career and work

Non-resident students face many challenges as they adapt to a new place away from their home. These challenges may be social, psychological, and academic. It may

also include the career domains of life as making informed career choices is important to maximize the opportunity for further study and professional career.

Among the students interviewed, 3.72 per cent of students expressed their worry about job placement and future career after completing their courses.

The acculturative stress does not end with the completion of courses. The worry on job opportunities on whether to stay in the host state for job search or return home, the decision on where to start their professional career being a non-resident are also among the major sources of acculturative stress.

As many as 19.29 per cent of the students expressed that they did not have issue in adjusting themselves to new culture. However, this did not imply the absence of different stressors in the process of acculturation. Rather, it implied that they could easily adapt and find effective coping strategies depending on their situation. Adaptation depends on an individual, and in the coping behaviour that he or she adopts.

The combined effects of these stressors in non-resident students while transitioning to new geographical and environmental settings contribute to the students being highly vulnerable to the detrimental effects of acculturative stress. However, it is important to understand that not all perceived stress resulting out of acculturation may have negative impact on the students. In fact, under these circumstances, some students may perceive them as challenges and help them in finding ways to cope with the stress. Certain level of acculturative stress may push students to cope and overcome the challenges they face towards optimum performance. They may develop their own specific strategies to deal with the stressors and facilitate positive emotions. On the other hand, if these stressors are not managed efficiently due to lack of resources and availability of help, they may have adverse effect on academic and personal growth. A recent study has found that international students with inadequate internal and external resources are more likely to experience an increased level of acculturative stress (Wang et al., 2021).

Helping the students to manage the stressful situation thus becomes very fundamental at personal, social, and institutional levels. It is of paramount importance to help identify the sources of the stress from different spheres of their life. This will enable teachers and/or professionals to make certain interventions and develop techniques to find the most effective strategies to reduce the stress. Some students may even need to seek help from professionals with different techniques such as yoga, life-skills training, biofeedback; they may even need psychotherapy in reducing the stress of the students. Institutions play an important role in recognising and managing the issues and needs of the non-resident students which is often overlooked.

From the discussion above, it is clear that basic local language class for non-resident students can prove to be beneficial as many issues they face resulted from insufficiency in knowing the local language. Further, more activities, curricular or co-curricular, in institutions can provide more involvement and participation of the non-resident students; through this, students can develop social relationships and better understanding of the other students from diverse cultures and groups. Besides, this can also help in reducing the feeling of isolation and instil a sense of belongingness with other students in the new educational and environmental settings. The status of well-being of the students also plays an important role in combating the various stresses; this could, in turn, have either negative or positive impact on their daily functioning, and in coping with the stress. Thus, helping to improve the general well-being of the students would also be beneficial for the students, as well as for the institution.

4.1.2 Findings and analysis of acculturative stress of non-resident students

To study the sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram, a self-constructed and standardised scale of "acculturative stress scale" for non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram was employed. The scale consists of six (6) dimensions: homesickness, food preferences, social behaviour and language, cultural values, perception of prejudice and racial discrimination and isolation.

Table 4.3   Interpretation of the total score of Acculturative Stress *(n=456)*

Range	Guideline	No. of students
100 - 145	High	30
50 - 100	Mild	390
Lower than 50	Low	36
Total		**456**

The above table categorizes level of acculturative stress scale into three groups, i.e., high, mild, and low acculturative stress. The minimum possible score is 29 and the maximum possible score is 145.

After analysing the total scores of the students, it was found that 36 students fall under the 'low' category. On the 'mild' category of acculturative stress, majority of the students, i.e., 390 students fell under the category. Out of the total 456 students, 30 students were found to fall under the range of 'high' category of acculturative stress. The lowest score was found to be 35 and the highest score was 137. It may be interpreted that majority of students, i.e., 390 students, had mild acculturative stress while pursuing higher education in a host state, while 30 students had high acculturative stress that might require professional help for better adjustment and adaptation to the new environment. The remaining 36 students could

adjust and cope with the unfamiliar new environment and that the new environment would not have adverse effect on their academic, physical, and mental health.

From the finding, majority of the students had mild acculturative stress. However, it should be noted that although the degree of acculturative stress experienced by an individual can range from mild stress, which gradually improves as the individual adapts, it can also escalate to a debilitating stress that worsens over time without appropriate guidance and resources (Williams & Berry, 1991; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007). Hence, the combined effect of this acculturation related stressors, coupled with the lack of resources available to assist non-resident students in the adaptation and transition to the new place, could render the students highly susceptible to the harmful effects of acculturative stress.

The findings above revealed language barrier to be the major issue for non-resident students. Language barrier can affect many lifestyle activities required in adapting to the new host society. It creates communication issues making it difficult to make purchases, getting directions and transportation. It results in inability in making effective relationship and friendship with local classmates, shopkeepers, drivers, and the locals.

The inability to adjust to the food items available, food quality provided in hostels and paying guests, and the timings of meals were found to be the second most common issue faced by the students. This was followed by the inability to make new friends, making purchases, and biased treatment for being a non-resident. At the same time, these issues could also be attributed to the communication issues resulting out of deficiency in knowing local language. When all these issues could not be resolved easily, students found it difficult to be productive; this led to lack of interest and motivation in studies. This process is evident from Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943). He believed that physiological and psychological needs motivate our actions that progressed from basic to complex needs. When the basic needs such as water, food, accommodation, which are essential for survival, are met, and security and safety needs are achieved, one can attend to higher needs. It is important for people to feel loved and accepted by others.

If non-resident students cannot maintain successful or personal relationships with friends while being away, the deficits of connectedness and being part of a group may hamper the students functioning. When these basic and deficiency needs are achieved or reasonably satisfied, they may be able to adjust and adapt to the environment better.

Further, the students' perception of being treated unequally, and experiences of disrespecting their cultural values and beliefs may instigate negative feeling, anger, and stress. When students achieve esteem for oneself (dignity, achievement, mastery, independence) and the desire for reputation or respect from others, it may enhance their motivation to perform effectively.

Most importantly, only after all the needs are achieved, the realization of a person's potential, self-fulfilment, seeking personal growth, and peak experiences can occur. The highest level in Maslow's hierarchy can be achieved by students when they learn to cope with all the issues and stressors effectively and appropriately. This will help them to function at their optimal best to achieve their desired goals. Maslow (1987, p. 71) also pointed out that most behaviour is multi-motivated and noted that "any behaviour tends to be determined by several or all of the basic needs simultaneously rather than by only one of them". This clearly indicates that when students are deprived of their basic and safety needs, their level of productivity decreases. Moreover, the students' inability to cope with the stressors successfully can cause them to fixate on a particular set of need. This causes more stress and can obstruct their growth in improving their well-being.

Table 4.4 **Pearson's correlation matrix among the different dimensions of Acculturative Stress**

Dimensions	Homesickness	Food preferences	Social behaviour and language	Cultural values	Prejudice and social discrimination	Isolation
Homesickness	+1					
Food preferences	0.32*	+1				
Social behaviour and language	0.36*	0.44*	+1			
Cultural values	0.27*	0.12*	0.31*	+1		
Prejudice and social discrimination	0.28*	0.31*	0.64*	0.42*	+1	
Isolation	0.31*	0.30*	0.60*	0.30*	0.62*	+1

*Correlation significant at the 0.05 level

The present study seeks to better understand the role of the different dimensions of acculturative stress among the ethnically diverse group of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. The table above shows the correlation among the different dimensions of acculturative stress using Pearson's correlation matrix. It reveals that all the dimensions are significant at the 0.05 level, signifying that all the dimensions are correlated to one another to certain degrees. An increase in a dimension predicts the same directional change for the other dimension. However, it should be noted that the correlation describes the strength of the relationship but not the causal and the actual relationship between the dimensions.

As can be seen, the dimensions prejudice and social discrimination, and social behaviour and language obtain the highest correlation among the dimensions with 0.64. Likewise, the dimensions isolation and social behaviour and language, and dimensions of isolation and prejudice and social discrimination obtain the correlation of 0.60 and 0.62 respectively. This indicates that these dimensions have average positive correlation.

The result indicates that when non-resident students perceive more bias and unequal treatment for being a non-resident, it becomes more difficult to adjust in the new set-up and hence, the feeling of intimidation to participate in social activities increases. It also indicates that when students feel there are certain discriminations against people who share the same religion and ethnicity, their acculturative stress is increased. Furthermore, the inability to communicate fluently with the locals in the native language makes it difficult to make new friends. This results in unequal treatment by the locals. A student said:

> *"I am charged more taxi fares and have to pay more for some items in the shops since I am a non-resident. I cannot do anything about it as I do not know Mizo to reason with them."*

Distinctions based on ethnicity, culture, tradition, race, religion, and other characteristics have been reported to be some of the key drivers of social exclusion (United Nations, 2016). Perceived discrimination remains a fundamental problem in the world today, including both immigrants and international students going through the acculturation process. Other than perceived prejudice and social discrimination, language is also a barrier for international students in the process of acculturation (Sandhu & Asrabadhi, 1994; Bernal, 2014; Schimdt, 2017). This has also been proved to be one of the issues for non-resident students in this study. Difficulty in language mastery also prevents non-resident students from having effective and meaningful interactions with students and locals since local language is intensely used in daily conversation. This can make it difficult for non-resident students to adjust.

Likewise, the finding also reveals that the feeling of isolation increases with more experiences of prejudice and social discrimination, and social behaviour and language or vice versa. For the dimensions of isolation and social behaviour and language, the result indicates that the more the students are unable to make new friends and adapt with the locals due to language difficulty, the more they feel alone and insecure in the new place. They feel that they do not belong there and do not have someone close to share their issues in adjusting to the new place. A student said thus:

"It is sometimes difficult to make new local friends because of the many differences we have, especially in language. I am the only non-Mizo in the class and I find it difficult to adjust. I often feel lonely during the first few months."

It can be seen from this study that acculturative stress is, to a certain extent, associated with the feeling of isolation and alienation. A study by Thomas and Sumathi (2018) has also indicated that acculturative stress of international students can be reduced to a greater extent if the students have social support when they go to another country. This highly indicates the importance of social support network for students to have a successful adjustment.

From the table 4.4, the dimensions that obtains low positive correlation are social behaviour and language, and food preferences (r=0.44) and prejudice and social discrimination and cultural values (r=0.42). This indicates that when students find it difficult to adjust socially, they tend to have difficulty in adjusting to new food, the food items available, and eating habits. Further, increased experiences of prejudice and social discrimination also predict more discouragement and hurtful feelings when others do not respect their cultural values. At the same time, it also indicates a minimal relationship between these dimensions without implying any causality or lack of it thereof.

Further result shows that there is negligible or mild positive correlation between the remaining dimensions of social behaviour and language and homesickness (r=0.36), food preferences and homesickness (r=0.32), prejudice and social discrimination and food preferences (r=0.31), isolation and homesickness (r=0.31), cultural values and social behaviour and language (r=0.31), isolation and cultural values (r=0.30), prejudice and social discrimination and homesickness (r=0.28), cultural values and homesickness (r=0.27). The dimensions of cultural values and food preferences (r=0.12) reveals no relationship between the two dimensions.

4.1.3   Acculturative stress and gender

To compare the male and female students on the scores of acculturative stress scale, Z-test was calculated.

Table 4.5   Z-test for Gender on all six dimensions of Acculturative Stress

Dimensions	Mean		Sd		Z-value	Critical value at 0.05
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Homesickness	5.71	6.59	3.20	2.42	**6.00***	
Food preferences	8.70	8.99	11.64	7.97	**1.00^{NS}**	
Social behaviour and language	19.28	20.48	36.72	38.85	**2.04***	1.96
Cultural values	9.90	10.96	8.57	7.16	**4.00***	
Prejudice and racial discrimination	16.32	17.18	38.70	35.07	**1.49^{NS}**	
Isolation	9.51	10.08	12.07	8.69	**1.87^{NS}**	
Total score of AS	69.44	74.29	319.05	251.53	**3.05***	

*Significant at the 0.05 level ^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.5 shows the comparisons of male (n-265) and female (n-191) students on the scores of acculturative stress scale.

A quick glance at data vide table 4.5 shows that the Z-value on the dimension of homesickness is 6.00. The means are found to be 5.71 and 6.59 for male and female respectively. This indicates that there is significant gender difference among students in homesickness. Females are found to have higher means indicating that they feel more homesick compared to male when moving to a new place for higher studies.

The above table 4.5 shows the comparison of male and female non-resident students on the dimension of food preferences. The mean is found to be 8.70 for male and 8.99 for female. The Z-value is found to be 1.00 indicating that there is no significant gender difference among students in food preferences.

On the dimension of social behaviour and language, the means are 19.28 and 20.48 for male and female respectively. The Z-value is 2.04. This shows that there is significant gender difference among students. This indicated that female tends to have more issues adapting to social behaviour and language barrier.

As per table 4.5, the means of male and female is found to be 9.90 and 10.96 respectively. Further, the Z-value is 4.00. It is found that there is significant gender difference among students in cultural values. From the means, it can be seen that female students feel more vulnerable when their cultural values are threatened.

An examination of data vide table 4.5 reveals that the calculated Z-value is 1.49. The means are found to be 16.32 and 17.18 for male and female respectively. It indicates that there is no significant gender difference among students in perception of prejudice and racial discrimination.

A quick glance at table 4.5 shows that the Z-value is 1.87. The means are found to be 9.51 and 10.08 for male and female respectively. It reveals that there is no significant gender difference among students in isolation.

As per table 4.5, the mean of male and female on the total score of acculturative stress is 69.44 and 74.29 respectively. The standard deviation is also found to be 319.05 and 251.53 for male and female respectively. Further, the computed Z-value is 3.05. This indicates that there is significant gender difference among students. The finding reveals that female score on the overall acculturative stress is higher than male.

One of the objectives of the study is to examine gender differences on the level of acculturative stress in relation to gender among non-resident students attending higher education institutions in Mizoram. After critical analysis, the present study has found that there is no significant difference between male and

female on the dimensions, viz. food preferences, perception of prejudice and racial discrimination and isolation of the non-resident students. However, significant differences are found on the dimensions of homesickness, social behaviour and language, cultural values, and the total score of acculturative stress. This implies that female non-resident students experience more homesickness, difficulty in adjusting to issues related to language barrier, and cultural values. As mentioned, any kind of stress can affect male and female in different ways. The findings of female to have experienced more stress on these dimensions can also be attributed to the wide individual differences in both cognitive and physiological responses to stress including personality (Steptoe, 1983). Further, studies have also consistently found gender differences in certain measures of both physical health and mental health such as anxiety, depression, and stress. For instance, on the scales measured by the Big Five Personality traits, women consistently report higher neuroticism, agreeableness, warmth (an extraversion facet), and openness to feelings, and men often report higher assertiveness (a facet of beliefs), values, and personality. Reactions and responses to stress, specifically acculturative stress in this study could vary.

There have also been a substantial number of researches which support the present finding that males and females differ in how they perceive and deal with acculturative stress. A study on immigrants has suggested that females are more likely to experience significantly more emotional acculturative stress than men (Allen et al., 1998). Other studies on Indian international and non-resident students have also supported that gender is the significant predictor on the levels of acculturative stress (Mehta & Beri, 2017). It was further reported that female participants reported higher acculturative stress in comparison to their male counterparts (Ayoob et al., 2011). Consistent with the existence of significant differences found, other studies also find gender has a significant impact on predicting acculturative stress (Berry & Kim, 1987; Mak et al., 2005). However, it has also been reported that males face greater problems than females (Cheng, 1999).

However, although most research carried out focused more on immigrants on the effects of acculturative stress in relation to gender, many research carried out have also contradicted the finding by revealing that there is no significance between

genders in determining the level of acculturative stress. Otlu (2010) found that gender was not a significant predictor of acculturative stress. Another study has also found that there was no significant correlation between gender and acculturative stress or any of its subcategory factors (Azizah et al., 2014). These findings have also been supported by several research carried out on international students on comparative studies between acculturative stress and gender differences (Berry et al., 1987; Desa et al., 2011).

4.1.4 Acculturative stress and educational level

It has been discussed that several researchers have found the influence of educational level on acculturative stress. On the contrary, few researchers have found no significant difference between years of study and acculturative stress (Azizah et al., 2014). Therefore, an attempt was made in this study to find if there exist any differences across the three educational levels under study.

For determining the level of Acculturative Stress across the different educational levels, the levels of education were categorized into three groups i.e.,

- Under Graduate (UG) (n=302),
- Post Graduate (PG) (n=103), and
- Ph. D (n=51).

One-way ANOVA was carried out using SPSS. To further identify where the differences lie across the different educational levels, post hoc test was computed. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed. Multiple comparisons using post hoc tests (Hochberg GT2) shows the comparisons across the three educational levels on the dimensions of acculturative stress scale where significant differences are found.

The findings for each of the different dimensions of acculturative stress along with means plot graph across the three educational levels where significant differences exists are analysed as follows.

Table 4.6   One-way ANOVA for six dimensions of Acculturative Stress on Educational Levels

Dimensions	Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Homesickness	Between Groups	2.97	2	1.48	**0.58**[NS]
	Within Groups	1151.02	453	2.54	
	Total	1153.99	455		
Food preferences	Between Groups	100.32	2	50.16	**5.05**[*]
	Within Groups	4499.64	453	9.93	
	Total	4599.96	455		
Social behaviour and language	Between Groups	140.74	2	70.37	**1.86**[NS]
	Within Groups	17095.61	453	37.73	
	Total	17236.36	455		
Cultural values	Between Groups	33.14	2	16.57	**2.02**[NS]
	Within Groups	3716.41	453	8.20	
	Total	3749.55	455		
Prejudice and social discrimination	Between Groups	222.42	2	111.21	**3.00**[*]
	Within Groups	16742.10	453	36.95	
	Total	16964.52	455		
Isolation	Between Groups	58.11	2	29.05	**2.73**[*]
	Within Groups	4818.37	453	10.63	
	Total	4876.49	455		
Total score	Between Groups	935.20	2	467.60	**1.58**[NS]
	Within Groups	133696.61	453	295.13	
	Total	134631.82	455		

*Significant at the 0.05 level   [NS] Not significant at the 0.05 level

The table 4.6 shows the F-value of One-way ANOVA carried out using SPSS. It shows the F-value for the six dimensions and the total score of acculturative stress. The F-value indicates that there is significant difference on dimensions of food preferences, prejudice and social discrimination, and isolation with the educational levels. Meanwhile, there is no significant difference found on the dimensions of

homesickness, social behaviour and language, cultural values, and the total score in relation to educational levels.

The following tables analyse the different dimensions in detail.

Table 4.7   One-way ANOVA for Homesickness and Educational Levels

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Homesickness	Between Groups	2.97	2	1.48	0.58^{NS}
	Within Groups	1151.02	453	2.54	
	Total	1153.99	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table shows that the F-value for the dimension homesickness is 0.58, i.e., $F(2, 453)$ value is 0.58. With the critical value of F being 2.99 at 0.05 level, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and that there is no significant difference in homesickness across educational levels of the students.

Students reported that homesickness did bother them at the beginning of moving away from home. But with the increase in the duration of stay, they were able to adjust and adapt after making new friends, both local and other students of the same state.

Table 4.8   One-way ANOVA for Food Preferences and Educational Levels

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Food preferences	Between Groups	100.32	2	50.16	5.05^*
	Within Groups	4499.64	453	9.93	
	Total	4599.96	455		

*Significant at the 0.05 level

The critical value of F is 2.99 and $F(2, 453)$ value is 5.05 ($p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is failed to be accepted at 0.05 level.

It signifies that there is significant difference in food preferences among students across the different educational levels.

As significant difference exists across the educational levels in this dimension, to further identify where the differences lie, post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) was carried out. The table below along with means plot graph on multiple comparisons using post hoc tests (Hochberg GT2) shows the comparisons across the three educational levels on the food preference dimension of acculturative stress scale.

Table 4.9   Multiple comparisons using Post Hoc Tests of Food Preferences on the three Educational Levels

Dimension	(I) EDNLEVEL	(J) EDNLEVEL	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Food preferences	UG	PG	1.02^*	0.36	0.01	0.16	1.88
		Ph. D	0.92	0.47	0.15	-0.22	2.07
	PG	UG	-1.02^*	0.36	0.01	-1.88	-0.16
		Ph. D	-0.09	0.54	0.99	-1.39	1.19
	Ph. D	UG	-0.92	0.47	0.15	-2.07	0.22
		PG	0.09	0.54	0.99	-1.19	1.39

Note: EDNLEVEL- Educational level
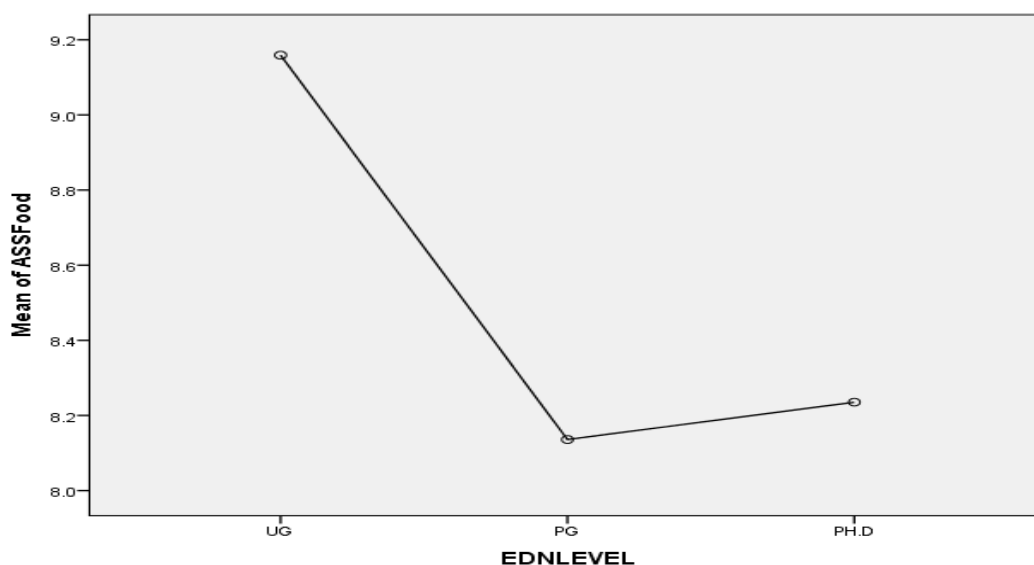
Figure 4.1   Means Plot of Food preferences and Educational Level

After careful analysis of the scores on the dimension food preferences on the three educational levels, a significant difference is found to exist. The above table and means plot indicate that UG non-resident students is the highest in food preferences. It is followed by Ph. D and PG students respectively. This reveals that students with lower educational level may have difficulty adjusting to new food and new eating habits.

The issue with food problem among the lowest educational level is also evident from the session carried out on focus group discussion. Students expressed their inability to adjust with the food even after few months.

An UG student stated:

"Food is the main problem. Everything else is manageable. The meal timing and variety of food available for hostellers are the main problems I have since coming here."

Another UG student mentioned:

"Food is really a concern. The hostel food lacks green vegetables, and the way food is prepared is health hampering."

This may indicate that changing food habits and adapting to the food items available can be difficult for students in the first few months of starting their academic sessions and moving to a new place. This study reveals that the lower the level of education, the more the food issues.

Table 4.10   One-way ANOVA for Social Behaviour and Language and Educational Level

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Social behaviour and language	Between Groups	140.74	2	70.37	1.86^{NS}
	Within Groups	17095.61	453	37.73	
	Total	17236.36	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

With the critical value of F (2, 453) is 2.99 and calculated F value is 1.86 (p > 0.05), the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is accepted. It signifies that there is no significant difference in social behaviour and language across the educational levels of the students.

Table 4.11   One-way ANOVA for Cultural Values and Educational Level

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Cultural values	Between Groups	33.14	2	16.57	2.02^{NS}
	Within Groups	3716.41	453	8.20	
	Total	3749.55	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.11 shows that the calculated F value for the dimension cultural value is 2.02, i.e., F value (2, 453) is 2.02, $p > 0.05$. With the critical value of F being 2.99 at 0.05 level, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between the scores on cultural values and educational levels of the students.

Table 4.12   **One-way ANOVA for Perception of Prejudice and Social Discrimination and Educational Level**

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Prejudice and social discrimination	Between Groups	222.42	2	111.21	
	Within Groups	16742.10	453	36.95	**3.00***
	Total	16964.52	455		

*Significant at the 0.05 level

The critical value of F is found to be 2.99 at 0.05 level and F (2, 453) value is found to be 3.00. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is failed to be accepted. It signifies that there is significant difference in perception of prejudice and social discrimination across the educational levels of the students.

As significant difference exists across the educational levels in this dimension, to further identify where the differences lie, post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) was carried out. The table below along with means plot graph on multiple comparisons using post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) shows the comparisons across the three educational levels on the perception of prejudice and social discrimination dimension of acculturative stress scale.

Table 4.13   **Multiple comparisons using Post Hoc Tests of Prejudice and Social Discrimination on the three Educational Levels**

Dimension	(I) EDNLEVEl	(J) EDNLEVEl	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Prejudice and social discrimination	UG	PG	1.33	0.69	0.15	-0.33	3.00
		Ph. D	-1.03	0.92	0.59	-3.24	1.17
	PG	UG	-1.33	0.69	0.15	-3.00	0.33
		Ph. D	-2.36	1.04	0.06	-4.86	0.13
	Ph. D	UG	1.03	0.92	0.59	-1.17	3.24
		PG	2.36	1.04	0.06	-0.13	4.86

Note: EDNLEVEL- Educational level
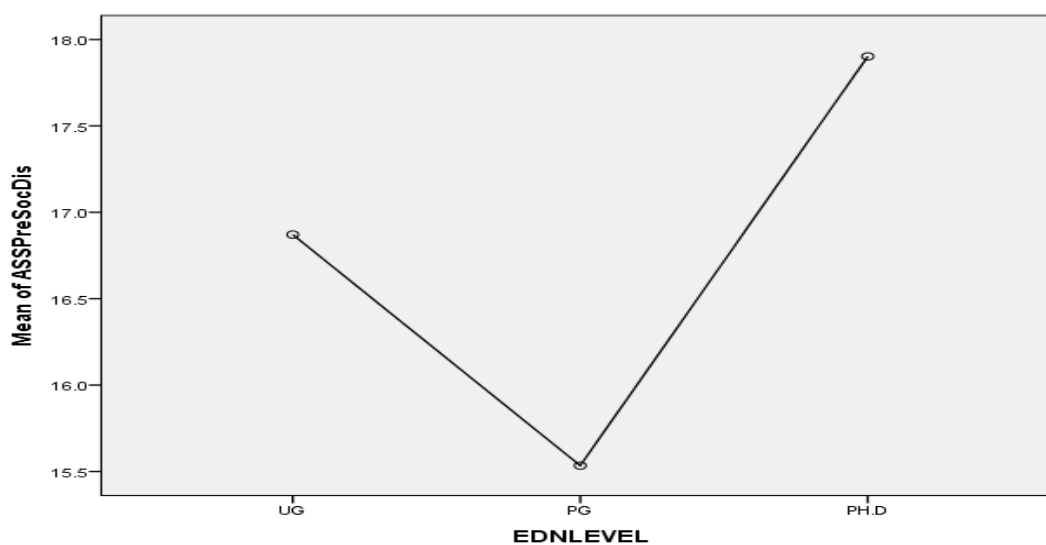
Figure 4.2   Means Plot of Prejudice and Social Discrimination and Educational Level

Analysis of data vide table 4.13 and the means plot on Figure 4.2 shows that Ph. D students experience prejudice and racial discrimination the most as compared to the other two educational levels. This is followed by UG and PG students respectively. This is also found to be evident from the focus group discussion conducted with the Ph. D students. More experiences on bias treatment and discrimination were stated by the scholars.

Ph. D scholars felt that there was certain discrimination against them on the basis of their distinctive looks, complexion, and races. They felt that bias and unequal treatment had been accorded to them on certain situation. A Ph. D student shared his experience by stating that:

> *"I experience partiality for being a non-Mizo. A guy came with bike and said, 'do not be bossy; this is not your home, this is Mizoram'. I face discrimination with their behaviour, facial expression, and body language, too."*

Another scholar said:

> *"While doing coursework, professors give lecture in Mizo, knowing the fact that we do not understand Mizo. This is one disappointment I would like to share."*

A scholar also said:

"Some shopkeepers and taxi drivers charge more fares from us compared to the locals."

The reason for the Ph. D scholars, the highest educational level, to experience discrimination could be that they had gone through many years of research, and, out in the field, they had interacted with more locals; hence they faced more incidents and experiences. A study has also found that experiences of daily racial discrimination and major racist events were significant predictors of acculturative stress (Dawson & Panchanandeswaran, 2010).

Meanwhile, another Ph. D. student expressed:

"I have not faced any kind of unbiased treatment. In fact, the locals are kind, helpful, and friendly when we ask for help. Mizoram is the safest place I have seen so far in the country especially for women even after 9 or 10 pm."

Likewise, an UG student also mentioned:

"Despite the other challenges I face as a non-resident, I feel extremely safe as a woman in the state."

A Ph. D scholar also said:

"I haven't faced any kind of bitter experience. The issues I have are road conditions and language barrier. I felt a bit cornered, left out in certain cases when there were discussions. But I know it is not intentional. I do understand. I am planning to learn Mizo as it is really necessary for communicating with locals for my field work."

Table 4.14   One-way ANOVA for Isolation and Educational Level

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Isolation	Between Groups	58.11	2	29.05	2.73[*]
	Within Groups	4818.37	453	10.63	
	Total	4876.49	455		

*Significant at the 0.05 level

With the critical value of F (2, 453) is 2.99 and calculated F value is 2.73 (p < 0.05), the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is failed to be accepted. It signifies that there is significant difference between in isolation among students across the educational levels.

As significant difference exists across the educational levels in this dimension, to further identify where the differences lie, post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) was carried out. The table below along with means plot graph on multiple comparisons using post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) shows the comparisons across the three educational levels on the isolation dimension of acculturative stress scale.

Table 4.15   Multiple comparisons using Post Hoc Tests of Isolation on the three Educational Levels

Dimension	(I) EDNLEVEL	(J) EDNLEVEL	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Isolation	UG	PG	0.86	0.37	0.06	-0.03	1.76
		Ph. D	0.12	0.49	0.99	-1.06	1.30
	PG	UG	-0.86	0.37	0.06	-1.76	0.03
		Ph. D	-0.74	0.55	0.45	-2.08	0.59
	Ph. D	UG	-0.12	0.49	0.99	-1.30	1.06
		PG	0.74	0.55	0.45	-0.59	2.08
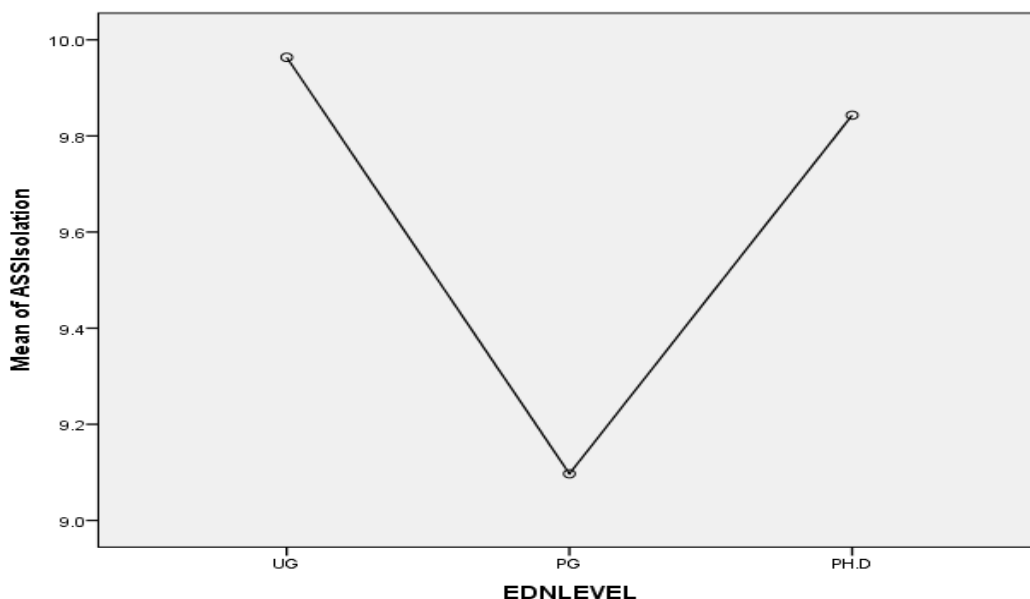
Figure 4.3   Means Plot of Isolation and Educational Level

Analysis of data vide table 4.15 and means plot on Figure 4.3 shows that UG students experiences isolation the most as compared to the other two educational levels. This is followed by Ph. D and PG students respectively. This is also found to be evident from the focus group discussion conducted with the students. An UG student expressed:

> *"When I find it difficult to adjust to this new place, I often call my parents and friends back home since I still do not have many friends here."*

Other UG students also shared that they felt lonely and had only few close friends to confide their personal and institution management issues. A student also shared in the discussion that a batch mate left their institution within few months due to the inability to adapt to the new place, lack of friends, and homesickness. Seeking social support and increasing social connectedness has been found to be the factors in contributing to adjustment and reducing acculturative stress (Alharbi & Smith, 2018; O'Reilly, 2018). Likewise, the present study indicates that lack of social support can lead to difficulty in adapting to the new environmental set-up, thereby increasing acculturative stress. This also reveals the need of guidance and direction for students in helping to employ healthy and right coping strategies depending on the issues they face.

Table 4.16   One-way ANOVA for Total Acculturative Stress and Educational Level

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Total score of AS	Between Groups	935.20	2	467.60	1.58^{NS}
	Within Groups	133696.61	453	295.13	
	Total	134631.82	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

The critical value of F (2, 453) is 2.99 at 0.05 level and the calculated F value is found to be 1.58; therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is accepted. It signifies that there is no significant difference in acculturative stress among students across the educational levels.

4.1.5   Acculturative stress and length of stay

Past researches on the length of stay and acculturative stress have anticipated that the longer the duration of stay in the new place, the lesser the acculturative stress. Further, the lesser the time spent in the host country, the more the acculturative stress (Vergaraa et al., 2010; Ayoob & Singh, 2011). The duration of stay in the host country has been researched by several researchers mostly on immigrants and international students. Only few have been studied within the country. One of the aims of the study is to find the major sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in relation to length of stay in Mizoram.

For determining the level of acculturative stress on the different length of stay, the length of stay of participants were categorized into five groups, i.e.,

- 0-1 year (*n*=102)
- 1-3 years (*n*=215)
- 3-5 years (*n*=93)
- 5-10 years (*n*=18)
- 10 years and above (*n*=28)

One-way ANOVA was also carried out using SPSS. To further identify where the differences lie across the different levels of length of stay, post hoc test was computed. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed.

Table 4.17   One-way ANOVA for six dimensions of Acculturative Stress and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Homesickness	Between Groups	0.68	4	0.17	0.06 NS
	Within Groups	1153.31	451	2.55	
	Total	1153.99	455		
Food preferences	Between Groups	121.44	4	30.36	3.05*
	Within Groups	4478.52	451	9.93	
	Total	4599.96	455		
Social behaviour and language	Between Groups	339.32	4	84.83	2.26*
	Within Groups	16897.04	451	37.46	
	Total	17236.36	455		
Cultural values	Between Groups	20.46	4	5.11	0.61 NS
	Within Groups	3729.09	451	8.26	
	Total	3749.55	455		
Prejudice and social discrimination	Between Groups	222.39	4	55.59	1.49 NS
	Within Groups	16742.13	451	37.12	
	Total	16964.52	455		
Isolation	Between Groups	154.80	4	38.70	3.69*
	Within Groups	4721.69	451	10.46	
	Total	4876.49	455		
Total score	Between Groups	2051.37	4	512.84	1.74 NS
	Within Groups	132580.45	451	293.97	
	Total	134631.82	455		

*Significant at the 0.05 level   NS Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.17 shows the F value and p-value for different dimensions of acculturative stress across different levels of length of stay: 0-1 year, 1-3 years, 3-5 years, 5-10 years, and 10 years and above. It can be seen that significant differences are found in food preference and isolation. No significant difference is found in homesickness, social behaviour and language, cultural values, prejudice and social discrimination, and the overall acculturative stress.

Further analysis is given for each of the six dimensions as well as the total score of acculturative stress below:

Table 4.18   One-way ANOVA for Homesickness and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Homesickness	Between Groups	0.68	4	0.17	0.06[NS]
	Within Groups	1153.31	451	2.55	
	Total	1153.99	455		

[NS] Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.18 shows that the F-value for the dimension homesickness is 0.06, i.e., F (4, 451) value is found to be 0.067. With the critical value of F being 2.37 at 0.05 level, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference in homesickness and length of stay of the students. The feeling of missing home, family and friends do not necessarily differ across the different length of stay of the students.

Although the finding revealed by the computation of ANOVA carried out shows no significant difference with the value found being 0.06, i.e., F (4, 451) is 0.06, $p> 0.05$, the above table show the comparisons of length of stay on the dimension homesickness. It reveals those students who stayed in Mizoram for 1-3 years had the highest score on homesickness. It is followed by students who stayed for 0-1 year. It can be seen that homesickness reduced as the duration of stay increases, that is, 5-10 years, 10 years and above. The feeling of homesickness is found to be the lowest on students who stayed for 3-5 years compared to the others.

It is observed in this study that the lesser the duration of stay in the host state, the more the feeling of homesickness. It is also found that students who stayed for the longest duration, that is, 10 years and above had decreased homesickness according to the score on the dimension of homesickness. Students at home, school, or in their neighbourhood get to enjoy the company of friends and relatives. They are perceived by friends and families in a certain way they are comfortable with in their home culture. Further, the familiarity and the predictability of their schedules give a sense of comfort and stability. Moving to a new environment, losing the relational stability and the struggle to cope can often lead to feeling of isolation and loneliness. In addition, the new responsibilities and difficulty in making social relationship can ignite feeling of homesickness. This may cause a decline in social functioning as well as overall functioning and increased psychological distress of the non-resident students.

Table 4.19   One-way ANOVA for Food preferences and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Food preferences	Between Groups	121.44	4	30.36	3.05*
	Within Groups	4478.52	451	9.93	
	Total	4599.96	455		

*Significant at 0.05 level

The critical value of F is found to be 2.37 at 0.05 level and $F_{(4, 451)}$ computed value is 3.05 ($p < 0.05$); therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is failed to be accepted. It signifies that there is significant difference in food preferences and length of stay of the students.

As significant difference exists across the length of stay in this dimension, to further identify where the differences lie, post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) was carried out. The table below along with means plot graph on multiple comparisons using post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) shows the comparisons across the different length of stay on the dimension of food preferences of acculturative stress scale.

Table 4.20   Multiple comparisons using Post Hoc Tests of Food Preferences on the different Length of Stay

Dimension	(I) LOS	(J) LOS	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Food preferences	0-1 year	1-3 years	-0.36	0.37	0.98	-1.43	0.70
		3-5 years	-0.974	0.45	0.27	-2.24	0.30
		5-10 years	-0.54	0.80	0.99	-2.81	1.72
		10 years and above	1.26	0.67	0.46	-0.63	3.15
	1-3 years	0-1 year	0.36	0.37	0.98	-0.70	1.43
		3-5 years	-0.60	0.39	0.71	-1.71	0.49
		5-10 years	-0.18	0.77	1.00	-2.36	1.99
		10 years and above	1.62	0.63	0.10	-0.16	3.41
	3-5 years	0-1 year	0.97	0.45	0.27	-0.30	2.24
		1-3 years	0.60	0.39	0.71	-0.49	1.71
		5-10 years	0.42	0.81	1.00	-1.85	2.71
		10 years and above	2.23*	0.67	0.01	0.32	4.14
	5-10 years	0-1 year	0.54	0.80	0.99	-1.72	2.81
		1-3 years	0.18	0.77	1.00	-1.99	2.36
		3-5 years	-0.42	0.81	1.00	-2.71	1.85
		10 years and above	1.80	0.95	0.45	-0.87	4.48
	10 years and above	0-1 year	-1.26	0.67	0.46	-3.15	0.63
		1-3 years	-1.62	0.63	0.10	-3.41	0.16
		3-5 years	-2.23*	0.67	0.01	-4.14	-0.32
		5-10 years	-1.80	0.95	0.45	-4.48	0.87

Note: LOS- Length of stay
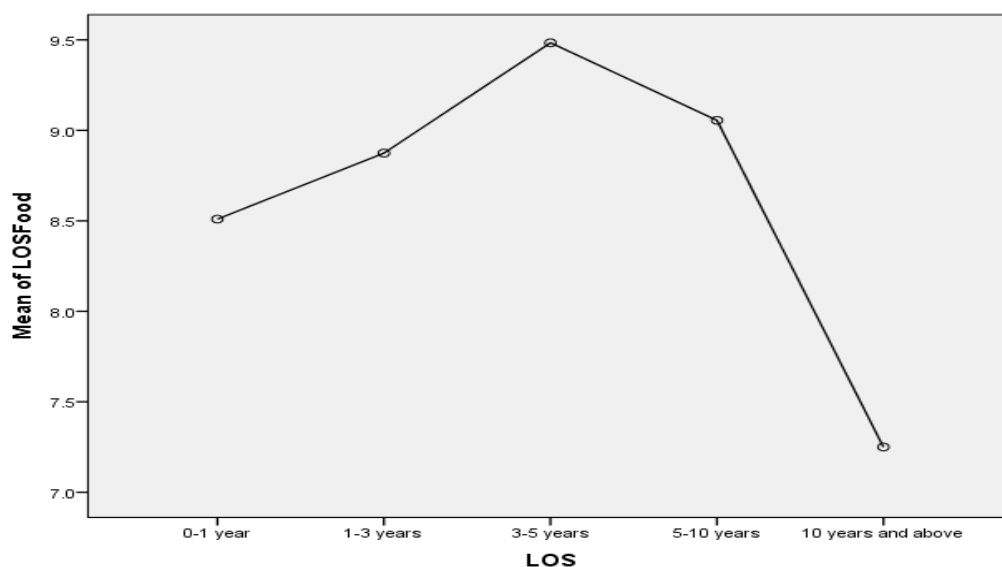
Figure 4.4   Means Plot of Food preferences and Length of Stay

The findings from the computed ANOVA signify that the critical value of F is 2.37 and F (4, 451) value is 3.05. It can be said that there is significant difference in food preferences across the different length of stay of the students.

Table 4.20 and Figure 4.4 shows the multiple comparisons on where the differences lie using post hoc test (Hochberg GT2). It reveals that students who stayed in Mizoram for 3-5 years had the most problem in adjusting to food. They found it difficult to adapt and adjust to the different food items and timings for different meals in a day. This is followed by students who stayed for 5-10 years, 1-3 years, 0-1 year and 10 years and above respectively.

Many factors can influence the dietary patterns after moving away from home even within the country. Adopting lifestyle changes include changes in availability of food items according to the staple food of the host state. In a study done on Asian students in America, it was found that students found it difficult to adapt to the 'westernised' diet in the early period of their stay; that gradually led to unhealthy dietary changes (Lv & Cason, 2004). In this study, one of the major issues faced by students in the process of acculturation was reported to be inability to adjust to new food items. It also reveals that the quality of food provided in hostel, change in timing, specifically the early timings of meals was an issue for students. In addition

to the stress due to homesickness, and academic burden, this can lead to alterations in eating patterns.

This result is consistent with the discussion sessions conducted with the non-resident students. A student who had stayed here for four years, pursuing bachelors and master's degree mentioned that:

> *"Till today, I find it difficult to adjust to the hostel food. Improper diet, lack of green vegetables, lots of oil, and the way food items are prepared have given me health issues and I had to seek medical help."*

Although majority of students stated that adjustment to food was the main problem for them, it can be clearly seen from the findings that students who had stayed for the longest period, that is, ten years and above seemed to have the least issue in food items available as well as in the early meal timings. A research scholar with five years of stay expressed how he overcame food issue by stating:

> *"The main reason for my homesickness at the beginning was the quality of food. It was very difficult at first. I gradually adjusted by eating out; sometimes I prepare what I like; now, I begin adapting to Mizo food."*

This may indicate that compared to the other lengths of stay, an increased duration of stay helps students gradually adjust to the food items available.

Table 4.21   One-way ANOVA for Social Behaviour and Language and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Social behaviour and language	Between Groups	339.32	4	84.83	2.26^{NS}
	Within Groups	16897.04	451	37.46	
	Total	17236.36	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4.21 shows that the calculated F-value for the dimension of social behaviour and language is 2.26, i.e., F (4, 451) value is 2.26. With the critical value of F being 2.37 at 0.05 level, it can be said that we can accept the null hypothesis that

there is no significant difference between the scores on social behaviour and language and length of stay of the students.

The calculated F-value for the dimension is found to be 2.26, i.e., F (4, 451) value is 2.26, indicating that there is no significant among students in social behaviour and language across the different length of stay.

Although no significant difference is found, analysis of data vide table 4.21 indicates that students who stayed for 0-1 year had the highest stress compared to the other duration of stay in relation to social behaviour and language. They felt intimidated to participate in social activities, had difficulty in making new friends and might even hinder self-expression due to the language differences. They had difficulty in making purchases both on clothing items and groceries and in using public transportation due to language differences. The reason for this could be that they were new to the place and the society and had lesser time to adjust to the new environmental set-up.

This is followed by students who stayed in Mizoram for 3-5 years, 1-3 years, 5-10 years, and 10 years and above respectively. The findings here also show that with an increase in the duration of stay, students reduced issues regarding social behaviour and language. This may not signify that student had resolved the issue with social behaviour and language but indicates that there was gradual adjustment and possibility of positive coping with an increase in experiences in the new environment.

Table 4.22   One-way ANOVA for Cultural Values and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Cultural values	Between Groups	20.46	4	5.11	0.61^{NS}
	Within Groups	3729.09	451	8.26	
	Total	3749.55	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.22 showed that the calculated F-value for the dimension is 0.61, i.e., F (4, 451) value is 0.61. With the critical value of F being 2.37 at 0.05

level, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference in cultural values across length of stay of the students.

Various customs, traditions, and community practices in one state may differ. Cultural values and beliefs have strong influence on people's life. It makes one to learn tolerance and understand brotherhood for social harmony, and physical well-being of the community as well as for others around. Understanding and respecting each other's cultural values and learning about different cultural backgrounds can help in fostering interpersonal relationships and reduce the acculturative stress for students. At the same time, while some students have the ability to find a balance between their inborn culture and the new culture, it can be distressing for some students to find people disrespect their deeply held core values and beliefs. In this study, students who stayed here for 5-10 years had the most stress as compared to other duration of stay. They experienced the feeling of hurt and discouragement when others disrespected their cultural values. In this dimension, it reveals that the longer duration of stay does not necessarily predict better adjustment. This is followed by students who stayed for 3-5 years, 1-3 years, and 0-1 year. However, students who stayed for the longest period of time, 10 years and above, experienced a decreased and minimum level of stress compared to others.

Table 4.23   One-way ANOVA for Perception of Prejudice and Social Discrimination and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Prejudice and social discrimination	Between Groups	222.39	4	55.59	1.49^{NS}
	Within Groups	16742.13	451	37.12	
	Total	16964.52	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.23 shows that the calculated F-value for the dimension of perception of prejudice and social discrimination is 1.49, i.e., $F_{(4, 451)}$ value is 1.49. With the critical value of F being 2.37 at 0.05 level, it can be said that the null

hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between the scores on perception of prejudice and social discrimination and length of stay of the students.

The calculated F-value for the dimension is 1.49, i.e., $F_{(4, 451)}$ value is 1.49 which indicates that there is no significant difference among students in perception of prejudice and social discrimination across the different length of stay. However, the multiple comparisons using post hoc test and the means plot graph are given above.

In perception of prejudice and social discrimination, students who stayed for 3-5 years had the highest stress as compared to those with other duration of stay. They experienced bias and unequal treatment as well as hatred verbally and non-verbally. They expressed that some opportunities had also been denied in institutions because of their race and distinctive looks. This is also consistent with the discussion sessions conducted with the students. Students expressed the biased treatment by stating:

> *"We are charged more taxi fares and more prices in some shops for the same item than the locals."*

Another student mentioned:

> *"We do not have a representative for non-resident students. It is difficult to make our voices heard on whatever problems we have. Student's Union members are elected through vote, and since majority are Mizos, non-resident students do not have a chance."*

Regarding religious discrimination, a student mentioned thus:

> *"The local classmates are nice, trying to make us feel at home by inviting us to Church services even if we are not Christians. At first, although it felt harmless, I felt threatened and uncomfortable when someone (not my classmates) at the Church told me I would become a better person if I practise their beliefs and practices."*

It is found that there is no significant difference in perception of prejudice and social discrimination across the different levels of length of stay among the students.

Table 4.24   One-way ANOVA for Isolation and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
	Between Groups	154.80	4	38.70	
Isolation	Within Groups	4721.69	451	10.46	**3.69***
	Total	4876.49	455		

*Significant at 0.05 level

The critical value of F is found to be 2.37 and $F_{(4, 451)}$ value is 3.69; therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is failed to be accepted. It signifies that there is significant difference on isolation across the different length of stay among students.

As significant difference exists across the length of stay in this dimension, to further identify where the differences lie, post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) was carried out. The table below along with means plot graph on multiple comparisons using post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) show the comparisons across the different length of stay on the dimension of isolation of acculturative stress scale.

Table 4.25   Multiple comparisons using Post Hoc Tests of Isolation on the different Length of Stay

Dimension	(I) LOS	(J) LOS	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Isolation	0-1 year	1-3 years	0.71	0.38	0.50	-0.38	1.81
		3-5 years	-0.31	0.46	0.99	-1.62	0.99
		5-10 years	1.24	0.82	0.76	-1.08	3.57
		10 years and above	1.82	0.69	0.08	-0.11	3.77
	1-3 years	0-1 year	-0.71	0.38	0.50	-1.81	0.38
		3-5 years	-1.03	0.40	0.10	-2.16	0.10
		5-10 years	0.53	0.79	0.99	-1.70	2.76
		10 years and above	1.11	0.65	0.59	-0.71	2.95
	3-5 years	0-1 year	0.31	0.46	0.99	-0.99	1.62
		1-3 years	1.03	0.40	0.10	-0.10	2.16
		5-10 years	1.56	0.83	0.46	-0.78	3.90
		10 years and above	2.14[*]	0.69	0.02	0.19	4.11
	5-10 years	0-1 year	-1.24	0.82	0.76	-3.57	1.08
		1-3 years	-0.53	0.79	0.99	-2.76	1.70
		3-5 years	-1.561	0.83	0.46	-3.90	0.78
		10 years and above	0.58	0.97	1.00	-2.16	3.34
	10 years and above	0-1 year	-1.82	0.69	0.08	-3.77	0.11
		1-3 years	-1.11	0.65	0.59	-2.95	0.71
		3-5 years	-2.14[*]	0.69	0.02	-4.11	-0.19
		5-10 years	-0.58	0.97	1.00	-3.34	2.16

Note: LOS- Length of stay
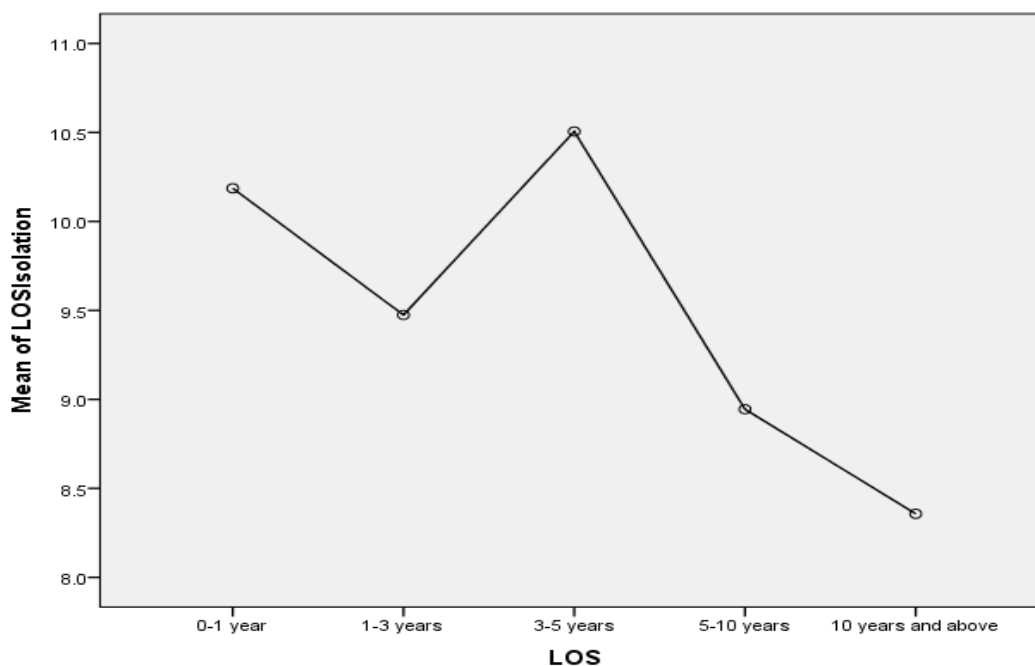
Figure 4.5   Means Plot of Isolation and Length of Stay

The computed one-way ANOVA shows that the F value is found to be 2.37 at 0.05 level and $F_{(4, 451)}$ value is 3.69, signifying that there is significant in isolation and length of stay of the students. The further multiple comparison using post-hoc test and the means plot graph is shown above.

Table 4.25 and Figure 4.5 reveal that students who stayed in Mizoram for 3-5 years had the highest stress in isolation. This is followed by 0-1 year, 1-3 years, 5-10 years, and 10 years and above respectively. The feeling of insecurity and alienation in the new environment were the problems that students faced. The feeling of isolation arose out of the different stressors discussed in this study.

Language and cultural differences can result to issues in making purchases, transportation, and inhibit non-resident students to make new friends. Lack of social support and close friends to confide their problems can further lead to feeling of isolation and inability in adjusting to the stressors. This is consistent with the discussion carried out with the students. Students who stayed for a fewer than five (5) years expressed their difficulty in making new friends leading to the feeling of isolation. A student who had studied here for 3 years mentioned thus:

"It is really difficult to fit into a group of locals and become good friends with them. Though it is not their intention to make us feel that way, it is really hard to become close to them when they are already in a group. At the same time, they are helpful and polite."

In this study, it can be seen that the feeling of isolation was reduced with the increase in the length of stay of the students. A research scholar who had 6 years and 7 months experience of studying here stated:

"The local classmates are my best friends now. They even accommodate me when I have problem with hostel and whenever I stand in need."

This may reveal that the more the experiences that comes with the longer the duration of stay, the better the adjustment with the locals and the more they fit into the culture and place.

Table 4.26   One-way ANOVA for Total Acculturative Stress and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Total score of AS	Between Groups	2051.37	4	512.84	1.74^{NS}
	Within Groups	1325 80.45	451	293.97	
	Total	134631.82	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.26 shows that the calculated F-value for acculturative stress is 1.74, i.e., the F (4, 451) value is 1.74. With the critical value of F being 2.37 at 0.05 level, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference among students in acculturative stress across the different length of stay of the students.

The calculated F-value for the dimension is 1.74, i.e., F (4, 451) value is 1.74 at 0.05 level, thereby accepting the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in acculturative stress and length of stay of the students.

The findings indicate that short duration of stay does not necessarily predict high acculturative stress. Previous study has also found that there is no correlation between acculturative stress and length of stay in international students (Azizah et al., 2014). However, although significant difference is not found, it can be seen here that students with the longest duration of stay, i.e., 10 years and above, had the lowest acculturative stress. It is presumed that the longer the duration of stay, the better the adjustment and adaptation to the new place. This is found to be true in this study to a certain extent. Students who stayed for 10 years were found to have the lowest acculturative stress compared to those who stayed for other durations. A study by Vergaraa et al. (2010) also ascertained that the longer length of stay in international university students is significantly correlated with low acculturative stress. A study also indicated that the longer the duration of stay, the less the stress experience (Thaker, 2013). Further, lower duration of stay predicted homesickness compared to longer duration of stay among international students (Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007).

4.1.6 Acculturative stress and types of courses

For determining the level of acculturative stress on the type of educational courses, the types of courses are categorized in two groups, i.e.,

- Professional course (n-317), and
- General course (n-139).

Professional courses are special courses offered at several colleges and universities. These courses give importance to professional development and specialization in particular fields. It has been presumed that students in professional courses and general courses experience stress in different ways. Waghachavare et al. (2013) opined that various studies across the globe emphasized that students undertaking professional courses, such as medical studies, engineering and others were subjected to higher stress. Moreover, moving with the need to adjust and adapt to an unfamiliar place may lead to higher acculturative stress. However, a study by Raut and Mundada (2016) revealed that non-professional students had more anxiety than students of professional courses and they attributed it to the lack of guidance,

lack of confidence, unemployment problems, competitions of career and above all, being unable to set goal for future life. Hence, the measure of such to identify the students' status on acculturative stress on both professional and general courses is found to be necessary.

The differences across the two courses on the different dimensions on acculturative stress were computed using Z-test. The table below shows the findings on each dimension of acculturative stress across the two courses.

Table 4.27   Z-test for Types of Courses on the six dimensions of Acculturative Stress

Dimensions	Mean		Sd		Z-value
	Professional (317)	General (139)	Professional (317)	General (139)	
Homesickness	6.10	6.02	1.63	1.50	0.47[NS]
Food preferences	9.00	8.41	3.21	3.05	1.64[NS]
Social behaviour and language	20.09	19.07	6.31	5.72	1.69[NS]
Cultural values	10.22	10.63	2.87	2.84	1.40[NS]
Prejudice and racial discrimination	17.15	15.61	6.31	5.45	2.64*
Isolation	10.18	8.77	3.32	2.94	4.50*
Total score of AS	72.76	68.53	17.96	14.96	2.60*

*Significant at the 0.05 level   [NS] Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.27 shows the Z-value for different dimensions of acculturative stress across the type of educational courses: professional and general courses. It can be seen that significant differences are found on the dimensions of perception of prejudice and social discrimination, isolation, and on the total score of acculturative

stress. No significant difference is found on the remaining dimensions: homesickness, food preferences, social behaviour and language, and cultural values of acculturative stress.

Further analyses on the overall acculturative stress and each of the six dimensions are given below.

The above table shows that the calculated Z-value for the dimension of homesickness is 0.47. It can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between homesickness, and professional and general courses of the students.

The above table shows that the calculated Z-value in food preference is 1.64; therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between food preferences, and professional and general courses of the students.

Analysis of data vide table 4.27 shows that the calculated Z-value in social behaviour and language is 1.69. It can also be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between social behaviour and language and professional and general courses of the students.

A quick glance at the above table shows that the calculated Z-value in cultural values is 1.40. This indicates that null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between values, and professional and general courses of the students.

In perception of prejudice and social discrimination, the means are found to be 17.15 and 15.61 for professional and general courses respectively. Further, the Z-value is found to be 2.64. This reveals that the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is rejected. It signifies that there is significant difference in perception of prejudice and social discrimination, across professional and general courses of the students. The means of the two courses reveals that students on professional courses experience more prejudice and social discrimination compared to students pursuing general courses. Several students from the professional courses mentioned that they did not experience any kind of discrimination on the ground of

gender and being non-resident students. At the same time, several others might have experienced biased treatment on different situations for being a non-resident. This finding is consistent with the FGD session where a student from the professional course stated:

"I experience taunting several times for being an outsider."

Another student mentioned:

"I was denied accommodation at few places, and it was very difficult to find a rent since I am a non-resident. We had to search for accommodation for a very long period of time; that affected our study time and it stressed us out very much as there was no time and comfortable place to study."

Students also encountered an unequal treatment:

"Our voices are not heard even when we place complaints on hostel issues. We need a representative from the non-resident students so that our problems can be solved. But majority of the votes are the locals, so we do not stand a chance."

On the dimension of isolation, the means are found to be 10.18 and 8.77 for professional and general courses respectively. Further, the Z-value is 4.50. This indicates that the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is failed to be accepted. It signifies that there is significant difference between the scores on isolation, and professional and general courses of the students. The above-mentioned means states that students on professional courses experience greater feeling of isolation when compared to students pursuing general courses. With the demanding workload of pursuing professional courses, the pressure in completing the course, and the uncertainty of future career, professional students might be more stressed out than students pursuing general courses. In addition, the perceived discrimination endured in different situations may cause students difficulties in making new acquaintances and leave them with a feeling of a sense of rejection. As a consequence, insecurity can surface resulting in feeling they had no one to confide to regarding their problems. This can further lead to social isolation causing further setbacks in undergoing more stress academically and mentally as well.

Analysis of data vide table 4.27 states that in acculturative stress, the means are found to be 72.76 and 68.53 for professional and general courses respectively. The Z-value is further found to be 2.60. It signifies that there is significant difference between professional and general courses of the students on in acculturative stress. As discussed earlier, different types of stress are common.

Table 4.27 states that students on professional courses experience higher acculturative stress, compared to students pursuing general courses. It is evident in this study that students pursuing professional courses experience more acculturative stress compared to students pursuing general courses. It can be said that students in different courses experience stress in different ways. Higher education studies become more stressful day to day especially in the changing scenario of the education system in India. Students pursuing professional courses are considered to be more exposed to academic stress specifically those in engineering, management, and medical studies. This may be due to the extremely high and rigorous workload, peer pressure, pressure from parents and families to excel in their studies, limited job opportunities and increased competition for jobs. Studies have also shown the prevalence of higher level of stress among medical and engineering students compared to students in the general courses (Gokul & Jayalakshmi, 2016). In addition, a study by Agarwal and Chahar (2007) also revealed that students studying technology are experiencing role overload, role stagnation, and self-role distance. In addition to the academic stress of higher education students, students, when moving, need to adjust to the unfamiliar new place. The difficulty to cope with food, language, homesickness, and change in daily lifestyle can add more stress to the students. The experiences of biased and unequal treatment and inability to make new close friends can adversely affect students' mental and physical health.

The present objective aims in finding out the major sources and the level of acculturative stress of non-resident students in higher education institutes in Mizoram. Further, it aims at determining if there are any differences in the students score of acculturative stress relating to gender, educational level, length of stay, and types of courses.

The major sources of acculturative stress of the non-resident students are found to be language barrier and issues related to food preferences. Students also experience biased treatment, homesickness, inability to make new friends, difficulty in making purchases, accommodation and transportation issues, and lack of interest and motivation in studies. Overall, responses to the scale reveals that majority of the students' experience mild (n=390) and high (n=30) acculturative stress. Further, thirty (30) students experience low acculturative stress. As mentioned, the main sources of acculturative stress are found to be deficiency in knowing the local language and the inability to adapt to new dietary behaviour. It has been found that UG students and students who stayed for 3-5 years had the most difficulties adjusting to new food and new eating habits compared to those with other education levels and durations of stay. This indicates that newcomers find it difficult to adapt to the sudden changes in diet when locating to a new place. Locating to a new environment could worsen students' eating habits due to lack of cooking skills, self-efficacy, and/or unavailability or inconvenience of cooking space. Moreover, this finding is also supported by the sessions carried out in focus group discussion where majority of the UG students (with average 3-5 years duration of stay) reported that the quality, timing, and variety of food were the major concerns. Likewise, studies have also found greater acculturative stress for short duration of stay (Mena et al., 1987; Ayoob & Singh, 2011). Further, students from the higher educational levels and longer duration of stay (5-10 years, 10 years and above) were found to have lower acculturative stress. This is also supported by the qualitative study where students expressed that the longer the duration of stay, the easier could they cope with the issue, resulting in less stress experience.

In this study, lifestyle stressors experienced by the students also included the struggle to find suitable accommodation, making purchases, and biased treatment for being non-residents. Ph. D scholars were found to experience prejudice and racial discrimination the most. They felt that there were certain discrimination against them on the basis of their distinctive looks, complexion, and their races. Possible explanation could be the fact that scholars needed to interact with more locals in and outside the institutes. They obviously had gone through many years of research that

necessitated interacting with more locals, hence they had more incidents and experiences along the way. Studies has also found that the major sources of acculturative stress includes the experience of higher levels of discrimination (Poyrazli et al., 2004; Vergaraa et al., 2010; Gebregergis, 2018; Xue, 2018) on international students. This finding is also supported by the qualitative study where Ph. D scholars expressed the many instances of bias and unequal treatment for being a non-resident. This resulted in the feeling of isolation and inability to make new friends.

In addition, this study also reveals that students who stayed for 3-5 years had the most difficulties in dealing with adjusting to new food, new eating habits, and had the most feeling of isolation. It is also evident from the finding that students developed the feeling of insecurity and alienation in the new environment. This may be caused by the different stressors including inability to cope with new dietary behaviour and language deficiency. This can result in inhibition of non-resident students in making new friends, along with the multitude stressors such as cultural differences. Lack of social support and close friends to confide their problems to can further lead to feeling of isolation; and inability to adjust to the stressors.

Further, a comparison of the level of acculturative stress among the two types of educational courses found that students pursuing professional courses experienced more prejudice and social discrimination, isolation and higher amount of acculturative stress than students' pursuing general courses. The demanding and rigorous workload that come with pursuing professional courses, the pressure in completing and exceling the course, and the uncertainty of future career stress out the student more than those pursuing general courses. It is evident from the findings that the different stressors related to acculturation add more stress to the students: the experiences of opportunities being rightfully denied, perceived discrimination endured in different situations resulting in difficulty in making new acquaintances, and a feeling of rejection for being a non-resident. Hence, the findings make it evident that, as a consequence of such experiences, insecurity surfaces resulting in the feeling that they had no one to confide to about their problems. This further led to

social isolation causing further setbacks in undergoing more stress academically and mentally.

Contrary to the many researches where differences are found, there is no significant gender difference among students on the measured acculturation factors: food preferences, perception of prejudice and racial discrimination, and isolation. However, significant differences are found in homesickness, social behaviour and language, cultural values, and acculturative stress.

4.2   Analysis and Interpretation of Objective 2

Objective 2   To find out the coping strategies used by non-resident students pursuing higher education in in relation to their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses in Mizoram

Coping strategies according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984) can be conceptualized as cognitive and behavioural efforts used by an individual to reduce the effects of stress. Coping responses consist of a wide range of behavioural and cognitive activities, and the efficacy is determined by factors that include the nature of the stress, culture, social contexts, and personal resources (Noh & Kasper, 2003).

Coping styles play an important role in physical and psychological well-being. This role is especially evident when individuals are confronted with negative or stressful life events. The way people cope with stressful situations is an important factor in their recovery and subsequent adjustment. To understand the important interaction between stressful events, indicatively acculturative stress in this study, and the ways in which students deal with them, Coping Inventory for Stressful Situation (CISS-Adult) developed by Endler and Parker is employed. The inventory measures three dimensions: task, emotion, and avoidance. This multidimensional approach to the assessment of coping with stressful situations provides great precision in predicting preferred coping strategies.

In this study, different coping mechanisms are likely to be employed by the students in managing stress resulting out of acculturation. In employing different

strategies according to the situation as mentioned above, the different strategies employed may also differ according to their varying gender, personalities, attitude, educational level, types of courses, and length of stay in the host state. Each problem or situation requires the use of a specific coping strategy; therefore, the same strategy can be effective or ineffective depending on whether or not an individual perceives the situation as threatening (Carver et al., 1989). Likewise, some people may be resilient in coping with stress while some may show maladaptive responses to the same stressor, which is considered to be attributable to individual differences.

Within the challenging higher education environment, there is a drive towards personal reflection requiring students to take ownership of their learning and deal with the issues of acculturation. In order to do so, it is important that they are able to adopt appropriate coping strategies; therefore, there is a need to understand and identify the coping strategies adopted by students and the extent to which these impact upon their well-being. This will allow the identification and implementation of support mechanisms where appropriate; therefore, it is important to identify the stressors and coping strategies that are relevant to the non-resident students that result from the various immigrant challenges they experience. Hence, one of the objectives of the study is to identify the coping strategies employed by non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram to overcome the stress and challenges resulting from acculturation.

4.2.1   Major findings of coping strategies

The following tables show the preferred coping strategy employed by the students using CISS-Adult.

Table 4.28   Interpretation of the scores, number of students and percentage on the different dimensions of Coping Strategies

| Range | Guidelines | Dimensions | | | | | |
| | | Task | | Emotion | | Avoidance | |
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Above 70	Very much above average	6		41		117	
66-70	Much above average	21	26.53%	47	57.67%	65	76.10%
61- 65	Above average	37		71		83	
56-60	Slightly above average	57		104		82	
45-55	Average	184	40.35%	138	30.26%	86	18.85%
40-44	Slightly below average	73		32		17	
35-39	Below average	39	33.11%	20	12.06%	4	5.04%
30-34	Much below average	22		2		1	
Below 30	Very much below average	17		1		1	
	Total no. of students	456		456		456	

The above table 4.28 shows the tabulated number of students on each dimension using the range and levels of interpretation provided by CISS-Adult. It also shows the total scores and percentage of each dimension, task-oriented coping, emotion-oriented coping, and avoidance-oriented coping. Further analysis on the comparison of gender on the scores obtained on each dimension is given (Table 4.29, 4.30 & 4.31).

It can be seen from the total scores that students' highest score is on the dimension of avoidance-oriented coping. The above table reveals that the greatest number of students, i.e., 347 (76.10 per cent) students' scores is above average on avoidance-oriented coping. It indicates that students use avoidance-oriented coping strategies the most as compared to other coping strategies. The second preferred

coping strategy used by students is the emotion-oriented coping; this is followed by task-oriented coping.

Avoidance-oriented coping measures statements that include distraction and social diversion coping strategies. Distraction involves behaviours such as watching TV and movies, going out for favourite meals or snacks, shopping and buying something new, and taking time off to get away from the issues that stress one out. It also includes engaging in other pleasurable activities such as playing sports and exercises to distract oneself from the stressful situation. Distraction is a passive coping strategy in that a person tries to avoid the stressor without directly confronting the situation or trying to solve the problem. It aims to create distance from the source of stress so as to process those uncomfortable feelings and situations that one is going through. Social diversion-oriented coping behaviour includes visiting friends, spending time with other people, calling friends and families for advice and companion. When confronted with a stressor or a situation, which are unavoidable and unchangeable, people may distract themselves from the situation. The effectiveness and the adaptiveness of this strategy depend on the situation. In this study, students may find it impossible to change the mind-set of the locals when they were socially discriminated, isolated, and treated biasedly for being a non-resident. They might cope with the stress by eating out, and engaging in other activities that would make them forget the stressful event for a while. Seeking help from family and friends was an important strategy that students employed to cope with different stressors. Assistance provided by family and friends, and the ready availability of adequate support when needed boosted the students' confidence and alleviated their stress. Previous studies also supported that strong social support was reported to be the major coping strategy employed, and seeking out familial and peer resources resulted in successful adaptation (Thomas & Choi, 2006; Lee, 2008; Junhyoun et al., 2012; Ma, 2017; Poulakis, 2017; O'Reilly, 2018). Past research result also found that social support was significantly correlated with decreased psychological distress (Yu et al., 2020). A student expressed his way of coping stressful situation by stating:

"I sleep for some time, which is the best solution. Otherwise, I talk with friends and try to stay away from the situation."

Another student said:

"To relieve stress, I cook or go to restaurant; sometimes, I go for a ride and drink with friends. There is nothing much you can do when you get unfair treatments for not being a Mizo. At times, I try to forget about it and resort to listening to my favourite music or play online games."

Another student shared:

"I engage in culinary activities and gardening. I also make time to read my favourite book or watch my favourite movie. I talk to my parents or friends when things really stressed me out."

These strategies may work for the students as it interrupts the mood and shifts their mood to activities that are more absorbing and pleasurable to them. These strategies may be helpful to the extent that the situation is beyond one's control or the situation cannot be changed. It is also true that sometimes negative emotions can be overwhelming, and people certainly need a break from them and tries to avoid them.

However, it should be noted that this strategy is not a permanent cure or fix and should not be thought of as one. It should be considered as a temporary break from the negative moods resulting out of the stressors. They may be only effective as a short-term rather than long-term coping process. At the same time, it should be kept in mind that categorizing strategies employed by students as effective or ineffective can also lead to erroneous interpretations. The situations and the goals of the students should be considered in order to draw firm conclusion as good or bad strategies. These strategies may rapidly or gradually change or replaced by wise choices that are more appropriate for coping over time depending on the situation and the coping skills learned by the students as time progresses. Further, the different strategies employed may also differ according to students' varying personalities, attitude, and length of stay in the host state. The inability or difficulty in coping to a new place may impact students functioning resulting in high acculturative stress, low academic performance, as well as decreasing overall well-being. To cope with these daily acculturative stressors and challenges, the need for and importance of the

students' own ability to successfully adjust and cope with emerges so as to facilitate positive outcomes. This result clearly indicates the crucial need of professionals or counsellors in helping students to develop and improve their coping skills, increase their resilience's and to learn how to handle negative emotions, and deal with their stress in difficult situations.

Adaptive coping strategies can protect students against acculturative stress, and this may differ according to genders. This study aims to estimate the prevalence of acculturative stress and examine gender differences in preferred coping strategies using a sample of 456 (Male-265; Female-191) higher education students. Further analysis on the comparison of gender on the scores obtained on each coping dimension is as follows (Table 4.8.1, 4.8.2 and 4.8.3).

Table 4.29   Interpretation of the scores, number of students for gender on Task-oriented coping

Dimension	Range	Guidelines	No. of students				
			Male (265)	%	Female (191)	%	Total (456)
Task	Above 70	Very much above average	2		4		6
	66-70	Much above average	12	25.67%	9	27.74%	21
	61- 65	Above average	19		18		37
	56-60	Slightly above average	35		22		57
	45-55	Average	108	40.75%	76	39.80%	184
	40-44	Slightly below average	48		25		73
	35-39	Below average	17	33.58%	22	32.46%	39
	30-34	Much below average	12		9		22
	Below 30	Very much below average	12		6		17

Analysis of data vide table 4.29 reveals that majority of the male, 108 students (40.75%), fall on the average level. Among male, 89 students (33.58%) fall under the below average levels. The remaining 68 students (25.67%) fall above the average levels.

Among the female, majority of the students' scores, 76 students (39.80%) fall on the average level. It also shows that 62 students (32.46%) fall on the below average levels. The remaining 53 students (27.74%) fall above the average levels. This indicates that female (27.74%) employs more task-oriented coping strategies compared to male (25.67%) to overcome their acculturation related stressors.

Table 4.30   Interpretation of the scores, number of students for gender on Emotion-oriented coping

| Dimension | Range | Guidelines | No. of students | | | | |
			Male (265)	%	Female (191)	%	Total (456)
	Above 70	Very much above average	17		24		41
	66-70	Much above average	32	58.50%	15	56.54%	47
	61- 65	Above average	43		28		71
	56-60	Slightly above average	63		41		104
Emotion	45-55	Average	78	29.43%	60	31.41%	138
	40-44	Slightly below average	18		14		32
	35-39	Below average	13	12.07%	7	12.05%	20
	30-34	Much below average	1		1		2
	Below 30	Very much below average	0		1		1

Analysis of data vide table 4.30 indicates that majority of the male, 78 students (29.43%) fall in the average level. Among male, 32 students (12.07%) fall

under the below average levels. The remaining 55 students (58.50%) fall above the average levels.

Among the female, majority of the students' scores, 60 students (31.41%), fall in the average level. It also shows that 23 students (12.05%) fall below average levels. The remaining 108 students (56.54%) fall above the average levels of emotion-oriented coping.

This indicates that male (58.50%) tend to employ more emotion-oriented coping strategies compared to female (56.54%) to overcome their acculturation related stressors. A study has also found that females were found to utilize the emotion-focused coping dimension and endorsed the use of coping strategies more often than males. These included self-distraction, emotional support, instrumental support, and venting (Graves et al., 2021). The present finding is also supported by other studies that also found that female medical students showed increased use of emotional support seeking (emotion-focused) in comparison to males (Harju & Bolen, 1998; Eaton & Bradley, 2008; Abdulghani et al., 2011). However, this has been contradicted by other studies that concluded that males used more emotion-focused strategies than females (Sigmon et al., 1995; Kieffer et al., 2006).

Table 4.31 **Interpretation of the scores, number of students for gender on Avoidance-oriented coping**

Dimension	Range	Guidelines	No. of students				
			Male (265)	%	Female (191)	%	Total (456)
	Above 70	Very much above average	89		28		117
	66-70	Much above average	48	84.15%	17	64.92%	65
	61- 65	Above average	44		39		83
	56-60	Slightly above average	42		40		82
Avoidance	45-55	Average	31	11.70%	55	28.80%	86
	40-44	Slightly below average	10		7		17
	35-39	Below average	1	4.15%	3	6.28%	4
	30-34	Much below average	0		1		1
	Below 30	Very much below average	0		1		1

Analysis of data vide table 4.31 indicates that majority of the male students, 223 (84.15%), fall in the above average levels in this dimension. It also shows that 31 students (11.70 %) fall in the average level. Among male, 11 students (4.15 per cent) fall under below average levels of avoidance-oriented coping.

Among the female, 124 students (64.9%) fall in the above average levels in this dimension. It also reveals that 55 students (28.80%) fall in the average level. The remaining 12 students (6.28%) fall below the average levels of avoidance-oriented coping.

This indicates that male (84.15%) employs more avoidance-oriented coping strategies compared to female (64.92%) to overcome their acculturation related

stressors. A study has also found that women were more likely to use adaptive coping strategies, whereas men were more likely to use maladaptive and avoidance coping strategies (Gentry et al., 2007). Lindquist et al. (1997) also found that men were more likely to use maladaptive coping strategies such as consuming alcohol and following unhealthy eating patterns to deal with stressors. It can be seen that gender differences in coping strategies have been inconclusive because of varying results in the past decades. These gender differences in coping with stressors did not exist in some previous studies (Rosario et al., 1988; Hamilton & Fagot, 1998).

Being able to effectively cope with acculturative stress can be the first step in preventing psychological distress and in achieving optimal functioning for the students. Talking with friends and family, exercising, praying, or actively addressing the causes of stress have been identified as adaptive coping strategies that may enhance overall well-being (Tyler & Ellison, 1994; Wang & Patten, 2002; Andre-Petersson et al., 2006). However, avoiding the stressors without addressing the problem directly can be a growing concern for mental health and students' well-being. This study contributes to existing literature and for the non-resident students on higher education institutions in a number of ways and has important implications for educators, guidance counsellors, and institution psychologists to help students adopt positive coping strategies to reduce their acculturative well-being and improve their well-being.

Correlation among the three dimensions of CISS-Adult using Pearson's correlation matrix

Table 4.32   Pearson's Correlation matrix among the three dimensions of CISS-Adult

Dimensions	Task	Emotion	Avoidance
Task	+1		
Emotion	0.15*	+1	
Avoidance	0.52*	0.24*	+1

* Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4.32 shows the computed Pearson's correlation matrix among the different dimensions of coping strategies. With the r critical value being 0.09, it can be said that all the values are significant at the 0.05 level.

Avoidance-oriented coping and task-oriented coping have the highest correlation among the three dimensions with a correlation of 0.52. It indicates that the dimensions have low positive correlation. This result may imply that when students use various activities in trying to avoid stressful situations, they also engage in task-oriented to a certain extent.

The correlation of the dimensions of avoidance-oriented and emotion-oriented coping was found to be 0.24. It indicates that the dimensions have very mild positive correlation. It also implies that students engage in both avoidance and emotion coping activities for the different stressors they face.

The dimensions of task-oriented coping and emotion-oriented coping have the correlation of 0.15. It indicates that there is more or less no correlation among these two dimensions.

Table 4.33   Pearson's Correlation matrix between Acculturative Stress and Coping Strategies

n=456 Dimensions	ASS	CISS
ASS (Acculturative stress)	1	
CISS (Coping strategies)	0.34*	1

*Significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.33 shows the computed Pearson's correlation matrix between the acculturative stress and coping strategy. With the critical r value being 0.09, the r value of 0.34 is found to be significant indicating a mild positive correlation. It indicates that a relationship exists between acculturative stress and coping strategy. The result may imply that when the acculturative stress increases, students also employ variety of coping strategies to alleviate the stress. Although majority of the students have mild (n=390) and low (n=39) acculturative stress, it may indicate that students do employ some kind of coping strategies depending on individual differences and varying situation.

The result indicates that successful adoption and learning coping skills can help students reach a state of successful adaptation to new environment. Prior studies have also found that the coping strategies employed among international students with high level of acculturative stress included individualistic approach of coping (Mena et al., 1987), social support (Thomas & Choi, 2006; Kim, 2009; Cheng, 2017; O'Reilly, 2018), self-reflection, normalizing (Lee, 2008), engagement in meaningful activities, and positive emotion (Junhyoun et al., 2008), suppressive coping and reactive coping (Akhtar & Kroner-Herwig, 2015), and problem-focused coping strategy (Tiwari, 2017). In this study, different types of coping strategies are found to be employed by students to minimize acculturative stress. The study finds that distraction-oriented coping strategies are found to be the preferred coping strategy.

4.2.2 Coping strategies and gender

The way an individual perceives situation as stress and the way they respond to it may vary across gender. Due to physiological and psychological differences between genders, there may be significant gender differences in coping with stress, including acculturative stress. Differences in coping styles could be because of sexual dimorphism in the brain which is due to the hormonal, chromosomal, and structural differences found in a male and a female brain. Several researches have supported and in fact found these differences in coping styles. Lawrence et al. (2006) said males exhibited greater ability to detach themselves from the emotions of a situation and were more inclined to demonstrate emotional inhibition or 'bottling up' of emotions compared to female. Studies have also revealed that females used more emotion focused coping while males employed problem-focused coping approach (Ptacek et al., 1994; Sinha & Latha, 2018).

At the same time, several researchers have also supported that there are no gender differences in coping any type of stress, including acculturative stress. This calls for the need to determine if there is any difference in the preferred coping strategies in dealing with the academic and acculturative issues faced by the students.

The following tables show the comparison of male and female on each of the three dimensions coping strategies using Z-test. The result of all the dimensions shows that there is no significant gender difference in task-oriented coping and emotion-oriented coping. Significant gender difference is found in avoidance-oriented coping. Analysis for each dimension is given below.

The tables below show the tabulated differences between male and female of all the dimensions using Z-test. The result shows that there is no significant gender difference in task-oriented coping and emotion-oriented coping. Significant difference is found in avoidance-oriented coping. Further, analysis for each dimension is given below.

Task-oriented coping and gender

Table 4.34   Z-test for Task-Oriented Coping on Gender

Dimension	Gender	Mean	Sd	Z-value
Task-oriented coping	Male (265)	48.89	6.99	0.18[NS]
	Female (191)	49.08	7.00	

[NS] Not significant at the 0.05 level

Analysis of data vide table 4.34 reveals that the means of male and female are 48.89 and 49.08 respectively. The standard deviation is found to be 6.99 and 7.00 respectively. The Z-value is found to be 0.18. The critical value of Z at 0.05 level is 1.95. The computed value is less than the critical ratio value. This indicates that there is no significant gender difference in task-oriented coping. This dimension tries to determine if students' way of dealing with their acculturative stress is emphasized on the task or planning, and on attempts to solve the problem or attempts to alter the situation.

Emotion-oriented coping and gender

Table 4.35   Z-test for Emotion-Oriented Coping on Gender

Dimension	Gender	Mean	Sd	Z-value
Emotion-oriented coping	Male (265)	56.39	7.50	0.79[NS]
	Female (191)	57.14	7.55	

[NS] Not significant at the 0.05 level

As per table 4.35, the means of male and female are 56.39 and 57.14 respectively. The standard deviation is found to be 7.50 and 7.55 respectively. The Z-value is 0.79 at 0.05. It indicates that there is no significant difference between male and female on the scores of the emotion dimension of CISS-Adult. This dimension describes emotional reactions that are self-oriented. The emotional reactions include emotional responses such as blaming self for being too emotional, getting angry, becoming tense, self-preoccupation, and fantasising (daydreaming reactions). In some cases, the reaction actually increases stress (like become very upset, become very tense).

Avoidance-Oriented Coping and Gender

Table 4.36   Z-test for Avoidance-Oriented Coping on Gender

Dimension	Gender	Mean	Sd	Z-value
Avoidance-oriented coping	Male (265)	64.53	8.03	6.15*
	Female (191)	59.00	7.68	

*Significant at the 0.05 level

An examination of data vide table 4.36 reveals that the means of male and female are 64.53 and 58.98 respectively. The standard deviation is found to be 64.53 and 59.00 respectively. The Z-value is found to be 6.15. This signifies that there is significant gender difference among students in avoidance-oriented coping. From the mean scores, it can be seen that male adopted more avoidance-oriented coping than female. This dimension describes activities and cognitive changes aimed at avoiding the stressful situation. The finding reveals that male tried to engage in different activities in order to avoid the stressful situation. This includes trying to be with other people, going out for a snack or meal, visiting friends, spending time with a special person, watching movies or television, and taking time off to get away from the perceived stressful situation.

One of the objectives of the study is to identify the coping strategies students adopt to cope with the acculturative stress. Specifically, it addresses whether any gender differences were present in the use of these coping strategies.

The findings on the above tables show no significant gender difference among students in task-oriented coping and emotion-oriented coping. However, significant gender differences are found in avoidance-oriented coping. As discussed above, it is evident that male tends to focus on something more interesting to not let the problem bother them. Those engaging in avoidant coping may ignore or avoid the problem altogether. They may be aware that there is a problem, or they may be in denial about the problem (Good Therapy, 2016). Further, it can be seen that male students seek advice and assistance from friends, family, or someone close in the face of threat for diversion more than female students. Male students in the

qualitative study also reported coping with different stressors by engaging in regular exercise, watching movies, spending time with friends, going for long drives, eating out, playing online games, and listening to music. In addition, some research also support the notion that, due to the differences in sexual dimorphism, the differences in hormones, chromosomes, and structures, males are less likely to engage in task-oriented and emotion-oriented coping, and are more likely to engage in avoidance-oriented coping than female. These avoidance coping activities can help students adjust and adapt to a certain extent for a short time. This may be adaptive and useful for uncontrollable problems in the short term. However, it is important to note that this can also be maladaptive in the long run. Over time, it is more effective to develop skills and implement strategies to address the threat in order to overcome them. Several researches have also found that avoidance-oriented coping is more often associated with psychological distress, particularly anxiety and depression. Consistent adoption of this strategy of coping is also more associated with negative psychological adjustment and well-being in the long run.

This calls for the need for providing professional assistance and/or counselling to help students adopt a more effective and healthier way of dealing with the stress resulting out of academic burden and acculturation. It can be said that positive coping plays an important role in the lives of individuals, especially with reference to well-being in general. In addition, the low scores found on the overall well-being of the students in this study may also be attributed to the adoption of negative coping strategies. Hence, it is important to identify the maladaptive strategies and introduce the effective and desirable adaptive strategies which may reduce the acculturative stress and foster high level of well-being.

In the qualitative study of the non-resident students, common coping strategies reported in times of stressful situations adopted by female included cooking, making plans and noting down, making timetable, giving priorities to do work, and taking efforts to follow the routine.

A PG female student shared her strategy stating thus:

> *"I try to introspect on myself regarding those small and big accomplishments which I have achieved so far and take a short break and meet reliable, helpful friends to rethink because believing in yourself and taking a second trial is what life is supposed to be."*

Female students have also shared that situation eventually becomes better if one goes with the flow. Many believe that adaptation to the new place occurs with the passage of time.

An UG female student said:

> *"I just think there's a first time for everything...and feel good about staying in a new place and learning new cultural values and traditions."*

Overall, the students expressed that although there were many times when the struggles were tough and difficult to cope with, they, however, gradually managed to find ways of dealing with the issues personally, and/or with the help of social support including families, peers from their own state, and local peers.

4.2.3 Coping strategies and educational level

For determining the scores of coping strategies on the different educational levels, i.e., UG, PG and Ph. D, one-way ANOVA with post hoc test was carried out. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed.

This study aims to identify if any difference exists in the coping strategies employed by students according to their educational levels. Students are likely to employ varieties of strategies according to the experiences and situation in coping with the different issues and challenges that occur as a result of acculturation. It has been assumed that the higher the level of study, the better the coping strategies of students; this is because of their experiences and/or maturity than students in the lower level of study. Hence, there arises the need to determine if there exists a difference on the type of coping adopted by students on the different levels.

Analysis and tabulation of the differences computed using one-way ANOVA is given as follows:

Table 4.37   One-way ANOVA for Coping Strategies on the different Educational Levels

Dimensions	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Task-oriented coping EDNLEVEL	Between Groups	43.17	2	21.58	0.20^{NS}
	Within Groups	48105.55	453	106.19	
	Total	48148.73	455		
Emotion-oriented coping EDNLEVEL	Between Groups	13.13	2	6.56	0.06^{NS}
	Within Groups	43815.07	453	96.72	
	Total	43828.20	455		
Avoidance-oriented coping EDNLEVEL	Between Groups	18.23	2	9.11	0.09^{NS}
	Within Groups	43473.27	453	95.96	
	Total	43491.50	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level   Note: EDNLEVEL- Educational level

The 4.37 shows the F value and *p*-value for different dimensions of coping strategies across different educational levels, i.e., UG, PG, and Ph. D.

Further analysis is given on the three dimensions and sub-dimensions of coping strategies on the different educational levels, i.e., UG, PG, and Ph. D.

Table 4.38   One-way ANOVA for Task-Oriented Coping on the different Educational Levels

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Task-oriented coping	Between Groups	43.17	2	21.58	0.20^{NS}
	Within Groups	48105.55	453	106.19	
	Total	48148.73	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4.38 shows that the F-value for the dimension is 0.20, i.e., F (2, 453) value is 0.20. With the critical value of F being 2.99, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between task-oriented coping and educational levels of the students. It indicates that there is no specific and preferred coping strategy either at the lower or higher levels in attaining higher education. This dimension measured if students analyse their problems, try to understand the situation, outline their priorities, come up with different solutions to their problem, determine course of action and follow it.

Table 4.39   One-way ANOVA for Emotion-Oriented Coping on the different Educational Levels

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Emotion-oriented coping	Between Groups	13.13	2	6.56	0.06 NS
	Within Groups	43815.07	453	96.72	
	Total	43828.20	455		

NS Not significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4.39 shows that the F-value for the dimension is 0.06, i.e., F (2, 453) is 0.06. With the critical value of F being 2.99, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between the scores on emotion-oriented coping and educational levels of the students.

Table 4.40   One-way ANOVA for Avoidance-Oriented Coping on the different Educational Levels

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Avoidance-oriented coping	Between Groups	18.23	2	9.11	0.09 NS
	Within Groups	43473.27	453	95.96	
	Total	43491.50	455		

NS Not significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4.40 shows that the F-value for the dimension is 0.09, i.e., F (2, 453) value is 0.09. With the critical value of F being 2.99, the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between avoidance-oriented coping and educational levels of the students. This dimension aimed to measure if students engage in activities and cognitive changes aimed at avoiding the stressful situation.

The above tables show the F value for different dimensions of coping strategies across different educational levels, i.e., UG, PG, and Ph. D. The study found that with the variation in the levels of education, there is no preferred or specific coping strategy adopted by the students.

4.2.4   Coping strategies and length of stay

This study aims to identify if any difference exists in the coping strategies employed by students, according to their varying length of stay. Researchers have found that the longer the student resides in the host culture, the lower are the cultural concerns (Wilton & Constantine, 2003); this significantly correlated with low acculturation stress levels (Msengi, 2003; Vergaraa et al., 2010; Ayoob, 2011). It has also been opined that the longer the duration of the length of stay, the better the networking and social skills; and there will be lower level of acculturative stresses (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The longer the duration a non-resident student spent in a host state, the more will he/she be exposed to the host's cultures and language. Therefore, the length of stay in the host country can also be considered a coping strategy (Dalton et al., 2001). In the light of these findings, determining the differences in coping with the stresses resulting out of acculturation on the non-resident students, with varying duration of stay, proves to be crucial in this study.

For determining the differences in coping strategies on the length of stay, the following are used:

- 0-1 year
- 1-3 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10 years and above

One-way ANOVA with Post Hoc test was carried out. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed. Analysis on each dimension of coping strategies with varying length of stay is given as follows.

Table 4.41   One-way ANOVA for Coping Strategies and Length of Stay

Dimensions	Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Task-oriented coping LOS	Between Groups	681.89	5	136.37	1.29 NS
	Within Groups	47466.84	450	105.48	
	Total	48148.73	455		
Emotion-oriented coping LOS	Between Groups	718.18	5	143.63	1.49 NS
	Within Groups	43110.02	450	95.80	
	Total	43828.20	455		
Avoidance-oriented coping LOS	Between Groups	619.81	5	123.96	1.30 NS
	Within Groups	42871.68	450	95.27	
	Total	43491.50	455		

NS Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.41 shows the F value of the scores of the different dimensions of coping strategies across different Length of Stay, i.e., 0-1 year, 1-3 years, 3-5 years, 5-10 years, and 10 years and above. Findings and further analysis on the different dimensions and length of stay are given below.

Table 4.42   One-way ANOVA for Task-Oriented Coping and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Task-oriented coping	Between Groups	681.89	5	136.37	1.29 NS
	Within Groups	47466.84	450	105.48	
	Total	48148.73	455		

NS Not significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4.42 shows that the F-value for the dimension is 1.29, i.e., $F_{(5, 450)}$ value is 1.29. With the critical value of F being 2.37, it can be said that the null hypothesis is

accepted and there is no significant difference between task-oriented coping and length of stay of the students.

Table 4.43   One-way ANOVA for Emotion-Oriented Coping and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Emotion-oriented coping	Between Groups	718.18	5	143.63	1.49 NS
	Within Groups	43110.02	450	95.80	
	Total	43828.20	455		

NS Not significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4.43 shows that the F-value for the dimension is 1.49, i.e., F (5, 450) value is 1.49. With the critical value of F being 2.37, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between the scores on emotion-oriented coping and length of stay of the students.

Table 4.44   One-way ANOVA for Avoidance-Oriented Coping and Length of Stay

Dimension	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Avoidance-oriented coping	Between Groups	619.81	5	123.96	1.30 NS
	Within Groups	42871.68	450	95.27	
	Total	43491.50	455		

NS Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.44 shows that the F-value for the dimension is 1.30, i.e., F (5, 450) value is 1.30. With the critical value of F being 2.37, it can be said the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference in avoidance-oriented coping and length of stay of the students.

The present study did not show any statistically significant effect of the length of stay on the different dimensions of coping strategies. This predicts that

non-resident students who had stayed for a longer period of time did not necessarily adopt a specific coping strategy or adopted particular positive coping strategies to settle in the new environment and geographical set-up. It also indicates that non-resident students who had shorter length of stay did not necessarily adopt maladaptive coping strategies or fare poorer than students with longer duration of stay. Length of stay is considered to have significant association with both acculturative stress and the strategies non-students employ to deal with the stressors. Although no difference is found in the present study, it is very important for the administrators and the educators as it can help understand the various problems faced by students coming from different parts of the country. It can aid in directing students towards positive coping strategies to overcome different problems such as unequal treatment, discrimination, culture shock, language problem, and other acculturation-related problems.

4.2.5   Coping strategies and types of courses

Few studies have been carried out on the preferred type of coping strategies among students of different courses in dealing with acculturative stress. This study aims to identify if there are any variation in the coping styles employed among students pursuing professional and general courses. Professional courses aim at providing students with practical skills in a particular area and make students job-ready once they complete the course. Meanwhile, the goal of a degree or general courses is to provide students with a strong academic foundation in a particular subject, not necessarily make students job ready. The distinct nature in these two types of courses demonstrates the differences in interests and the skills inculcated during the courses. The development of these skills may shape the mind-sets of students and the ways in which they deal with the adaptation to new culture and environment. In addition, as discussed earlier, various studies across the globe have emphasized that students undertaking professional courses are subjected to higher stress (Waghachavare et al., 2013). This implies that the variation in the level of stress may impact the way students deal with by employing a range of different coping responses. Therefore, the identification of whether differences exist in coping with the different stressors among non-resident students pursuing professional and general courses is necessary.

In this study, professional courses include medical and engineering course while general courses include arts and sciences.

For determining the preferred dimensions of coping using CISS-Adult on the two types of courses, i.e., professional (317) and general (139) courses, Z-test was carried out.

Table 4.45   Z-test on the dimensions of Coping Strategies across the Types of Courses

Dimension	Types of courses	Mean	Sd	Z-value
Task-oriented coping	Professional course (317)	49.20	7.01	0.71 [NS]
	General course (139)	48.46	6.96	
Emotion-oriented coping	Professional course (317)	57.32	7.57	2.00[*]
	General course (139)	55.30	7.43	
Avoidance-oriented coping	Professional course (317)	62.05	7.87	0.54 [NS]
	General course (139)	62.59	7.91	

*Significant at the 0.05 level   [NS] Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.45 shows the z-scores on the different dimensions of coping strategies across professional and general courses. It shows that there are no significant differences between students of professional and general courses in coping with acculturation related stress on all the dimensions; task-oriented coping, emotion-oriented coping, and avoidance-oriented coping.

The above table shows that the means for the dimension of task-oriented coping are 49.20 and 48.46 for professional and general courses respectively. Further, the Z-value for the dimension is 0.71. It signifies that there is no significant difference between the students' scores of professional and general courses on the dimension of task-oriented coping.

A quick glance at table 4.45 reveals that the means for the dimension of emotion-oriented coping are 57.32 and 55.30 for professional and general courses respectively. The Z-value is found to be 2.00. With the z-tabulated value being 0.97, it indicates that there is significant difference between the students' scores of professional and general courses on the dimension of emotion-oriented coping. It can be seen that students in the professional courses feel more anxious about not being able to cope, become very tense, become easily upset, or worry about what to do. Students may tend to focus on their inadequacies, get angry and may even take it out on other people while being under stress.

Analysis of data vide table 4.45 states that the means for the dimension of avoidance-oriented coping are 62.05 and 62.59 for professional and general courses respectively. Further, the Z-value is 0.54. This shows that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between the students' scores of professional and general courses on the dimension of avoidance-oriented coping.

The above findings resulted from the quantitative data collected using CISS-Adult developed by Endler and Parker (1999). The qualitative study on identifying the different coping strategies employed by non-resident students was also discussed. Among the 46 students who participated in the FGD, majority of students mentioned that the CISS-Adult well covered the strategies they employed. Other coping activities indulged and reported by the students included exercising using gyms and playing sports, engaging in music, singing and playing instruments, and taking a walk to enjoy nature and relieve themselves from the stressors. Among the participants, 9 per cent mentioned that they tried to first calm themselves, motivated themselves in order to work on the problem they faced. As many as 32 per cent of the students preferred to be with friends and sought support from families back home; while 15 per cent of the students expressed that they sought spiritual help using yoga, meditation, attended Church, read Bible, and prayed to calm themselves from the different issues they faced. A 26 per cent of the students claimed that they turned to different social media applications, and browsed the internet to pass their time and energized themselves. A16 per cent stated that the best way to cope was to accept the reality and look for solutions to their problems. A little 3 per cent of the

students mentioned that it was effective to organize routines or plans, and to work on and follow the plans. A 2 per cent of the students mentioned that they resorted to smoking and consuming alcohol to reduce their stress.

Those migrating from one state to the other or from one country to the other experience communication problem, homesickness, food preferences, adjustment problem, perceived discrimination, biased treatment, new geographical set-up and change in instructions and institutional environment. Such experiences and stress related to acculturation can result to negative psychological symptoms such as depression (Soriano, 2009; Li et al., 2011; Ma, 2017), anxiety (Soriano, 2009), psychosocial functioning (Tafoya, 2011), risk of psychological distress (O'Reilly, 2018), psychological well-being (Li et al., 2014), and poor mental health (Thomas & Sumathi, 2018). The present study also found that majority of the non-resident students (271 out of 456) falls on the "low" level of general well-being. These undoubtedly indicate the need for non-resident students to improve their psychological and general well-being for optimal functioning, thereby, fostering effective and adaptive ways of coping with any issue and problem they face.

It is also certain that non-resident students have to learn ways of adapting to the new cultural norms and environment of the host state. While many students can easily adapt to the new place and changes in institutional instructions and environment, some find it difficult to cope with the sudden change in daily living and academics. Some students may effectively adapt and adjust with the different stressors and successfully overcome their issues and problems in a short period of time. At the same time, there are students who find it difficult to adjust and often resort to employing maladaptive strategies to reduce the stressors. Likewise, some people may be resilient in coping with stress, while some may show maladaptive responses to the same stressor, which is considered to be attributable to individual differences. The different strategies employed may differ according to varying personalities and attitude in the host state. Each problem or situation requires the use of a specific coping strategy. Therefore, the same strategy can be effective or ineffective depending on whether or not the individual perceives the situation as threatening (Carver et al., 1989). Thus, different people experience and react to stress

differently. Coping involves how different individuals evaluate the demands of the situation and balance these demands against their ability to meet them. The efforts in managing the internal and environmental demands may be unique for each individual.

The world has recognized the importance of well-being in society and educational institutions in recent years. Little is known about student perspectives on the stressors in university or institutional environments and the steps that universities could take to better support student well-being. Although any form of stress may be considered normal and may act as challenges to some in building their skills to manage them, it may not be so for many. Students need to control and manage these stressful events not to let the stress impact their lives and academic achievements. To cope with these daily acculturative stressors and challenges, the need for and importance of the students' own ability to successfully adjust and cope emerges in order to facilitate positive outcomes. The responsibility of imparting resilient skills to higher education students lies with every institution in order to help their students overcome their barriers in helping accomplish their goals.

The present study finds that avoidance-oriented coping is the most preferred coping strategies employed by non-resident students. This is followed by emotion-oriented coping and task-oriented coping respectively. It has been found that males adopt more avoidance-oriented coping strategies than female. Males are found to employ more distraction and social diversion coping mechanisms. It has also been observed in the qualitative study that males tend to ignore or avoid the problems altogether to cope with the different stressors by engaging in regular exercise, watching movies, spending time with friends, going for long drives, eating out, playing online games, and listening to music. This study further finds that students pursuing professional courses employ more emotion-oriented coping than students in general courses. With more stress experiences found in relation to acculturation among students in professional courses, the finding reveals that students tend to act out on the stressors by regulating negative feelings and emotions instead of addressing the problem. Students become very tensed, worry, very upset, and angry. This indicates that when the stress becomes excessive, unchangeable and

uncontrollable, students focus on regulating their emotional reactions to the stressors. These findings suggest that with higher well-being obtained by males, the coping strategies employed are effective to a certain extent in the short term with issues that are unchangeable, and beyond their control. However, consistent reliance on these strategies of coping is more associated with negative psychological adjustment and well-being, and likely to generate a broad range of stressors in the long run. Several researches have also confirmed that avoidance-oriented coping is more often associated with psychological distress, particularly emotional distress, and depression overtime in university students (Holahan et al., 1999; Penland et al., 2000). This made it evident that students need professional assistance and supervision towards healthy and adaptive coping strategies for the long term.

4.3   Analysis and Interpretation of Objective 3

Objective 3   To study the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in in relation to their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses in Mizoram

The association between acculturative stress and well-being is less frequently studied. Most studies have explored the adverse effects it has on mental health such as anxiety and depression (Soriano, 2009; Li et al., 2014; Gebregergis, 2018; Thomas & Sumathi, 2018). Only few studies are undertaken for positive effects such as life satisfaction, quality of life, and general well-being as a whole. Students experiencing increased levels of difficulty with the acculturative stressors are more likely to experience higher levels of stress, which may reduce the level of different aspects of well-being. From this, it is evident that the primary importance for improving well-being and reducing the stressors of acculturation is to not only measure the status of students but to take measures in order for students to reach a desirable physical and mental state. Hence, this objective plays an essential role in this study.

To identify the level of well-being of the students, FWBS constructed and standardised by Friedman (1992) was used. The FWBS consists of twenty bi-polar adjectives. It can be scored for an overall measure of well-being, the Friedman Well-Being Composite, and for five subscales: emotional stability, self-esteem/self-confidence, joviality, sociability, and happiness. The present study measures the overall well-being of the students.

4.3.1 Finding on the level of well-being

The finding of the students' score on FWBC is given as follows.

Table 4.46   Interpretation of the total score of FWBC

Range	Level	No. of students
90-96	Very High	0
74-88	High	0
56-72	Average	157
41-55	Low	271
21-35	Very Low	28
Total		**456**

A quick glance at Table 4.46 reveals that 28 students fall in the 'very low' level, majority of students, i.e., 271 students fall in the 'low' level, and 157 students' falls in the 'average' level. It has been found that there are no students in the 'high' and 'very high' levels.

Well-being includes having good mental and physical health, happiness, high life satisfaction, feeling good, a sense of meaning or purpose, how they function personally and at a societal level, maintaining positive relationships with others, self-esteem, and self-confidence. It includes many positive feelings and experiences about life and prosperity. The test measures the overall well-being including emotional stability, self-esteem/self-confidence, joviality, sociability, and happiness of the students. Acculturative stress is typically considered and viewed as negative health as well as mental health influence. This makes researchers confer and review

it as a potential reducer of well-being rather than as a factor that increases the level of well-being. This leads to an assumption that an increased level of acculturative stress would relate to lower levels of well-being. When different stressors arise due to acculturation, it is evident that it may adversely affect students' well-being.

The findings from the present study also show that the general well-being of non-resident students is markedly low in average. From the above result, it can be interpreted that majority of the students have low level of well-being while pursuing their studies in a host state. Studies on international students have also found that acculturative stress was significant predictor of psychological well-being (Li et al., 2014; O'Reilly, 2018). This finding is also supported by the experiences shared by students in the different sessions of FGD carried out. The different issues resulting out of academic and acculturation lead to frustration and dissatisfaction with the environment around them.

A student stated thus:

> *"The issues with food, lack of better accommodation and learning, and communication gap definitely reduce my sociability and daily functioning."*

Another student has expressed:

> *When our voices are not heard, it makes us feel demotivated in our studies."*

A Ph. D scholar said:

> *"The lowest state in my academic life happened when I did not get proper accommodation for many months and had to adjust with friends. I lose interest in my studies, and my level of productivity decreased."*

It is evident from here that elevated stress levels among students can result in reducing their ability to concentrate. This can limit the students' ability to be at their optimal levels and think critically. This can lead to decreased academic accomplishments and can affect the students' overall well-being. Students who are distressed by different stressors as a result of acculturation often experienced a change in sleeping habits, change in eating habits, lack of motivation, feeling of

isolation, lack of support system, new responsibilities, increased workload and may be unable to or find it challenging to manage and balance their work with the stresses.

Improving one's well-being alone is not always easy. It requires an effort to figure out what aspects of well-being are most important for you. It also requires an ability to figure out how to improve the skills of well-being. Furthermore, while measuring the status of well-being, it is also essential to look beyond and ask how students feel. Their self-perception and view of their well-being are balanced with indicators relating to the quality of life, such as health, physical activity, and social interaction. Having this information will enable professionals to get the best possible perspective on someone's overall well-being and how well they manage daily. This calls for the need of professionals and educators to help identify the needs and help build the status of well-being among the students as improving one's well-being can be difficult without being aware of what to do and how to do it.

4.3.2 Correlation of acculturative stress and well-being

Table 4.47 shows the computed Pearson's correlation matrix between the total score of acculturative stress and well-being. With the critical r value being 0.09, the r value of 0.67 is found to be significant with average positive correlation. It indicates there exists a relationship between the scores of acculturative stress and well-being.

Table 4.47   Pearson's Correlation matrix between Acculturative Stress and Well-Being

n-456 Dimensions	ASS	FWBC
ASS (Acculturative stress)	1	
FWBC (Well-being)	**0.67***	1

*Significant at the 0.05 level

The results shown on the above table signifies that students with high or low acculturative stress scores may imply low or high well-being respectively. It is found that majority of the students (n=390) had mild acculturative stress, and few students (n=30) had high acculturative stress (objective 1). Further, the result of this study

also revealed that majority of the students had low (n=271) and very low (n=28) levels of well-being. In addition, there were 157 students on the average and no students were on the high and very high levels of well-being (objective 3). These findings indicate the presence of acculturative stress, despite the fact that the majority were under mild level, and it also indicates low level of well-being among the students.

Further, another reason for markedly overall low well-being of the students could be caused by other types of stress other than acculturative stress. This can include academic stress, low achievement, health issues, and financial constraints of the students. A student in this study said thus:

> *"I worry a lot about the high academic and personal expenses to complete my study. This definitely affects my mental state."*

Prior research has also found that low educational aspirations and worry about career outcome (Pitre, 2017), low self-esteem and high depression (Tafoya, 2011) contributed to decreased level of well-being.

It cannot be denied that the process of acculturation affects students' well-being. Common assumption of past researchers has been that high acculturative stress predicts low well-being of the students. Studies have also found that acculturation influenced students' psychological well-being (Li et al., 2014); experiences of acculturative stress were related to low self-esteem, high depression, anxiety (Soriano, 2009; Tafoya, 2011); students with high acculturative stress may be in need of counselling and psychological intervention (Cheng, 2017); and well-being is related to academic stress, anxiety, and psychological adaptation (Wang, 2017). It is evident from these studies that the process of acculturation can bring distress to different aspects of well-being including physical, emotional, social, psychological, subjective, and institutional well-being. The markedly overall low levels of well-being of the students as a whole in this study can also lead to the inability to manage and balance their study with the stresses. The result indicates the necessity of professionals and educators to help cope with the stressors, and render assistance to

build the status of the students' overall well-being to successfully achieve desired goals and obtain optimal functioning.

Table 4.48   **Pearson's Correlation matrix between Coping Strategies and Well-Being**

n-456 Dimensions	CISS	FWBC
CISS (Coping strategies)	1	
FWBC (Well-being)	**0.88***	1

*Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4.48 shows the computed Pearson's correlation matrix between coping strategies and well-being. With the critical r value being 0.09, the r value of 0.88 is found to be significant with high positive correlation. It indicates that a high relationship exists between the scores of coping strategies and well-being. The result signifies that the students' high or low well-being scores imply the use of various coping strategies.

Further, it has been found that avoidance-oriented coping is the most preferred strategy employed by the students (objective 2). Under avoidance-oriented coping, statements on the use of distraction and social diversion coping are included. In distraction-oriented coping, a person substitutes an alternative task of his or her choosing (Parker & Endler, 1992). Avoidance-oriented coping strategy, as the name suggests, refers to ignoring the stressor, resulting in denial of the problem. It is considered to be one of the negatives, maladaptive, or mental disengagement coping strategies (Carver et al., 1989). Although students' level of acculturative stress may be minimized to a certain extent using this strategy, it may not be a healthy way of dealing with the stresses; rather, it may impact the well-being of students in the long run. This is evident in the present study where majority of the students has low (n=271) and very low (n=28) levels of well-being. Prior research has also found that negative coping strategies, including avoidance, are the risk factors for low well-being (Stanislawski, 2019). It has also been found by Babicka-Wirkus et al. (2021) on university students that the use of maladaptive strategies when coping with

stressful situation may result in long-term consequences in their psychophysiological health and academic achievements. Thus, based on the present finding and past research, a support program or guidance for students is vital which would involve both psychological and adaptation of healthy coping skills to achieve high status of well-being.

Pearson's Correlation of the six dimensions and total Acculturative Stress and Well-being

In order to determine the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of non-resident students, Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed. Further analysis on the correlation and significant correlation test for each dimension of acculturative stress and well-being are as under.

Table 4.49   Pearson's Correlation of Homesickness and Well-being

Dimension	n	Pearson's r	Significant correlation test	Interpretation
Homesickness	456	-0.25*	-5.49	Significant negative correlation

*Significant at the 0.05 level

Analysis of data vide table 4.49 shows that the correlation and significant correlation test is -0.25 and -5.49 respectively. It can be seen that there is significant negative correlation between the two variables. It indicates that with the increase in homesickness, well-being decreases. Likewise, with a decrease in the score of homesickness, well-being increases. In the focus group discussion, students shared that the inability to quickly adjust to language, food available, and the unequal treatment perceived made them missed their friends and family back home. When dealing with these issues, students also shared that their level of productivity reduced, and that resulted in lack of motivation and interest in studies and in performing daily activities.

Homesickness is common during the early stages of moving away from home and starting a new higher education. It can be daunting for students and there are

usually lots of mixed emotions. Missing family and friends is a natural reaction, felt by many, and homesickness is a normal and real feeling. It has also been found that students going through homesickness during their first semester may be feeling a sense of grief from the perceived loss of their support network (Fisher, 2017). But the inability to adjust and cope with the overwhelming feeling of the new environment can lead to performance issues at work and institute and lead to low general well-being. It has also been known that cognitive symptoms of homesickness can potentially develop into pervasive mental health issues (Thurber & Walton, 2012). Emotional and psychological disturbances represented through depressive mood, loneliness, and anxiety is also found in sufferers from homesickness (VanTilburg, 1996; Fisher, 2017). The present finding and the past studies indicate a strong relationship that increasing and prolonged homesickness can have adverse effect resulting in decreasing mental and general well-being of the students.

Table 4.50   Pearson's Correlation of Food Preferences and Well-being

Dimension	n	Pearson's r	Significant correlation test	Interpretation
Food preferences	456	-0.17*	-3.65	Significant negative correlation

*Significant at the 0.05 level

A quick glance at table 4.50 shows that the correlation and significant correlation test is -0.17 and -3.65 respectively. It also indicates that there is significant negative correlation between the two variables. The finding reveals that with an increase in the issues on food preferences, well-being decreases. At the same time, it states that with a decrease or ability to adjust with the food varieties available, the level of students' well-being increases. It has also been found that 193 students (42%) reported difficulties in adjusting to the food habits in the new state. Eating well helps in reducing the risk of physical health problems. It is also widely well-known that a well-balanced diet provides all the energy one needs to keep active throughout the day, provides the nutrients needed for growth and repair, and helps in staying strong and healthy. Following a healthy pattern of eating is linked with better stress management, sleep quality, concentration and attention span, and better physical and

mental well-being. Conversely, an inadequate or improper diet can lead to fatigue, impaired decision-making, and can slow down reaction time. In fact, a poor or improper diet can actually aggravate, and may even lead to stress and depression. In the long term, students find difficult to adjust with the food items available; poor nutrition can contribute to stress, tiredness, and decrease the capacity to work effectively. At the same time, some students also stated adjustment to food came gradually with the increase in length of stay. A student said:

> *"When we are not satisfied with the food provided, we find ways to cook by ourselves or dine out to have good food."*

The present finding clearly indicated that the more issues students face in relation to food habit, the more it affects the mental state and well-being of the students. The experiences shared by students also indicated that with effective coping strategy, students can overcome the problems in no time.

Table 4.51 **Pearson's Correlation of Social Behaviour and Language and Well-being**

Dimension	n	Pearson's r	Significant correlation test	Interpretation
Social behaviour and language	456	-0.35*	-7.94	Significant negative correlation

* Significant at the 0.05 level

An examination of data vide table 4.51 shows that the correlation and significant correlation test is -0.35 and -7.94 respectively. It reveals that there is significant negative correlation between the two variables. It indicates that when a student has great difficulties in adapting to a new society and has difficulty in language, his/her level of well-being decreases. Likewise, the ability to adjust in the new society leads to an increase in the level of well-being. From the findings shown in objective 1, language has been found to be one of the major sources of stress. Among the 456 non-resident students, 241 students with 53 per cent stated their struggle with language issue. This made them feel intimidated in participating in social activities, in making new local friends, in purchasing groceries and clothing items, and in using

public transportation. Language difficulty was also reported as a source of acculturative stress, establishing that international students with poor local language proficiency in the host community were more likely to experience higher acculturative stress (Cetinkaya-Yildiz et al., 2011). Previous research work also confirmed that international students who had good social relations with domestic students experienced less acculturative stress than those with no friends (Hendrickson et al., 2011). The present finding and prior research supported that students' feeling of belongingness and social behaviour were greatly influenced by language efficiency. This may be because the ability to communicate effectively is vital in the measurement of a students' capability to perform socially and academically. The inability to adjust and cope may lead to rising levels of psychological distress and physical health (Yeh & Inose, 2003). It may also increase students' level of dissatisfaction with the new place, which creates a vicious cycle of stress and anguish (Wan et al., 1992). It is evident from the present finding and past research that there is a close relationship between social behaviour and language in students' well-being. It reveals that the greater the language barrier, the more it affects or reduces the level of well-being.

Table 4.52 Pearson's Correlation of Cultural Values and Well-being

Dimension	n	Pearson's r	Significant correlation test	Interpretation
Cultural values	456	-0.15*	-3.22	Significant negative correlation

*Significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.52 reveals that the correlation and significant correlation test is -0.15 and -3.22 respectively. It also indicates that there is significant negative correlation between the two variables. This states that when students feel that their cultural values are threatened, their level of well-being decreases, and vice versa. Acculturation or adapting to a new culture involves changes in many areas of functioning including values, beliefs, behaviour, and attitudes. Many cultures have strong collectivist beliefs or values. It has also been found that people who experience frequent discrimination or micro-aggressions because of their cultural

identity have significantly worse physical and mental health outcomes overall. This supports the significant negative relationship found between the two variables in this study.

Table 4.53   Pearson's Correlation of Perception of Prejudice and Social Discrimination and Well-being

Dimension	n	Pearson's r	Significant correlation test	Interpretation
Prejudice and social discrimination	456	-0.27*	-5.96	Significant negative correlation

*Significant at the 0.05 level

Analysis of data vide table 4.53 shows that the correlation and significant correlation test is -0.27 and -5.96 respectively. It also revealed that there is significant negative correlation between the two variables. The finding reveals that when more students perceive bias and unequal treatment in relation to religion, races, distinctive looks, and complexion for being a non-resident, the level of well-being reduces. Likewise, when students feel accepted for their differences, the level of well-being increases. Being discriminated against for differences as mentioned above is an unpleasant and stressful experience for all, including students. The combination of a discriminatory experience and inability to cope efficiently may increase negative affect on the well-being of students. The finding is supported by prior research that perceived perception of prejudice and social discrimination may make international students less interactive and participatory in activities of the host community and subsequently develop health problems such as psychological distress and alienation (Lee et al., 2016). The present finding concludes that when perceived prejudice and social discrimination increases, the level or well-being decreases.

Table 4.54   Pearson's Correlation of Isolation and Well-being

Dimension	n	Pearson's r	Significant correlation test	Interpretation
Isolation	456	-0.36*	-8.17	Significant negative correlation

*Significant at the 0.05 level

An examination of data vide table 4.54 shows that the correlation and significant correlation test is -0.36 and -8.17 respectively. It reveals that there is significant negative correlation between the two variables. This states that when students feeling of insecurity and loneliness increases and do not know any trustworthy company to talk to about their problems, their state of well-being decreases. Likewise, when students can easily adapt by making new friends to whom they can rely on in times of problems, their state of well-being improves. Perceived social isolation can have a significant effect on health and well-being. A study has found that perceived social isolation was associated with poor life satisfaction across all domains, as well as work-related stress, and lower trust of institutions (Claire et al., 2021). Further, it has also been found that increased social isolation is associated with decreased life satisfaction, higher levels of depression, and lower levels of psychological well-being (Cacioppo & Cacioppo, 2014).

In addition, social support is found to increase well-being and aid in successful adjustment for students moving to a new place. Yeh and Inose (2003) found that greater social connectedness and social support network satisfaction negatively predicted distress related to adjusting to the new host culture among international students studying in the USA Likewise, Ye (2006) found that greater satisfaction with support networks was related to better emotional health for Chinese international students studying in the USA, and greater amounts of online emotional support for these students were related to less stress due to the acculturation process; therefore, the finding of the present study predicts that social support for non-resident students would play an important role in their adjustment as well as improving their general well-being.

Table 4.55   Pearson's Correlation on Total Acculturative Stress and Well-being

Dimension	n	Pearson's r	Significant correlation test	Interpretation
Total ASS	456	-0.37*	-8.45	Significant negative correlation

*Significant at the 0.05 level

A quick glance at table 4.55 shows that the correlation and significant correlation test is -0.37 and -8.45 respectively. It also reveals that there is significant negative correlation between the two variables. This indicates that when the level of acculturative stress increases, the state of well-being is found to be low.

The above tables show the computed Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of the six dimensions and total scores of acculturative stress and well-being to determine their relationship. Analysis of the computed Pearson's correlation coefficient indicates that there is significant negative difference between the two variables. It indicates that the students' high or low level of acculturative stress predicts low or high level of well-being on the students respectively. It has also been shown on Table 4.47 (Pearson's correlation matrix between the total score of acculturative stress and well-being) that significant average positive correlation was found between the students' total score of acculturative stress and well-being. The result signifies that the students high or low acculturative stress scores may imply low or high well-being respectively.

The present finding is consistent with the study on women immigrants that acculturative and family-related stress both had statistically significant negative correlations with the positive factors of well-being; that is, when the women reported lower degrees of acculturative and family-related stress, they reported more hope and positive factors of well-being (Lee & Park, 2016). It has also been found that greater exposure to acculturative stress predicted significantly more withdrawn, somatic, and anxious/depressed symptoms (Sirin et al., 2012). Moreover, acculturative stress is found to be the major predictor of psychosocial functioning (Tafoya, 2011), influenced students' psychological well-being, depression, anxiety, and trait anxiety

(Soriano, 2009; Li et al., 2014; Gebregergis, 2018), and more negative emotional reactions (Ladum, 2019). Further, students are predisposed to negative health outcomes (Falavarjani, 2019) and results in poor mental health (Thomas & Sumathi, 2018). This clearly indicates that acculturative stress affects not only general well-being, but also has the ability to negatively impact our lives. It can affect our physical conditions, such as headaches, digestive issues, and sleep disturbances. It can also cause psychological and emotional strains, including confusion, anxiety, and depression. Moreover, it cannot be denied that higher education students may experience stress due to several other factors affecting well-being. This can include rigorous workload, academic pressures from families and friends, relationship with friends and peers, teachers, parents, job and career aspirations, personal issues, and financial constraints. To conclude, the finding clearly indicates that an increase in the level of acculturative stress negatively impact the students' status of well-being.

4.3.3 Z-test of acculturative stress and well-being

In order to determine the significant difference between the score of acculturative stress and well-being, Z-test was employed. The computed Z-values and analysis on the six dimensions and total acculturative stress and well-being are given below.

Table 4.56   Z-test for Homesickness and Well-being

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Z-value
Homesickness	6.08	1.59	**40.18***
Well-being	52.88	24.82	

*Significant at the 0.05 level

An examination of data vide table 4.56 states that the means of homesickness and well-being are 6.08 and 52.88. The standard deviations are found to be 1.59 and 24.82 for homesickness and FWBC respectively. The Z-value is found to be 40.18.

Table 4.57   Z-test for Food Preferences and Well-being

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Z-value
Food Preferences	8.82	3.17	**37.60***
Well-being	52.88	24.82	

*Significant at the 0.05 level

An analysis of data vide table 4.57 states that the means of food preferences and well-being are 8.82 and 52.88. The standard deviations are found to be 3.17 and 24.82 for food preferences and FWBC respectively. The Z-value is found to be 37.60.

Table 4.58   Z-test for Social Behaviour and Language and Well-being

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Z-value
Social Behaviour and Language	19.78	6.15	**27.64***
Well-being	52.88	24.82	

*Significant at the 0.05 level

A quick glance at table 4.58 reveals that the means of social behaviour and language and well-being are 8.82 and 52.88. The standard deviations are found to be 6.15 and 24.82 for social behaviour and language and FWBC respectively. The Z-value is found to be 27.64.

Table 4.59   Z-test for Cultural Values and Well-being

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Z-value
Cultural Values	10.34	2.87	**36.35***
Well-being	52.88	24.82	

*Significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.59 indicates that the means of cultural values and well-being are 10.34 and 52.88. The standard deviations are found to be 2.87 and 24.82 for cultural values and FWBC respectively. The Z-value is found to be 36.35.

Table 4.60   Z-test for Perception of Prejudice and Racial Discrimination and Well-being

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Z-value
Perception of Prejudice & Racial Discrimination	16.68	6.10	**30.24***
Well-being	52.88	24.82	

*Significant at the 0.05 level

Critical analysis of data vide table 4.60 shows that the means of perception of prejudice and racial discrimination and well-being are 16.68 and 52.88. The standard deviations are found to be 6.10 and 24.82 for perception of prejudice and racial discrimination and FWBC respectively. The Z-value is found to be 30.24.

Table 4.61   Z-test for Isolation and Well-being

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Z-value
Isolation	9.75	3.27	37.01*
Well-being	52.88	24.82	

*Significant at the 0.05 level

An examination of data vide table 4.61 states that the means of isolation and well-being are 9.75 and 52.88. The standard deviations are found to be 3.27 and 24.82 for isolation and FWBC respectively. The Z-value is found to be 36.79.

Table 4.62   Z-test for Total Acculturative Stress and Well-being

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Z-value
Total AS	71.48	17.20	13.14*
Well-being	52.88	24.82	

*Significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.62 indicates that the means of total acculturative stress and well-being are 71.48 and 52.88. The standard deviations are found to be 17.20 and 24.82 for total score of acculturative stress and FWBC respectively. The Z-value is found to be 13.14.

The above tables show the mean, standard deviation, and Z-value for all the six dimensions and total score of acculturative stress and students' scores on FWBC. It indicates that there are significant differences on the means between all the dimensions of acculturative stress and well-being.

4.3.4 Well-being and gender

To determine the difference among gender on their scores of well-being, Z-test was computed as given below.

Table 4.63   Z-test for Gender on Well-Being

Scale	Gender	Mean	SD	Z-value
FWBC	Male (265)	54.79	1011.78	**2.24***
	Female (191)	50.24	57.43	

*Significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.63 shows the comparison of the scores of male and female non-resident students on FWBC. The mean is found to be 54.79 for male and 50.24 for female. The standard deviation for male and female is found to be 1011.78 and 57.43 respectively. The critical value or table value of z is 1.95. The critical ratio or the Z-value is found to be 2.24. It signifies that there is significant difference between male and female on their scores on FWBC. The finding indicates that males reported higher well-being in comparison to females.

Having a positive well-being is crucial for successfully navigating a new environment, engaging in meaningful relationships, and realizing one's fullest potential throughout one's lifespan. Gender differences do exist because of biological, physiological, and psychological differences. The level of satisfaction of life, purpose in life, personal growth, self-acceptance, positive relations with others, and environmental mastery among males and females can differ due to the differences mentioned. The study is important in order to empower all individuals, both male and female to achieve self-actualization and utilize their full potential in the process of acculturation, thereby, promoting optimal functioning. The ability to adopt positive attitude towards life despite acculturation related issues is imperative for students. Tafoya (2011) had also found that acculturative stress was found to be the major predictor of psychosocial functioning. Further, O'Reilly, (2018) found that acculturative stress was the predictor of psychological well-being; and groups of learners were found to be at risk of psychological distress. Wang (2017) also

revealed that well-being is related to academic stress and anxiety, psychological adaptation, and views on social support.

Only few studies have been taken up on the general well-being of students while psychological and subjective well-being has frequently been studied. The present finding that male significantly scores higher than female in their overall well-being could be caused by biological, physiological, and psychological differences as stated. Male and female students may value different aspects of life, thereby, leading to differences in well-being overall. Another reason could be the way they perceive acculturation related stress as stressful or less of a threat. Another major possible reason could be attributed to the differences found in the coping strategies employed. In this study, it has been found that male employs more avoidant-oriented coping strategies. They engage more in distracting themselves from the stressors by engaging in regular exercise, watching movies, spending time with friends, going for long drives, eating out, playing online games, and listening to music. Further, they seek advice and assistance from friends, family, or someone close in the face of threat more than female students. These can help students successfully adjust and adapt to a certain extent as these activities can be adaptive and useful for uncontrollable problems in short term. It is also important to consider that in a country like India, although there is a progressive improvement in doing away with gender-biases, it is still prevalent in some societies when it comes to education. Females who are socialized into a stereotypical gender role tend to behave in ways that limit their holistic development and often develop learning, behaviour, and emotional problems. Gender inequity can have serious and long-lasting consequences, and this could also further lead to difficulty in overcoming issues and maintaining a positive overall well-being.

Several studies have also supported the existence of gender differences in their psychological and subjective well-being; for instance, in a Taiwanese study, Lu (2000) discovered gender differences while examining subjective wellbeing. A large-scale international study by Lucas and Gohm (2000) also found that in most of the nations examined, women experienced more negative affect than men. Another study also reported that negative affect was more prevalent among women (Nolen-

Hoeksema & Rusting, 2003). Contrary to these findings, Hyde (2005) proposed than men and women are more similar than they are different. She proposed that many gender differences in well-being are extremely small, if not totally non-existent, and found that most mean difference effect sizes are small, if not non-significant. Hence, it can be said that longitudinal study or periodical assessment on non-resident students is necessary not only to determine the differences in relation to gender and measure the status of students but to take measures in order for students to reach a desirable physical and mental state.

4.3.5   Well-being and educational level

For determining the scores of well-being on different educational levels, i.e., UG, PG and Ph. D, one-way ANOVA was carried out. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed.

Table 4.64   One-way ANOVA of Well-Being on the different educational levels

Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Between Groups	1716.51	2	858.25	
Within Groups	278609.88	453	615.03	1.39^{NS}
Total	280326.39	455		

[NS] Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.64 shows the F value and *p*-value of the scores of well-being across different educational levels, i.e., UG, PG and Ph. D.

The critical value of F is found to be 2.99 and F (2, 453) value is 1.39. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is accepted. It signifies that there is no significant difference between the scores on FWBC and educational level of the students. This shows that the high or low educational levels do not indicate better or lower students' level of well-being.

4.3.6   Well-being and length of stay

For determining the scores of well-being on the different length of stay, i.e.,

- 0-1 year

- 1-3 years

- 3-5 years

- 5-10 years

- 10 years and above,

One-way ANOVA was carried out. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed.

Table 4.65   One-way ANOVA of Well-Being on the different levels of Length of Stay

Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Between Groups	783.53	4	195.88	
Within Groups	279542.85	451	619.82	0.31^{NS}
Total	280326.39	455		

^{NS} Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.65 shows the F value and p-value of the scores of FWBC across different length of stay, i.e., 0-1 year, 1-3 years, 3-5 years, 5-10 years, and 10 years and above.

The critical value of F is 2.37 and F (4, 451) is found to be 0.31. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is accepted. It signifies that there is no significant difference between the total scores of well-being and the length of stay of the students. The finding shows that the longer duration of stay among the non-resident students does not necessarily predict higher well-being due to better adaptation or adjustment to the new educational and environmental settings.

4.3.7   Well-being and types of courses

For determining the scores of FWBC on the two types of courses, i.e., professional and general courses, Z-test was computed.

Table 4.66   Z-test for the scores of Well-Being across the Types of Courses

Scale	Gender	Mean	SD	Z-value
FWBC	Professional Course (317)	54.79	1011.78	**2.24***
	General Course (139)	50.24	57.43	

NS Not significant at the 0.05 level

The above table 4.66 shows that the Z-value is 0.95. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference is accepted. It signifies that there is no significant difference between the total scores of well-being and professional and general courses of the students. The finding indicates that non-resident students pursuing professional courses with higher acculturative stress (finding on objective 1) does not necessarily predict a low status of well-being. Students pursuing general courses with lesser acculturative stress experience compared to professional courses do not necessarily predict a high or better level of well-being.

It can be seen from these findings that there are no significant differences found on the scores of students' well-being across the different educational levels, varying length of stay, and the types of courses. The concept of well-being is complex and is in common use not only in the area of general health but also in the field of educational growth and human development globally. Well-being depends on both the individual and the environment, and during adolescence and adulthood, the environmental factor can be decisive. Although the present findings find no significant differences across different educational levels, varying length of stay, and types of courses, however, the status of students' well-being is bound to change over time. The nature of one's well-being is such that the levels may change due to several factors. The change may be influenced according to experiences, life circumstances, and continuous process of personal growth, societal changes, and appropriate use of coping strategies to deal with the daily hassles and acculturation

related stressors. In addition, family support, institutes, environment, and peers are also widely recognized as significant contexts for successful development of well-being. Environment can also contribute to students' well-being. Prior research have also shown that social activities (Diener & Seligman, 2002), social relations (Tay & Diener, 2011), a network of social support (Wallace & Lemaire, 2007) are important for student's well-being. This is proven to be true with the present quantitative finding where male with a higher well-being tends to seek more social support from families and close friends to cope with the stressors than female. Qualitative study in the form of discussions has also supported that issue faced as a non-resident student could be managed gradually with the help of friends and families including local peers. These supports are found to play essential roles in sustaining the students' coping and overall well-being despite the struggles faced.

The study aims to investigate the levels of well-being among non-resident students of higher educational institutes in Mizoram. This study measures the level of students' well-being only at a particular time. Follow-up or periodical assessment to examine the dynamics and patterns of change over a span of time is needed. However, the status of students' well-being and its influences on several variables brought into light on this study can pave a long way in providing awareness, advocating the need of empirical analysis, and engaging in periodical assessment by institutions and educational administrators for further improvement for the welfare of non-resident students. Focusing on well-being among students provides more comprehensive knowledge on both acculturative stress and well-being among students. From this, it is evident that the primary importance for improving well-being and reducing the stressors of acculturation is not only to measure the status of students but to take measures in order for students to reach a desirable physical and mental state.

In assessing the well-being of the students, the study finds that 59.4 per cent, i.e., majority of the students have low well-being. Among the 456 students, 34.4 per cent of the students are found to have average well-being while 6.14 per cent are found to have very low level of well-being. Important consideration that has to be taken is the finding that the general well-being of the non-resident students is

markedly low in average. This could be attributed to the academic-related stress as well as the different lifestyle stressors in locating to new institution and cultural environment, and the effectiveness of coping strategies employed.

The scores of well-being indicate that male scores significantly higher than female. This finding reveals the need and essence of studying acculturative stress and the adverse impact it has on the well-being of higher education students in India. In addition, the findings in itself proves the paramount importance of administrators and educators in taking effective measures; this will help in identifying the state of students' well-being using periodical assessment, and improving the status of well-being, which are influenced by acculturative stress among higher education students moving from state to state within the country. However, there are no significant differences found on the scores of students' well-being across the different educational levels, varying length of stay, and the types of courses.

The following figure presents the hierarchical clustering using dendrogram showing the correlation of acculturative stress, coping strategies and well-being.
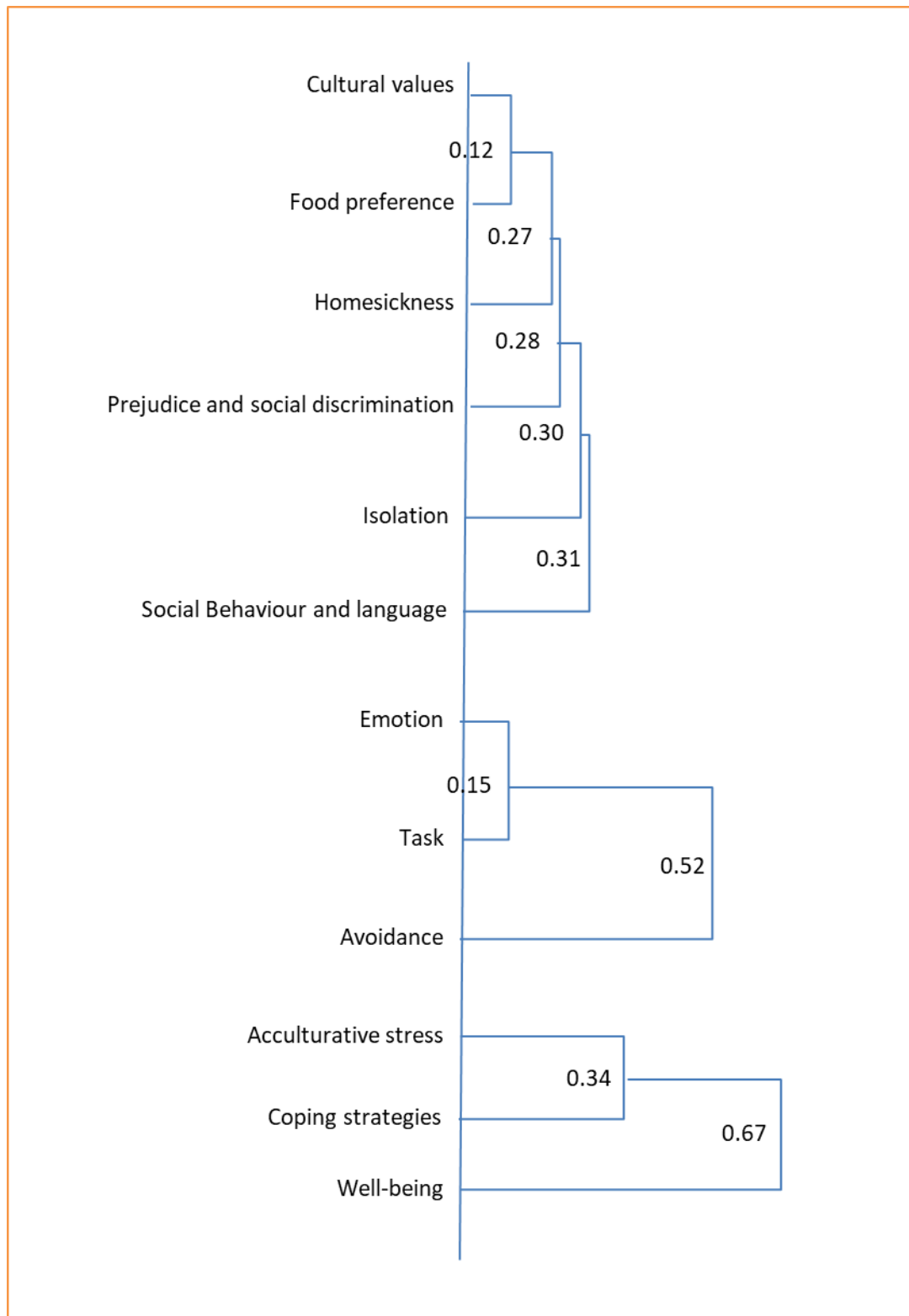
Figure 4.6   Hierarchical clustering using dendrogram showing the correlation of acculturative stress, coping strategies and well-being

4.4   Suggestions for Students and Higher Education Institutions of Objective 4

Objective 4   To suggest the measures for reducing the present acculturative stress level and improving well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram

The present study aims at identifying the major sources of acculturative stress of non-resident students pursuing higher education. Findings indicate that the major issues faced by non-resident students include language, unavailability of varieties of students' comfort food items, temporary location of the institute (specifically NIT), transportation, making purchases, biased treatment and racial discrimination, accommodation, inability to make new friends, lack of proper management of basic hostel facilities, homesickness, concerns for future career and job, and lack of interest and motivation academically. In measuring the level of acculturative stress using a self-developed scale, 6.58 per cent (n=30) of the students are found to be on the "High" level of acculturative stress. Majority, i.e., 85.53 per cent (n=390) of the students are found to fall under the "mild" level. Further, 7.89 per cent (n=36) of the students are found to be on the "low" level of acculturative stress.

It also aims at identifying the coping strategies employed by students in order to reduce the stressors resulting out of acculturation.

It further aims at identifying the status of the general well-being of the non-resident students during their stay in Mizoram. The present study finds that there are no students on the "high" and "very high" levels of well-being; 34.43 per cent (n=157) of the total sample falls on the "average" level. Majority of the students, i.e., 59.42 per cent (n=271) are found to fall under the "low" level of general well-being. Further, 6.14 per cent (n=28) of the students are found to be on the "very low" level of well-being.

The findings of the study mentioned above advocate the need for institutions to address the negative impacts of acculturative stress on the overall well-being of the non-resident students. Moreover, the need to provide guidance in imparting

effective coping skills for successful adaptation is necessary. The overarching aim of the study is also to suggest measures and recommendations to help improve the students' level of acculturative stress, to help students develop positive and adaptive coping strategies and well-being for optimal functioning to help accomplish their goals. The analysis of the findings discussed in the prior objectives will provide a better understanding of the different issues and challenges that non-resident students go through. As teachers and administrators of the institutes, the aim is to help students achieve their goals and successfully overcome their problems in adjusting and adapting to the environment. Considering all the quantitative and qualitative data findings, along with suggestions and recommendations expressed by the students in discussions, several recommendations and measures to enhance the students' growth, development, and adjustment to the environment are given as follows.

Suggestions on measures for reducing the present acculturative stress level and improving well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram

4.4.1   Suggestions for administrators and faculties

1. First of all, institution-based intervention program will be beneficial for teachers, institute advisors, and other officials concerned with educational planning and implementation for non-resident students; this may help institutes to take preventive measures that hinder adjustment since little is still known about the issues faced by students as a result of acculturation. It may help administrators and faculties to be aware of the importance of identifying acculturation issues faced by their students. This will enable administrators to be open to help, guide and direct the students to help solve their adaptation issues. The intervention programs can help support diverse sets of students and determine the most adaptive acculturation strategy for an individual well-being.

2. Assigning trained and professional counsellors in every higher education institute is strongly recommended. Active and operative counsellor is crucial in encouraging the non-resident students to seek their help in times of need.

Directing students towards efficient and adaptive coping strategies according to their issues will prove to be beneficial for students struggling to cope with different stressors. Moreover, with the world recognising the importance of students' well-being, counsellors may perform periodical evaluation and assessment of the students to identify the status of students' well-being, thereby, identifying where students need support. This will help in recognising how institutes can take measures and steps to provide support to students. Understanding the challenges and obstacles faced by non-resident students can contribute to planning for providing support for acculturative stress and academic help. Such support could be in the areas of academic advising, services in terms of coping with a new environment, psychological services for hardships, and help in financial matters.

3. Educational intervention for students to reduce acculturative stress can be of great benefit for the non-resident students. Higher education institute can conduct this annually or at the start of a new academic year; focussed group could be newcomers coming from outside the state. An extended orientation program during the first few months of the students' academic life might also help them in finding successful ways of dealing with these concerns. This will also help students comprehend what to expect from the new place; besides, it will also give them an opportunity to get insights in dealing with their issues.

4.4.2 Suggestions for institutions

4. Basic local language class: To lessen the communication gap due to language, a short course on basic local language for non-resident students who are interested is strongly recommended. This will aid non-resident students in their interaction with locals within and outside the institutes.

5. Organizing cultural festivals annually: Organizing cultural festivals and/or cultural-related programs and activities is suggested in order to help all students to be cognizant, appreciate, and respect the rich diverse cultures in

the institutes. This will help institutions in providing a welcoming and conducive campus besides ensuring smooth transition to new institutions and balancing differing cultures in a new place.

6. Appropriate representation of non-resident students in students' union: As discussed, students felt the need for representatives when their voices were not heard at times. A strong support system where major issues and problems can be addressed is necessary for non-resident students. Moreover, there are several procedures required to join a new institute. This includes the process of applying, steps for securing admission, campus hostel and other accommodations. For such, a representative of non-resident student and/or a establishing student support services where students can acquire help, directions and guidance, to address their needs and problems in each higher education institute is suggested.

7. Improving the functioning and timing of libraries: Extended library timing is recommended for all institutes. This recommendation comes to light with many students, especially campus hostellers, complaining insufficient for libraries. A well-equipped functioning library which can provide the basic needs of the students in each department is also recommended. This will suffice the needs of the students and proves useful for the students in between classes and even after the end of their classes.

8. Arrangement of transportation services within and outside campus: As mentioned, non-resident students in Mizoram University reported difficulty in moving in and around the campus. As departments are mostly situated far off from each other, they reported the crucial need of hireable vehicles probably auto-rickshaw, taxi, or any other mode of convenient services within and around campus. This will help in saving time when going to important centres like administrative cell, central library, ICT centre, multipurpose hall, and bus stops. Further, as the institute of Zoram Medical College is situated at Falkawn, 16 kilometres from the state capital Aizawl, medical students expressed the need for daily institute bus service from the institute to Aizawl;

they opined that this bus service be exclusively for students to gather their personal and academic essentials.

9. Build effective and efficient Human Resource Management: Proper maintenance of facilities provided in the institutes is crucial for successful teaching-learning process. This includes the need for efficient and prompt response when things need to be repaired or to be replaced. For such, it is important to strengthen the concerned authority, and this authority itself should be held accountable and responsible in different areas of work within the institute's campus and hostels.

10. Establishing opportunities for industrial training facilities, new companies for internship, and job placements: Students pursuing technical and medical degrees expressed the need for industrial training facilities, more companies for internships, and job placements. These will enable students to apply and increase their skills and competencies, technical knowledge, and methods when facing real life situations. This will also give them valuable prospects to experience working as a professional or with other professionals.

4.4.3 Suggestions for improvement of hostel facilities and accommodation

11. To provide more hostel seats for non-resident students: Students spoke of the need for more campus hostel seats for non-resident students. This may help students in avoiding the exhaustive task and stress in finding satisfactory accommodation. If the hostel is not inside the campus, arrangement could be made in renting buildings or rooms near the institutes as institutions' hostels.

12. Improvement in quality of food and choices: One of the major sources of adaptation issues reported by students was the unsatisfactory qualities of food provided. Lack of green vegetables and food choices for a healthy balanced diet were reported by the students. To improve this issue, strengthening the monitoring cell or the mess managers and introducing more varieties in food

choices are indispensable. Periodic monitoring by higher authorities is also suggested.

13. Allotting single hostel room for Ph. D scholars: The work culture of scholars is very different from other educational levels. It requires considerably long hours for reading, write up or laboratory work. These may often require working through the night. It requires deep commitment to projects, far more rigorous workload, and effective time management. Scholars may not have much time to socialise. All these and the need to work efficiently on their own time with minimal disturbances necessitate a single hostel room for each Ph. D scholar.

14. Maintaining data records of available rent by localities: Due to limited hostel seats, many students, especially newcomers and non-residents, expressed the difficulty in finding affordable houses to rent. Local councils, especially those near the institutes, could maintain a systematic and updated record of available houses to rent in their localities.

A hostel is a home away from home for the non-resident students. It brings together students from different academic, gender, and race, social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. It is a place where the first few steps of adjustment and adaptation take place for the students; therefore, lack of or inadequate living space and poor management of facilities provided to students largely affect students' well-being. This aggravates stress and causes difficulties in the process of adaptation. Hence, the quality of daily living environment goes a long way in influencing the behaviour of the students. The different recommendations for improving hostel facilities and accommodation after analysing students' issues are given above.

The present study will provide a better understanding of the challenges and issues that non-resident students go through in the process of acculturation. Besides, suggestions and recommendations given above can prove to be beneficial for non-resident students struggling with adaptation and adjustment in a new environmental set-up. This study can help education practitioners understand acculturation-related

issues and may be able to enhance their abilities in providing culturally sensitive and supportive services to students. The findings of the study may help in illuminating the influence of well-being in the acculturation process. This may also provide more awareness on the necessity of periodical assessment of students' well-being, giving proper and appropriate counselling. The awareness of such will help reduce the acculturative stress in order for students to reach a desirable physical and mental state. The responsibility of imparting resilient skills to higher education students lies with every institution in order to help their students overcome their barriers and achieve their goals.

The above mentioned can only be achieved with the awareness of the importance of exploring the different stress factors that result from acculturation among institutions nationwide. This study is in itself the first to investigate the acculturative stress, coping strategies, and the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. If due measures and actions are taken by higher education institutes on the suggestions and recommendations given above, it may contribute to the progressive growth and development of making the state an educational hub, for the present and for the future.

After analysing and interpreting the present study, summarisation of the major findings and the recommendations for further research is presented in the succeeding chapter.

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Chapter V

MAJOR FINDINGS, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Major Findings

5.2   Summary of the Study

5.3   Recommendations for Further Research

Chapter V

MAJOR FINDINGS, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter highlights the findings of Objective 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the study. It includes suggestions for administrators and faculties, institutions, and management of hostel facilities and accommodation to reduce acculturative stress and for the improvement of the non-resident students' well-being given on Objective 4. It also presents the summarisation of the study and recommendation for further research.

5.1: Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are given as follows.

5.1.1 Findings of Objective 1

Objective 1 **To study the significant sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in relation to their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses in Mizoram**

5.1.1.1 Major sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

In order the find out the possible sources of acculturative stress of the non-resident students, the researcher asked four hundred fifty-six (456) students pursuing their higher education in Mizoram. According to the multiple responses, the major sources that can be gathered are prepared in a table below.

Table 5.1   Major sources of Acculturative Stress of non-resident students

Sl. No.	Major Sources of Acculturative Stress	No. of responses	Percentage
1	Language	275	60.30
2	Food	193	42.32
3	Making purchases	130	28.50
4	Transportation	121	26.53
5	Biasness and racial discrimination	106	23.24
6	Lack of proper management of basic hostel facilities	105	23.02
7	Lack of interest and motivation in academics	91	19.95
8	Accommodation	71	15.57
9	NIT temporary location including hostel	62	13.59
10	Homesickness	49	10.74
11	Inability to make new friends	47	10.30
12	Pandemic Covid-19	26	5.70
13	Future career and work	17	3.72
14	No issue	88	19.29

5.1.1.2 Findings of students' level of acculturative stress.

To study the major sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram, a self-developed standardized scale of "Acculturative Stress Scale" for non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram was employed. The scale consists of 6 dimensions: homesickness, food preferences, social behaviour and language, cultural values, perception of prejudice and racial discrimination and isolation.

Table 5.2   Interpretation of the total Acculturative Stress

Range	Guideline	No. of students
100 - 145	High	30
50 - 100	Mild	390
Lower than 50	Low	36
	Total	**456**

The above table categorized the level of acculturative stress scale into three groups: high, mild, and low acculturative stress. After analysing the total scores of the students, it has been found that 36 students fall under the "low" category. On the "mild" category of acculturative stress, majority of the students, i.e., 390 students, fall under the category. As many as 30 students fall under the range of "high" category of acculturative stress.

5.1.1.3 Acculturative stress and gender.

1. To compare the scores on the different dimensions of acculturative stress scale of male and female students, Fisher's Z-test was computed. The findings are:

2. There is a significant gender difference among students in homesickness. Females are found to have higher means indicating that they feel more homesick compared to males when moving to a new place for higher studies.

3. There is no significant gender difference among students in food preferences.

4. There is a significant gender difference among students in social behaviour and language. Females tend to have more issues adapting to social behaviour and language barrier.

5. There is a significant gender difference among students in cultural values. Female students feel more vulnerable when their cultural values are threatened.

6. There is no significant gender difference among students in perception of prejudice and racial discrimination.

7. There is no significant gender difference among students in isolation.

8. There is a significant gender difference among students on the total acculturative stress. The finding revealed that female score on the overall acculturative stress is higher than male.

5.1.1.4 Acculturative stress and educational level.

For determining the level of Acculturative Stress on the different educational levels, the levels of education were categorized into three groups:

- Under graduate (UG) (n=302)
- Post graduate (PG) (n=103) and
- Ph. D (n=51)

One-way ANOVA was carried out using SPSS. To further identify where the differences lie across the different educational levels, Post Hoc Test was computed. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed. Multiple comparisons using post hoc tests (Hochberg GT2) show the comparisons across the three educational levels on the dimensions of acculturative stress scale; significant differences are found.

The major findings are:

1. There is no significant difference in homesickness across the different educational levels.

2. There is a significant difference in food Preferences across the different educational levels. Findings reveal that UG students have the most issues and difficulties adjusting to new food and new eating habits compared to the other educational levels. This is followed by Ph. D scholars and PG students respectively.

3. There is no significant difference in social behaviour and language across the different educational levels.

4. There is no significant difference in cultural values across the different educational levels.

5. There is significant difference in perception of prejudice and racial discrimination across the different educational levels. It has been found that Ph. D students experience prejudice and racial discrimination the most as compared to the other two educational levels. This is followed by UG and PG students respectively.

6. There is significant difference in isolation across the different educational levels. It has been found that UG students experience loneliness and isolation the most as compared to the other two educational levels. This is followed by Ph. D and PG students respectively.

7. There is no significant difference on the total score of acculturative stress across the different educational levels.

The findings indicate that significant differences are found on the dimensions of food preferences, and prejudice and social discrimination; no significant differences are found on the remaining dimensions across the different educational levels.

5.1.1.5 Acculturative stress and length of stay.

For determining the level of acculturative stress on the different length of stay, the lengths of stay of participants were categorized into five groups:

- 0-1 year (*n*=102)
- 1-3 years (*n*=215)
- 3-5 years (*n*=93)
- 5-10 years (*n*=18)
- 10 years and above (*n*=28)

One-way ANOVA was also carried out using SPSS. To further identify where the differences lie across the different levels of length of stay, post hoc test was computed. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed.

The major findings are:

1. There is no significant difference in homesickness across the different length of stay.

2. There is a significant difference in food preferences across the different length of stay. Findings indicate that students who stayed for 3-5 years scored the highest; these found it difficult to cope with the new eating habits and the varieties of food items available. This group is followed by students who stayed for 5-10 years, 1-3 years, and 0-1 year respectively. Students who stayed for more than 10 years were found to have the least problem in adjusting to new food and new eating habits.

3. There is no significant difference in social behaviour and language across the different length of stay.

4. There is no significant difference in cultural values across the different length of stay.

5. There is no significant difference in perception of prejudice and racial discrimination across the different length of stay.

6. There is a significant difference in isolation across the different length of stay. Findings reveal that students who stayed in Mizoram for 3-5 years obtained the highest score. This is followed by 0-1 year, 1-3 years, 5-10 years, and 10 years and above respectively.

7. There is no significant difference on the total acculturative stress across the different length of stay

It was found that there exist significant differences on the dimensions of food preferences and isolation. Meanwhile, there are no significant differences on the remaining dimensions of acculturative stress and length of stay of the students.

5.1.1.6 Acculturative stress and types of courses.

For determining the level of acculturative stress on the type of educational courses, the types of courses are categorized in two groups:

- Professional course (n=317)
- General course (n=139)

The differences across the two courses on the different dimensions on acculturative stress were computed using Z-test.

The major findings are:

1. There is no significant difference in homesickness across the two types of courses.

2. There is no significant difference in food preferences across the two types of courses.

3. There is no significant difference in social behaviour and language across the two types of courses.

4. There is no significant difference in cultural values across the two types of courses.

5. There is a significant difference in perception of prejudice and racial discrimination across the two types of courses. Students pursuing professional courses experience more prejudice and social discrimination compared to students pursuing general courses.

6. There is a significant difference in isolation across the two types of courses. Students pursuing professional courses experience greater feeling of isolation compared to students pursuing general courses.

7. There is a significant difference on the total acculturative stress scale across the two types of courses. Students pursuing professional courses experience higher acculturative stress as indicated on their total score of acculturative stress scale compared to students pursuing general courses.

The present study reveals that there are significant differences on the dimensions of prejudice and racial discrimination, isolation, and total acculturative stress. However, there are significant differences found on the remaining dimensions.

5.1.2   Findings of Objective 2

Objective 2   **To find out the coping strategies used by non-resident students pursuing higher education in in relation to their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses in Mizoram**

5.1.2.1 Findings of coping strategies.

1. The present finding finds that non-resident students used avoidance-oriented coping the most compared to emotion-oriented and task-oriented coping strategies. This was followed by emotion-oriented and task-oriented coping strategies respectively.

2. It is found that female (27.74%) use more task-oriented coping strategies compared to male (25.67%) to overcome the acculturation related stressors.

3. It is found that male (58.50%) tends to use more emotion-oriented coping strategies compared to female (56.54%) to overcome the acculturation related stressors.

4. It is found that male (84.15%) use more avoidance-oriented coping strategies compared to female (64.9%) to overcome their acculturation related stressors.

5.1.2.2 Correlation among the three dimensions of CISS-Adult using Pearson's correlation matrix.

5.1.2.2 (a)   Pearson's correlation matrix among the three dimensions of coping strategies.

1. With the r critical value being 0.09, it can be said that all the values are significant at the 0.05 level.

2. Avoidance-oriented coping and task-oriented coping have the highest correlation with a correlation of 0.52 indicating low positive correlation between the three dimensions.

3. The correlation of the dimensions of avoidance-oriented and emotion-oriented coping was found to be 0.24 indicating very mild positive correlation.

4. The dimensions of task-oriented coping and emotion-oriented coping have the correlation of 0.15 indicating that there is more or less no correlation among these two dimensions.

5.1.2.2 (b)   Pearson's Correlation matrix between acculturative stress and coping strategies.

With the critical r value being 0.09, the r value of 0.34 is found to be significant indicating a mild positive correlation. It indicates a relationship exists between the scores of acculturative stress and coping strategies.

5.1.2.3 Coping strategies and gender.

To compare the scores on the different dimensions of CISS-Adult of male and female students, Fisher's Z-test was computed. The findings are:

1. There is no significant gender difference among students in task-oriented coping.

2. There is no significant gender difference among students in emotion-oriented coping.

3. There is a significant gender among students in avoidance-oriented coping.

The findings reveal that, in the study, males adopted more avoidance-oriented coping strategies than females. Meanwhile, the findings reveal that there is no significant difference between male and female non-resident students in emotion and task-oriented coping in relation to gender.

5.1.2.4 Coping strategies and educational level.

For determining the scores of CISS-Adult across the different educational levels, i.e., UG, PG and Ph. D, one-way ANOVA with post hoc test was carried out. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed.

The major findings are:

1. There is no significant difference in task-oriented coping across the different educational levels.

2. There is no significant difference in emotion-oriented coping across the different educational levels.

3. There is no significant difference in avoidance-oriented coping across the different educational levels.

The findings of the study reveal that there is no significant difference on all the dimensions of coping strategies across the different educational levels among the non-resident students.

5.1.2.5 Coping strategies and length of stay.

For determining the differences in coping strategies on the length of stay, i.e.,

- 0-1 year
- 1-3 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-10 years

- 10 years and above

One-way ANOVA with post hoc test was carried out. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed.

The major findings are:

1. There is no significant difference in task-oriented coping across the different length of stay.

2. There is no significant difference in emotion-oriented coping across the different length of stay.

3. There is no significant difference in avoidance-oriented coping across the different length of stay.

The present study finds that there is no significant difference on coping strategies across the different length of stay among the non-resident students.

5.1.2.6 Coping strategies and types of courses.

For determining the preferred coping strategies on the two types of courses, i.e., professional (317) and general (139) courses, one-way ANOVA was carried out. To further identify where the differences exist, further analysis using post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) was carried out on the dimensions where significant difference is found.

The major findings are:

1. There is no significant difference in task-oriented coping across the different types of courses.

2. There is a significant difference in emotion-oriented coping across the different types of courses. The finding shows that students pursuing professional courses employed more emotion-oriented coping than students in general courses.

3. There is no significant difference in avoidance-oriented coping across the different types of courses.

The present study finds that there is significant difference on emotion-oriented coping: students pursuing professional courses engage more in emotion-oriented coping strategies than students in the general courses. The study also indicates that there is no significant difference on the task-oriented coping and avoidance-oriented coping across the different types of courses among the non-resident students.

5.1.3   Findings of Objective 3

Objective 3   To study the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in in relation to their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses in Mizoram

5.1.3.1 Findings on the level of well-being.

The study measured the level of well-being of the non-resident students using FWBS. The present study measures the overall well-being of the students.

Table 5.3   Interpretation of the score of Well-being

Range	Level	No. of students
90-96	Very High	0
74-88	High	0
56-72	Average	157
41-55	Low	271
21-35	Very Low	28
	Total	**456**

The major findings of well-being reveal that 28 students fall on the "very low" level, majority of students, i.e., 271 students, fall on the "low" level, and 157

students fall on the "average" level. It has been found that there are no students on the "high" and "very high" levels.

5.1.3.2 Correlation of acculturative stress and well-being.

5.1.3.2 (a) Pearson's correlation matrix between acculturative stress and well-being.

With the critical r value being 0.09, the computed r value of 0.67 is found to be significant with average positive correlation. It indicates there is a relationship between the score of acculturative stress and well-being.

5.1.3.2 (b) Pearson's correlation matrix between coping strategies and well-being.

With the critical r value being 0.09, the r value of 0.88 is found to be significant with high positive correlation. It indicates a high relationship exists between the scores of coping strategies and well-being. The result signifies that the students' high or low well-being scores imply the use of various coping strategies.

5.1.3.2 (c) Pearson's correlation of the six dimensions and total acculturative stress and well-being.

Analysis of the computed Pearson's correlation coefficient and significant correlation test indicates that there is significant negative difference between all the dimensions of acculturative stress and well-being. It indicates that the students' high or low level of acculturative stress predicts low or high level of well-being on the students respectively.

5.1.3.2 (d) Z-test of acculturative stress and well-being.

The computed Z-values indicate that there are significant differences on the means between all the dimensions of acculturative stress and well-being.

5.1.3.3 Well-being and gender.

To compare the scores on well-being of male and female students, Fisher's Z-test was computed.

The finding shows that there is significant difference between male and female students on well-being in relation to gender. The study finds that male has significantly higher level of well-being compared to female non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

5.1.3.4 Well-being and educational level.

For determining the scores of well-being of the different educational levels, i.e., UG, PG and Ph. D, one-way ANOVA was carried out. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed.

The study indicates that there is no significant difference on the level of well-being across the different educational levels among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

5.1.3.5 Well-being and length of stay.

For determining the scores of well-being of the different levels of length of stay, i.e., 0-1 year, 1-3 years, 3-5 years, 5-10 years, and 10 years and above, One-way ANOVA with post hoc test was carried out. With unequal sample sizes for the number of students in the groups, Hochberg GT2 was employed.

The study also shows that there is no significant difference on the level of well-being across the different duration of stay among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

5.1.3.6 Well-being and types of courses.

For determining the scores of well-being on the different types of courses, i.e., professional (317) and general (139) courses, one-way ANOVA was carried out.

The study reveals that there is no significant difference on the level of well-being across the two types of courses different among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

5.1.4 Suggestions for students and higher education institutions of Objective 4

Objective 4 **To suggest the measures for reducing the present acculturative stress level and improving well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram**

Suggestions on measures for reducing the present acculturative stress level and improving well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram

Suggestions for Administrators and Faculties

1. First of all, institution-based intervention program will be beneficial for teachers, institute advisors, and other officials concerned with educational planning and implementation for non-resident students; this may help institutes to take preventive measures to hinder adjustment since little is still known about the issues faced by students as a result of acculturation.

2. Assigning trained and professional counsellors in every higher education institute is strongly recommended. Active and operative counsellor is crucial in encouraging the non-resident students to seek their help in times of need. Directing students towards efficient and adaptive coping strategies according to their issues will prove to be beneficial for students struggling to cope with different stressors.

3. Educational intervention for students to reduce acculturative stress can be of great benefit for the non-resident students. Higher education institute can conduct this annually or at the start of a new academic year; focussed group could be newcomers coming from outside the state. An extended orientation program during the first few months of the students' academic life might also help them in finding successful ways of dealing with these concerns.

Suggestions for Institutions

4. Basic local language class: To lessen the communication gap due to language, a short course on basic local language for non-resident students who are interested is strongly recommended.

5. Organizing cultural festivals annually: Organizing cultural festivals and/or cultural-related programs and activities is suggested in order to help all students to be cognizant, appreciate, and respect the rich diverse cultures in the institutes.

6. Appropriate representation of non-resident students in students' union: As discussed, students felt the need for representatives when their voices were not heard at times. A strong support system where major issues and problems can be addressed is necessary for non-resident students.

7. Improving the functioning and timing of libraries: Extended library timing is recommended for all institutes. This recommendation comes to light with many students, especially campus hostellers, complaining insufficient for libraries. A well-equipped functioning library which can provide the basic needs of the students in each department is also recommended.

8. Arrangement of transportation services within and outside campus: As mentioned, non-resident students in Mizoram University reported difficulty in moving in and around the campus as departments are mostly situated far off from each other. Further, as the institute of Zoram Medical College is situated at Falkawn, 16 kilometres from the state capital Aizawl, medical students expressed the need for daily institute bus service from the institute to Aizawl.

9. Build effective and efficient Human Resource Management: Proper maintenance of facilities provided in the institutes is crucial for successful teaching-learning process. This includes the need for efficient and prompt response when things need to be repaired or to be replaced.

10. Establishing opportunities for industrial training facilities, new companies for internship, and job placements. These will enable students pursuing technical and medical degrees students to apply and increase their skills and competencies, technical knowledge, and methods when facing real life situations.

Suggestions for Improvement of Hostel Facilities and Accommodation

11. To provide more hostel seats for non-resident students: Students spoke of the need for more campus hostel seats for non-resident students. This may help students in avoiding the exhaustive task and stress in finding satisfactory accommodation. If the hostel is not inside the campus, arrangement could be made in renting buildings or rooms near the institutes as institutions' hostels.

12. Improvement in quality of food and choices: One of the major sources of adaptation issues reported by students was the unsatisfactory qualities of food provided. Lack of green vegetables and food choices for a healthy balanced diet were reported by the students. To improve this issue, strengthening the monitoring cell or the mess managers and introducing more varieties in food choices are indispensable. Periodic monitoring by higher authorities is also suggested.

13. Allotting single hostel room for Ph. D scholars: The different work culture of scholars and the need to work efficiently on their own time with minimal disturbances necessitate a single hostel room for each Ph. D scholar.

14. Maintaining data records of available rent by localities: Due to limited hostel seats, many students, especially newcomers and non-residents, expressed the difficulty in finding affordable houses to rent. Local councils, especially those near the institutes, could maintain a systematic and updated record of available houses to rent in their localities.

The present study will provide a better understanding of the challenges and issues that non-resident students go through in the process of acculturation. Besides,

suggestions and recommendations given above can prove to be beneficial for non-resident students struggling with adaptation and adjustment in a new environmental set-up. This study can help education practitioners understand acculturation-related issues and may be able to enhance their abilities in providing culturally sensitive and supportive services to students. The findings of the study may help in illuminating the influence of well-being in the acculturation process. This may also provide more awareness on the necessity of periodical assessment of students' well-being, giving proper and appropriate counselling. The awareness of such will help reduce the acculturative stress in order for students to reach a desirable physical and mental state. The responsibility of imparting resilient skills to higher education students lies with every institution in order to help their students overcome their barriers and achieve their goals.

The above mentioned can only be achieved with the awareness of the importance of exploring the different stress factors that result from acculturation among institutions nationwide. This study is in itself the first to investigate the acculturative stress, coping strategies, and the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. If due measures and actions are taken by higher education institutes on the suggestions and recommendations given above, it may contribute to the progressive growth and development of making the state an educational hub, for the present and for the future.

5.2   Summary of the Study

This current study attempts to find the sources of acculturative stress, the coping strategies employed, and the status of the well-being of non-resident students.

5.2.1   Acculturative stress and demographic variables

Overall, responses to the scale reveal that majority of the students experienced mild (n=390) and high (n=30) acculturative stress. Further, thirty (30) students experienced low acculturative stress. The main sources of acculturative stress were found to be the inability to adapt to new dietary behaviour, and deficiency in knowing local language. It has been found that UG students and those who stayed for

3-5 years had the most difficulties adjusting to new food and new eating habits compared to those in other education levels and durations of stay. This indicates that newcomers find it difficult to adapt to the sudden changes in diet when locating to a new place. Locating to a new environment could worsen students' eating habits due to a lack of cooking skills, self-efficacy, and/or unavailability or inconvenience of cooking space. Moreover, this finding is also supported by the sessions carried out on focus group discussion where majority of the UG students (with average 3-5 years duration of stay) reported that the quality, timing, and variety of food were the major concerns. Likewise, studies have also found greater acculturative stress for short duration of stay (Mena et al., 1987; Ayoob & Singh, 2011). Further, students from the higher educational levels and longer duration of stay (5-10 years, 10 years and above) are found to have lower acculturative stress. This is also supported by the qualitative study where students expressed when they stayed for a longer period of time, they could find ways to gradually cope with the issue, and, hence, experienced less stress.

In this study, lifestyle stressors experienced by the students included the struggle to find suitable accommodation, making purchases, and biased treatment for being non-residents. Ph. D scholars were found to experience prejudice and racial discrimination the most being a non-resident compared to those in other educational levels. They felt that there were certain discrimination against them on the basis of their distinctive looks, complexion, and their races. Possible explanation could be the fact that scholars needed to interact with more locals in and outside the institutes. They obviously had gone through many years of research; out in the field, they had interaction with more locals, and hence they experienced more incidents along the way. Studies has also found that the major sources of acculturative stress included the experience of higher levels of discrimination (Poyrazli et al., 2007; Vergaraa et al., 2010; Gebregergis, 2018; Xue, 2018) on international students. This finding is also supported by the qualitative study where Ph. D. scholars expressed the many instances of bias and unequal treatment for being a non-resident. This resulted in the feeling of isolation and inability to make new friends.

In addition, this study also reveals that students who stayed for 3-5 years had the most difficulty in dealing with adjusting to new food, new eating habits, and had a feeling of isolation. It is evident from the finding that students developed a feeling of insecurity and alienation in the new environment. This may be caused by different stressors including inability to cope with new dietary behaviour and deficiency in the knowledge of local language. This can result in inhibition of non-resident students while making new friends, along with the multitude stressors such as cultural differences. Lack of social support and close friends to confide their problems to can further lead to feeling of isolation and inability to adjust to the stressors.

Further, a comparison of the level of acculturative stress among the two types of educational courses finds that students pursuing professional courses experience more prejudice and social discrimination, isolation, and a higher amount of acculturative stress than students pursuing general courses. The demanding and rigorous workload that come with pursuing professional courses, the pressure in completing and exceling the course, and the uncertainty of future career stress out the students more than those pursuing general courses. It is evident from the findings that the different stressors related to acculturation add more stress to the students. The experiences of opportunities being rightfully denied, perceived discrimination endured in different situations result in difficulty in making new acquaintances and a feeling of rejection for being a non-resident. Hence, the findings make it evident that, as a consequence of such experiences, insecurity surfaces resulting in the feeling that they have no one to confide to about their problems. This further leads to social isolation causing more stress academically and mentally.

Contrary to the many researches where differences are found, there is no significant difference between male and female students on the measured acculturation factors: homesickness, food preferences, social behaviour and language, cultural values, perception of prejudice and racial discrimination, and isolation.

5.2.2 Coping strategies and demographic variables

The present study finds that avoidance-oriented coping is the most preferred coping strategies employed by non-resident students. This is followed by emotion-oriented coping and task-oriented coping respectively. It has been found that males adopt more avoidance-oriented coping strategies than female. Males are found to employ more distraction and social diversion coping mechanisms. It has also been observed in the qualitative study that males tend to ignore or avoid problem altogether to cope with different stressors by engaging in regular exercise, watching movies, spending time with friends, going for long drives, eating out, playing online games, and listening to music. The study further finds that students pursuing professional courses employed more emotion-oriented coping than students in general courses. With more stress experiences found in relation to acculturation among students in professional courses, the finding reveals that students tend to act out on the stressors by regulating negative feelings and emotions instead of addressing the problem. Students become very tense, very upset, and angry. This indicates that when the stress becomes excessive, unchangeable, and uncontrollable, students focus on regulating their emotional reactions to the stressors. These findings suggest that with higher well-being obtained by males, the coping strategies employed are effective to a certain extent in the short term with issues that are unchangeable, and beyond their control. However, consistent reliance on these strategies of coping is more associated with negative psychological adjustment and well-being and is likely to generate a broad range of stressors in the long run. Several research have also found that avoidance-oriented coping is more often associated with psychological distress, particularly emotional distress, and depression overtime in university students (Holahan et al., 1999; Penland et al., 2000). This makes it evident that students need professional assistance and supervision towards healthy and adaptive coping strategies for the long term.

5.2.3 Well-being and demographic variables

In assessing the well-being of the students, the study finds that 59.4 per cent, i.e., majority of the students had low well-being. Among the 456 students, 34.4 per cent

of the students were found to have average well-being while 6.14 per cent were found to have very low level of well-being. Important consideration that has to be taken is the finding that the general well-being of the non-resident students is markedly low in average. This could be attributed to academic-related stress as well as the different lifestyle stressors in locating to new institutional and cultural environment and the effectiveness of coping strategies employed.

The scores of well-being on FWBC indicate that male scored significantly higher than female. This finding reveals the need for and essence of studying acculturative stress and the adverse impact it has on the well-being of higher education students in India. In addition, the findings in itself prove the paramount importance of administrators and educators to take effective measures in identifying the state of students' well-being. Periodical assessment and improving the status of well-being influenced by acculturative stress among higher education students moving from state to state within the country can be employed. However, there were no significant differences found on the scores of students' well-being across the different educational levels, varying length of stay, and the types of courses.

5.2.4 Acculturative stress and coping strategies

The computed Pearson's correlation matrix between the total score of acculturative stress and CISS-Adult is found to be 0.34 indicating a mild positive correlation. The result may imply that when the acculturative stress increases, students employ variety of coping strategies to alleviate the stress. The finding that majority of the students have mild acculturative stress could also be attributed to the coping strategies used by the students. The strategies used may be effective to a certain extent in alleviating the issues encountered in the process of acculturation; however, it depends on individual differences and varying situations. As found in this study, avoidance-oriented coping strategy is the most preferred by students. As mentioned, this strategy may be effective in dealing with unavoidable and uncontrollable circumstances. However, being considered an unhealthy and a maladaptive coping strategy, consistent use of this strategy may deter students in focusing on the real problem. It can hinder students in focusing on the major problem.

5.2.5 Acculturative stress and well-being

The students' score on the different dimensions of acculturative stress were found to have significant negative correlation with the scores of FWBC. It indicates that when students had issues in adapting to the new society, their level of well-being decreased. The present finding has also found that majority of the students had mild acculturative stress. Although students might not have an alarming high acculturative stress on the quantitative study, it still causes concern as the majority of students had low general well-being. As mentioned, students' level of acculturative stress can be mild but may progress to worse if not provided with the appropriate resources necessary for their improvement. Moreover, the qualitative study has proved that many students struggling with issues in the process of acculturation reported their reduction in productivity and motivation to achieve their desired goal.

5.2.6 Coping strategies and well-being

The study finds that students' well-being and coping strategies have high positive correlation. It indicates a high relationship exists between the scores of coping strategies and well-being. The result signifies that the students' high or low well-being scores imply the use of various coping strategies. Further, it has been found that avoidance-oriented coping was the most preferred strategy employed by the students. This finding may prove that avoiding the issue and not focusing on the main problem may not be a healthy way of dealing with the stresses; besides, such type of coping does have an impact on the state of well-being of the students.

Lastly, the results of this study indicate that many non-resident students struggle with different stressors related to acculturation. In order to reduce these issues, there are many important yet simple and undemanding roles which can be easily achieved by educational administrators and higher education institutes. Among the many important aspects, developing programs, activities, and building different clubs that emphasize opportunities for cross-cultural contact can be some of the first effective steps. This may help in providing conducive environment for newcomers in institutes. With multitude array of challenges and difficulties, formation of non-resident students' association, assigning operative counsellors for support and

assistance in the institute campuses can greatly benefit non-resident students. This will play a valuable role in assisting students to identify their areas of difficulties as well as helping in developing effective strategies for in adapting to new academic and cultural environment.

This study is the first study to examine acculturation related stress, coping strategies and well-being among non-resident students pursuing higher education higher education in Mizoram. This research may illuminate factors that are related to acculturative stress as well as factors that result in more positive intercultural experiences for students. If efforts and actions are taken to all the suggestions and recommendations mentioned in this study, institutes will be able to facilitate a more welcoming, inclusive campus and a community where all can work together. This will further help non-resident students in optimizing their full potential, in achieving their desired goals, and in having a fruitful and productive stay in Mizoram.

5.3   Recommendations for Further Research

The present study has led to several recommendations for future research in Mizoram and different parts of the county on non-resident students. The recommendations for further research are stated as follows:

1. It is recommended that longitudinal and in-depth studies are fundamental for future research. As students' acculturative experiences are subject to change over time, studying and observing the same students for a longer period of time would contribute greatly to the understanding of the development and changes in the process of acculturation. This will enable professionals or institutes to identify the impact acculturative stress has on students and detect any changes that might occur over a period of time. It may enhance the present findings and give a precise and comprehensive map on the issues faced by non-resident students.

2. In addition to investigating the acculturative stress of non-resident students, studies on developing and evaluating an intervention program for acculturative stress are also recommended. This will aid in enhancing and fostering the adjustment of non-resident students to the new educational environment.

3. Further research is recommended to pay more attention to the assessment of language incompetency. Researchers need to explore the role of language confidence in the adjustment and transition of non-resident students. In-depth study and implementation of more effective and efficient measures towards successful language proficiency for students are essential.

4. A study on the impact of acculturative stress on academic achievement is also strongly recommended. This will further help students identify the issues and take certain measures to improve and achieve more academic success.

5. Further study on the effect of acculturative stress on students' mental health experienced by non-resident students is of vital importance to help students minimize the factors impacting their mental states.

6. In-depth and periodical assessment on the status of non-resident students' well-being is strongly recommended. This will help identify the areas of weaknesses, thereby, providing development of means to help students in adopting healthy coping strategies and in achieving optimal functioning to achieve their desired goals.

7. Comparative study is imperative between non-resident students and local/domestic students. This would provide greater insight into how the level of stress and well-being differ between the groups. Moreover, it could lead to development of novel and creative solutions for the issues faced by either or both the groups.

8. The role of institutes in providing conducive environment for smooth transitioning of non-resident students to a new place is of vital importance. The awareness of such would contribute to the implementation of successful intervention program for students, staffs, and administrators.

9. A comprehensive psycho-educational interventional programme that incorporates cognitive, behavioural, psychological, social, and affective elements with the utilization of relevant, valid, and reliable measurement to evaluate the acculturation outcomes of non-resident students is recommended.

10. This study finds the paramount importance in conducting further research that develops effective coping strategies and defence mechanisms in order to help students cope with multiple acculturation related stressors. This will benefit counsellors, faculties, families, and educational administrators in managing acculturation related stress cases.

11. Self-report measures are subject to social desirability and common method variance. Some limitations should be noted in interpreting these results. Future research is needed to extend our findings to include objective indexes of coping efforts and psychological functioning.

12. Finally, more studies on the effects and influences of acculturative stress and well-being on non-resident students in different parts within the county are strongly recommended. While majority of studies on acculturative stress and its impacts have focused mainly on immigrants and international students, issues and challenges faced by non-resident students moving across the country for higher studies are still overlooked. More studies across the country would help in providing awareness, and in addressing the problems of educational administrators and institutes. This could prove to be useful in implementing measures and actions to help students' adjustment in differing and diverse cultures prevailing across the country.

The need for further studies, including longitudinal and comparative studies, are identified and stated above. It also identifies the need for further in-depth studies on the major sources and the acculturation related stress. These are given with the vision that acculturation related phenomena may be understood in terms of their origins in variations across the host societies, acculturating groups, and their interactions in Mizoram and different parts across the country or differing culture on non-resident students. If these recommendations and suggestions are considered and taken up, it could further enhance the present findings, and will have tremendous impact in implementing more effective and efficient measures towards successful transitioning to new geographical and institutional set-up for non-resident students.

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Appendix A

List of Experts for Tool Construction

The experts consulted for the construction of the tool "Acculturative Stress Scale (ASS) of Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in Mizoram" is listed below:

1. Prof. P. C. Shukla
    Ex Head and Dean,
    Faculty of Education,
    Banaras Hindu University

2. Prof. H. Malsawmi
    Ex Head,
    Department of Education,
    Mizoram University

3. Prof. Loknath Mishra
    Head of Department,
    Department of Education,
    Mizoram University

4. Prof. Lallianzuali Fanai
    Principal,
    Institute of Advanced Studies in Education, Aizawl

5. Dr. Narikimelli Pramod Kumar
    Associate Professor,
    Department of Education,
    Mizoram University

6. Dr. Lalremruati Ralte
    Associate Professor,
    Department of Psychology,
    Government Aizawl West College

7. Dr. Tushar Gupta
    Assistant Professor,
    Department of Education,
    University of Allahabad

8. Dr. Shilpi Ghosh
    Assistant Professor,
    Department of Education,
    Vishva Bharati University,
    Shantiniketan- West Bengal

Appendix B

Acculturative Stress Scale (ASS) of Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in Mizoram

Section I

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Age   : ………………   Gender   : ………………..

Course   : ………………   Semester   : ………………..

Department   : ………………   Institute/University: ………………………………….

Religion   : ………………   State of Domicile: …………………………………

Length of stay in Mizoram: …….. Year(s)   .…….. Month(s)   ………… Day(s)

Accommodation: ☐ Campus hostel   ☐ Hostel   ☐ Rent   ☐ PG   ☐ Relatives

If others, please specify …………………………………………………………….

Contact no.: …………………………….. Email: ……………………………………

INSTRUCTION:

On the next pages, there are some statements covering different attitudes, views and experiences you have regarding your stay here in Mizoram. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Your honest response is of immense importance to bring out desirable outcome for this study. Confidentiality of your responses shall be strictly maintained. Answering this may require 10-15 minutes. Please read each statement carefully and mark the appropriate response. Please make sure you do not leave out any and do not hesitate to ask for help if you do not understand or not sure how to respond.

For each of the statements below, circle the response that best characterizes how you feel about the statement.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I feel homesick.	SA	A	N	D	SD
2	I miss my friends and families.	SA	A	N	D	SD
3	I have difficulty adjusting to new food.	SA	A	N	D	SD
4	I have difficulty adjusting to new eating habits.	SA	A	N	D	SD
5	The types of food available here do not suit me.	SA	A	N	D	SD
6	People treat me differently in social situations.	SA	A	N	D	SD
7	I feel intimidated to participate in social activities.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8	I have difficulty in making new mizo friends.	SA	A	N	D	SD
9	It takes a great deal of effort to adjust in this new set-up.	SA	A	N	D	SD
10	My stress level increases with the increase of the duration of my stay in Mizoram.	SA	A	N	D	SD
11	The climate in Mizoram does not suit me.	SA	A	N	D	SD
12	I feel reluctant to communicate in English.	SA	A	N	D	SD
13	I have difficulty in purchasing groceries and clothing items.	SA	A	N	D	SD
14	I have difficulty in using public transportation.	SA	A	N	D	SD
15	I feel discouraged when people are sarcastic toward my cultural values.	SA	A	N	D	SD
16	It hurts me when people do not respect my cultural values.	SA	A	N	D	SD
17	I fear for my personal safety because of my different	SA	A	N	D	SD

cultural background.

18	Others are biased towards me.	SA	A	N	D	SD
19	People show hatred towards me non-verbally by their actions.	SA	A	N	D	SD
20	I feel that I receive unequal treatment.	SA	A	N	D	SD
21	Many opportunities are denied to me.	SA	A	N	D	SD
22	I am treated differently because of my race.	SA	A	N	D	SD
23	I am treated differently because of my distinctive looks and complexion.	SA	A	N	D	SD
24	I feel that there are certain discriminations against people who share the same religion and ethnicity as me.	SA	A	N	D	SD
25	It bothers me when people use racial slurs and jokes about my culture and religion.	SA	A	N	D	SD
26	I feel insecure here.	SA	A	N	D	SD
27	I feel I do not belong here in Mizoram.	SA	A	N	D	SD
28	I do not know whom to turn to when I am unwell.	SA	A	N	D	SD
29	I do not know any trustworthy company to talk to about my problems.	SA	A	N	D	SD

Appendix C

CISS – Adult

by Norman S. Endler, Ph.D., F.R.S.C. & James D.A. Parker, Ph.D.

Name:_____ Age:_____ Sex: M F Date:____/____/____

Occupation:_____ Education:_____ Marital Status:_____

Instructions: The following are ways people react to various difficult, stressful, or upseting situations. Please circle a number from 1 to 5 for each item. Indicate how much you engage in these types of activities when you encounter a difficult, stressful, or upsetting situation.

Not at All				Very Much		
1	2	3	4	5	1.	Schedule my time better.
1	2	3	4	5	2.	Focus on the problem and see how I can solve it.
1	2	3	4	5	3.	Think about the good time I've had.
1	2	3	4	5	4.	Try to be with other people.
1	2	3	4	5	5.	Blame myself for procrastinating.
1	2	3	4	5	6.	Do what I think is best.
1	2	3	4	5	7.	Become preoccupied with aches and pain.
1	2	3	4	5	8.	Blame myself for having gotten into this situation.
1	2	3	4	5	9.	Window shop.
1	2	3	4	5	10.	Outline my priorities.
1	2	3	4	5	11.	Try to go to sleep.
1	2	3	4	5	12.	Treat myself to a favourite sweet or snack.
1	2	3	4	5	13.	Feel anxious about not being able to cope.
1	2	3	4	5	14.	Become very tense.
1	2	3	4	5	15.	Think about how I solved similar problems.
1	2	3	4	5	16.	Tell myself that it is not really happening to me.
1	2	3	4	5	17.	Blame myself for being too emotional about the situation.
1	2	3	4	5	18.	Go out for a snack or meal.
1	2	3	4	5	19.	Become very upset.
1	2	3	4	5	20.	Buy myself something.
1	2	3	4	5	21.	Determine a course of action and follow it.
1	2	3	4	5	22.	Blame myself for not knowing what to do.
1	2	3	4	5	23.	Go to a party.
1	2	3	4	5	24.	Work to understand the situation.
1	2	3	4	5	25.	"Freeze" and do not know what to do.
1	2	3	4	5	26.	Take corrective action immediately.
1	2	3	4	5	27.	Think about the event and learn from my mistakes.
1	2	3	4	5	28.	Wish that I could change what had happened or how I felt.
1	2	3	4	5	29.	Visit a friend.
1	2	3	4	5	30.	Worry about what I am going to do.
1	2	3	4	5	31.	Spend time with a special person.
1	2	3	4	5	32.	Go for a walk.
1	2	3	4	5	33.	Tell myself that it will never happen again.
1	2	3	4	5	34.	Focus on my general inadequacies.
1	2	3	4	5	35.	Talk to someone whose advice I value.
1	2	3	4	5	36.	Analyze the problem before reacting.
1	2	3	4	5	37.	Phone a friend.
1	2	3	4	5	38.	Get angry.
1	2	3	4	5	39.	Adjust my priorities.
1	2	3	4	5	40.	See a movie.
1	2	3	4	5	41.	Get control of the situation.
1	2	3	4	5	42.	Make an extra effort to get things done.
1	2	3	4	5	43.	Come up with several different solutions to the problem.
1	2	3	4	5	44.	Take some time off and get away from the situation.
1	2	3	4	5	45.	Take it out on other people.
1	2	3	4	5	46.	Use the situation to prove that I can do it.
1	2	3	4	5	47.	Try to be organized so I can be on top of the situation.
1	2	3	4	5	48.	Watch TV.
Not at All				Very Much		

Appendix D

FRIEDMAN WELL-BEING SCALE

Name_____ Date_____ Gender (*Circle*): M F Age_____

HOW ACCURATELY CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF?
(A Questionnaire for Honest Self Descriptions)

Directions

Please use this list of common human traits to describe yourself as accurately as possible. Describe yourself as you see yourself *at the present time*, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you are typically, as compared with other persons you know of the same gender and roughly the same age. Please circle *only* one number in each line.

	Very		**Moderately**		**Neither**		**Moderately**			**Very**		
angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	calm
tense	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	relaxed
nervous	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	at ease
discontented	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	contented
insecure	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	secure
shy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	self-confident
joyless	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	jovial
serious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	humorous
unenthusiastic	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	enthusiastic
unhappy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	happy

_____ _____ FWBS1

moody	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	steady
unstable	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	stable
emotional	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	unemotional
guilt-ridden	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	guilt-free
envious	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	not envious
timid	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	assertive
meek	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	self-assured
anti-social	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	social
unneighborly	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	neighborly
distant	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	outgoing

_____ _____FWBS2

Very	**Moderately**	**Neither**	**Moderately**	**Very**

_____FWBS1+FWBS2

FWBC = (FWBS1+FWBS2) _____ /2 =_____   FSOC = _____ /3 = _____ x 10 = _____

FSES = _____ /3 = _____ x 10 = _____   FJOV = _____ /3 = _____ x 10 = _____

FES = E.S. x 1 = _____   FHAPP = Happ. x 10 = _____

Appendix E

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD)

General discussion themes for all students

1. Can you tell me about your overall experiences staying here in Mizoram?
2. Probe- What has changed since you started staying here?
3. Do you find it difficult to adjust to staying here?
4. Can you share the difficulties or challenges that you have faced while trying to adjust here in Mizoram?

With locals or generally

5. Do you feel that different treatment has been given to you?
6. Probe- Why do you think you were treated differently?
7. Can you share any personal experiences where you believed you had been treated differently in Mizoram by local people?

Within institution

8. What has been your experience in the institution/campus?
9. Can you share any personal experiences where you believed you had been treated differently on the campus by the native teachers and students?
10. Do you have any problem with rent and hostel being a non-resident?

Coping

11. How have you coped with the different challenges of staying here in Mizoram?
12. Are there any specific ways you employ to cope with the problems?
13. Have you sought any help from others to cope with the stress and problems you have?
14. Have you sought any help from mental professionals?

Academic and well-being

15. Do you think the problems you face here as a non-resident affects your academic achievement?
16. How have your experiences here in general influenced your well-being?

For UG students

17. Discussion on food and isolation, task and emotion-oriented coping, well-being (lowest)

For PG students

18. Discussion on homesickness, cultural values, avoidance-distraction oriented coping, well-being (highest)

For Ph. D. students

19. Discussion on social behaviour and language, prejudice and racial discrimination, total ASS, avoidance-social diversion oriented coping, well-being (second highest)

Concluding discussion

20. Suggestions and recommendations from students for their welfare within and outside the institutions.

Appendix F

STUDENT'S CONSENT FORM FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD)

Research Title : "Acculturative Stress, Coping Strategies and Well-Being among Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in Mizoram"

Researcher : Malsawmkimi, Ph. D Scholar, Department of Education, Mizoram University

Supervisor : Dr. Abha Shree, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Mizoram University

I have been given information about the study and discussed the research project with the researcher who is conducting this research as part of a Ph. D degree supervised by Dr. Abha Shree, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Mizoram University.

I, ……………………………… agree to participate in this discussion. I understand that my participation in this Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is voluntary and there are no risks regarding the responses and the experiences I share. Further, my identity will not be used to identify my comments in the study.

If I have any concerns or any further questions I may have had, I can contact the researcher Malsawmkimi, Department of Education, Mizoram University or email meskay0825@gmail.com.

By signing below, I am indicating my consent to participate in the discussion. I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used primarily for a PhD thesis, and will also be used in summary form for journal publication, and I consent for it to be used in that manner.

Signature:

Date:

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Acculturative Stress and Well-Being: Need of Study among Students of Higher Education in India

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Abstract

The phenomenal increase in internationalization for pursuing higher education is seen globally and within the states of India in recent years. Many students face challenges due to the processes of acculturation, which adversely affect the well-being of students. Several studies have focused on migrants and international students studying abroad; however, previous studies have not yet amply focused on students of higher education. There is still a lack of research on acculturative stress and its effect on higher education students' well-being. The primary purpose of this article is to advocate the essentiality of studying acculturative stress and the adverse impact it has on the well-being of higher education students of India. Further, it tries to enlighten the administrators and educators' paramount importance in taking effective measures for identifying and improving the status of well-being influenced by acculturative stress among higher education students moving from state to state within the country.

Keywords: Acculturation, acculturative stress, well-being, students of higher education

Introduction

In order to pursue higher education, many students from all over the world travel from their home countries to other countries. It is widely known that internationalization has increasingly been growing in the last few decades to get the best higher education available. India has also become one of the most important centres in providing education, skills and professionalism for international students from different parts of the globe. The Ministry of External Affairs (2019) estimated to over 10.9 lakhs students pursuing higher education programs in abroad as of July, 2019. Likewise, the total number of international students enrolled in higher education in India is 47,427 (The Economic Times, 2019).

At the same time, students move from state to state within the country for higher education. According to the 2021 Indian University Ranking (uniRank), around 884 Indian higher-education institutions are across the country. Students from different corners of the country migrate from state to state for higher studies as well as for employment. A student's reasons to move from state to state for higher studies vary significantly from person to person. One may opt to pursue education in other states due to high and better quality of education at a particular institution or university, whereas one may choose due to limited seats in institutions and limited quality intake of students due to extreme competition across the country. Even though the standard of courses available across institutions in India is developing, there still seems to be a lack of opportunities for practical application of skills learned through conceptual understanding due to limited resources and facilities, especially in rural areas of the country. This leads to struggle in job placement, thereby driving students to pursue a better quality of education from rural areas to metropolitan cities. In addition, due to financial constraints, all students cannot opt to go abroad, leaving with the only option of finding admission within the country.

Another obvious and well-known reason could be that exposure to different environments, better equipment, facilities and technologies, diverse cultures, advanced and other teaching methods enhance students' knowledge and skills for their future career. India also has reputed and world ranking institutions and universities within reach for its students-citizens and foreigners from different parts of the world, including the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) at Bombay, Madras, Kanpur, Delhi and Kharagpur. Other higher education institutes like fundamental research, medical science, management, agriculture, design, planning, mental health and neurosciences and many more with specific specialization and those that offer varieties of courses are available. Further, the main reason students move to other states for higher studies may be considered due to the diverse

interest of specialization offered at a particular or specific institution, especially in different metropolitan cities of the country.

With the increase of international students studying here, it can be said that different problems and challenges are inevitable. For Indians studying abroad, as well as students moving from state to state within the country, a multitude of challenges tends to rise, including financial constraints, ineffective communication, change in environment, experiences of discrimination, cultural and religious differences, feeling of homesickness and isolation, change in food habits, finding suitable accommodation, and different learning methods. Likewise, the problems of international students are no other when coming to India for higher education.

All these challenges generate acculturative stress. Acculturative stress is often defined as a "culture shock". People who migrate to another country or move from state to state often find it difficult to adjust due to the differences mentioned in their practices with the new environment. According to Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994), the several general factors that additionally contribute to the international students' acculturative concern include lack of confidence to communicate in the local language, feeling of intimidation to take part in social activities, lack of sense of belongingness to the host community, worries about what to do after completing one's study whether to go back to their home country or stay abroad. Stressors may result due to this varying experience of acculturation. For some people, acculturative changes may be all in the form of stressors, while others may be of no problem. These varying levels of acculturative stress may manifest as a result of acculturation experiences and stressors.

When different stressors arise due to acculturation, it is evident that it may adversely affect students' well-being. Unfortunately, the level of well-being has been slowly declining at all ages globally in this present technological age. World Health Organization (2012) has defined well-being as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". It is the experience of health, happiness, and prosperity. It includes having good mental health, high life satisfaction, a sense of meaning or purpose, and the ability to manage stress. With a decrease in well-being, one's ability to manage stress also decreases. Therefore, it is crucial to look into the adverse impact of acculturative stress on the students' well-being to help overcome their issues.

This article aims at advocating the crucial importance of examining the sources of acculturative stress and well-being of students staying in a host state for higher education. The objective of the study is to provide awareness and understanding on:

- the importance of identifying the major factor leading to acculturative stress,
- the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of the students, and
- to identify the necessary measures and implications to be taken up to reach the desired physical and mental well-being of students pursuing higher education.

Acculturative Stress

The prevalence of acculturative stress is evident in different researches done on immigrants. Researches have also indicated that stress is increasing not only among immigrants but among students as well. Likewise, Indian students have also experienced acculturative stress in foreign countries in pursuing better and higher education—the majority of studies on acculturative stress focused primarily on international students studying abroad. Focus has also been given to migrants worldwide.

Certain variables concerning acculturative stress such as language barriers, academic achievement, social support, perceived discrimination, length of stay in the host state or country, anxiety, depression, socio-demographic factors, age, and gender have been carried out for students studying abroad. It is evident from various researches that the language barrier is a significant contributor to acculturative stress. Rajab et al. (2014) indicated in their study a high level of acculturative stress for non-English speaking international students. Likewise, Friday (2018), in a study among international graduate students in the U.S.A, has also revealed that the contributing factors to acculturation stress include the language barrier.

Individuals cope with stress, specifically acculturative stress, differently. Studies have found that the experience of acculturative stress is affected by socio-economic status. As mentioned earlier, many students are from low socio-economic status backgrounds moving in search of better studies in metropolitan cities without the scholarship. This makes it difficult for them to cope with the insecurity of good flow on finance for their accommodation and educational expenses. It has also been found that international students were challenged by social interactions and financial issues (Nasirudeen et al., 2014). This combination of financial constraints and acculturative stress has also been identified as a factor.

When a person migrates from rural to urban, state to state, or abroad, he has to adjust himself to different cultures, values, and attitudes. But individuals often find it difficult to adapt themselves to the other culture. Significant life changes such as moving into an unfamiliar location and new settings are likely to cause high spikes in stress. Students dealing with any stress are likely to be affected mentally, physically, and emotionally. Too much stress can result in physical and mental health problems, reduce self-esteem, and affect academic

achievement. A study has also proved that acculturative stress is significantly correlated with academic performance (Lee, 2016). Another study indicated that students with higher academic performance have lower acculturative stress (Benita & Supriya, 2016). For students who are distressed by different stressors as a result of acculturation often experiences a change in sleeping habits, change in eating habits, lack of motivation, lack of support system, new responsibilities, increased workload and may be unable or find it challenging to manage and balance their work with the stresses. Elevated stress levels among students can also result in reducing their ability to concentrate. This can limit the students' ability to be at their optimal levels and to think critically. This can lead to decreased academic accomplishments and can affect both the students' physical and mental health. Therefore, studies on coping with acculturative stress and its associated factors will significantly impact higher education to help improve academic performances.

From the findings of various studies, these variables are undoubtedly considered the direct or indirect factors that affect an individual's adaptation to a new cultural and environmental context. It is essential to understand that acculturative stress signifies unresolved problems resulting from new practices and experiences in a different and pristine environment, which cannot be overcome easily by simply adjusting. A study has revealed that participants reported they needed assistance adapting to the various types of experienced stress (Poulakis et al., 2017). It is equally essential to recognize that not all forms of stress can become good stress, but assisting one in changing the perception of stressors can help achieve a positive mindset. Perceiving stress as a challenge and as a motivator to survive helps one see the potential benefits of any situation and overcome them.

Just as important is finding out the major factors leading to acculturative stress: suggest or find measures to resolve the issues that students face due to acculturation. Social support from parents and peers are important agents in influencing a low level of acculturative stress. Studies have also indicated that social support activities reduced the level of acculturative stress, and social support from parents was the most important predictive factor in determining acculturative stress levels (Thomas & Choi, 2006). At this time, the need for indispensable positive orientation of administrators and faculty towards diverse students emerges.

The motive on why many studies have been conducted itself justifies the importance and the need for further research of acculturative stress on students and the stressors associated with it. This will significantly help in the knowledge and understanding of the sources of stress among students, which are crucial for implementing stress reduction strategies because stress may reduce motivation and decrease academic performance as well as the overall functioning of the students.

Well-Being

It is very important to realize that well-being is a much broader concept than moment-to-moment happiness. It includes happiness and includes how an individual is satisfied with his life and his sense of purpose in life. It also includes how people feel and how they function personally and at a societal level, maintaining positive relationships, having some control over one's life and having a sense of purpose, self-esteem and self-confidence.

The different aspects of well-being include physical, emotional, social, psychological, subjective and institutional well-being. Physical well-being includes practising good exercise habits and healthy eating habits to improve the functioning of the body. Managing one's emotional well-being includes the ability to practise stress-management techniques, be resilient, and generate the emotions that lead to a healthy mindset. Social well-being includes communicating, developing meaningful relationships with others, maintaining a support network, and having positive relations with others that help overcome loneliness. The ability to create a feeling of purpose and meaning in life, self-acceptance, personal growth, and development concerns psychological well-being. An equally important aspect is subjective well-being, defined as a person's cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life' (Diener et al., 2002). The definition of Institutional Well-being has been proposed by Dohms (2014) as "a result of the effectiveness of the institution as a result of a harmonious, effective and affective coexistence, coming from all its collaborators in action, and the promotion of a healthy environment in which teaching and learning processes (in the case of an educational institution) more significant, generating positive effects throughout the chain of relations that constitute the institution".

The association between acculturative stress and well-being is less frequently studied. Most studies have explored the adverse effects it has on mental health, such as anxiety and depression. Only a few studies are undertaken for positive effects such as life satisfaction and quality of life. Acculturative stress is typically considered and viewed as negative health as well as mental health influence. This makes researchers confer and review it as a potential reducer of well-being rather than as factors that increase the level of well-being. This leads to an assumption that an increased level of acculturative stress would relate to lower levels of well-being.

A number of studies on the negative effects of acculturative stress have been carried out, especially on Asian immigrants (Kim et al., 2012; Ma, 2017, Mui & Kang, 2006, Cho & Haslam, 2010; Xu & Chi, 2013), Pakistani immigrants (Jibeen, 2011), and Mexican Americans (Hovey, 2000; Crockett et al., 2007; Mejía & McCarthy, 2010). It has been found that the association of acculturative stress with depression has a negative impact on other mental health concerns such as suicide, anxiety, and diminished well-being. Other studies also

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explored how acculturative stressors indicated a high level of depression and were the most frequently reported variable followed by acculturation (Gebregergis, 2018; Li et al., 2014). It has also indicated that experiencing higher acculturative stress predicted more negative emotional reactions (Ladum, 2019). From these studies, it can be assumed that acculturative stress is a factor or related to factors that intensify psychological mechanisms related to suicidal ideation, anxiety and depression. Some students experiencing increased levels of difficulty with the acculturative stressors may be more likely to experience higher levels of stress, which may reduce the level of different aspects of well-being. A change in the various aspects of an individual's well-being may be reflected in an alteration of behavior or a task or activity's performance.

As mentioned, only a few studies related to positive outcomes have been undertaken. The influence of acculturative stress on meaning in life, life satisfaction, collectivistic coping, psychological adaptation and including well-being researches though few in number have indicated that relational coping and perceived social support moderated the direct effect of acculturative stress (Yi, 2017; O'Reilly, 2018). From this, it is evident that the primary importance for improving well-being and reducing the stressors of acculturation is to not only measure the status of students but to take measures in order for students to reach a desirable physical and mental state.

Improving one's well-being alone is not always easy. It requires the effort to figure out what aspects of well-being is most important for you. It also requires the ability to figure out how to improve the skills of well-being. Furthermore, while merely measuring the status of well-being can show improvements overtime at the individual level, it is also essential to look beyond and ask how students are feeling. Their self-perception and view of their well-being are balanced with indicators relating to the quality of life, such as health, physical activity and social interaction. Having this information enables professionals to get the best possible perspective on someone's overall well-being and how well they manage daily. This calls for the need of professionals and educators to help identify the needs and help build the status of well-being among the students. Improving one's well-being can be difficult without being aware of what to do and how to do it.

Conclusion

The vital importance of identifying students' status on acculturative stress and well-being is evident from the discussion above. However, there is poor and lack of previous research. Little research has been pointed towards the Indian higher education students, especially in the north-eastern states, in relation to their acculturative stress and well-being beliefs and practices that can be culturally bounded. A study of such would make it possible to find out what students' experiences are and how to manage stress while studying away from home. Findings will help illuminate the complex nature of well-being in the acculturation process and be more aware of the necessity of giving proper and appropriate counselling to students in order to help reduce the acculturative stress that they face when they are in a new and different geographical area.

The world has recognized the importance of well-being in society and educational institutions in recent years. Little is known about student perspectives on the stressors in university or institutional environments and the steps that universities could take to better support student well-being. Although any form of stress may be considered normal and may act as challenges to some in building their skills to manage them, it may not be for many. Students need to control and manage these stressful events not to let the stress impact their lives and academic achievements. The responsibility of imparting resilient skills to higher education students lies with every institution in order to help their students overcome their barriers in helping accomplish their goals.

Moreover, resilient skills are necessary to inculcate achievement aspirations, leadership aspirations, educational aspirations, and job search self-efficacy for their future careers. Certain measures can be taken to support students' well-being. Strengthening and adjusting course design, programme administration, establishing students' support services, assessing students' status, changing or modifying teaching practices by educators and administrators can play important roles in preventing high rates of students' distress.

The above mentioned can only be achieved with the awareness of the importance of exploring the different stress factors resulting from acculturation among institutions nationwide. Further, more studies on the association between acculturative stress and well-being can pave the way for making specific implications to support diverse sets of students and determine the most adaptive acculturation strategy for an individual account of well-being.

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Primary Sources of Acculturative Stress among Students Pursuing Higher Education

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out the primary sources and the level of acculturative stress among non-resident students enrolled in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Mizoram. It also aims to study if there is a significant difference between males and females on acculturative stress among non-resident students. The sample of the study consists of 51 non-resident students of Mizoram University. A self-developed Acculturative Stress Scale for non-resident students in HEIs in Mizoram was used as the research tool. The tool consists of 34 items with six dimensions: homesickness, food preferences, social behaviour and language, cultural values, prejudice and racial discrimination, and isolation. This study used statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviations, and t-test. Findings showed that most students (n=41) fall on the "mild" level of acculturative stress. The remaining students (n=10) fall on the "high" level of acculturative stress. The primary source of acculturative stress is found to be a language barrier. There is no significant difference found concerning gender on the level of acculturative stress.

Keywords: Acculturative stress, higher education institutions, HEIs, language barrier, non-resident students

Introduction

With the internalization of higher education across the globe, many students move across the world and from state to state within the country in search of quality higher education. Many students across the country are now enrolled in various educational, social and professional growth in specialized fields. Like other states of India, Mizoram has also witnessed a rapid expansion of HEIs in the past few decades. A number of HEIs are established in different districts and other localities of the capital city, Aizawl. Most students experience the transition from school to colleges and higher education as challenging. Among the many challenges includes making new friends, increasing workload, adapting to the new academic culture, and pressure and high family expectations. Transitioning to a higher institution alone can be stressful enough for many students whose future careers are at stake. In addition, the pressure of moving to a new

place can bring more stress to students for their daily functioning. With the increase in the number of international and non-resident students, so is the acculturative stress.

Acculturation is a social, psychological, and cultural change that arises from balancing two cultures when moving to a new culture and society. Acculturative stress arises from intercultural contact that is brought on by post-immigration factors such as difficulties assimilating to the beliefs, values, and norms of a dominant culture and the frustration of limitations imposed by language barriers (Berry, 1997). It involves changes in food, language, culture, religious practices in a unique geographical location.

Multitude challenges may tend to rise in the process of adapting and adjusting to the new geographical area. Although studying in a new place may be an exciting transition for students, cultural differences may elevate

psychological distress to a certain extent. Among such is the feeling of isolation and homesickness. Students may have problems about feeling alone and relationships by moving to a new place with no friends, families, and familiarity with the place. Because of personality and individual differences, while some can easily make friends, some may have problems creating new relationships, leading to discomfort and isolation in the fresh set-up. Homesickness is a familiar feeling for students studying away from home. Still, when it hinders the process of adjustment and adaptation for an extended period, it becomes a concern for the educational and personal growth of the student.

Another major issue that increases acculturative stress is the language barrier. It is evident from various researches that the language barrier is one of the significant stressors contributing to acculturative stress. Friday (2018), in a study among international graduate students, has also revealed that the contributing factors to acculturation stress include the language barrier. The primary importance of language proficiency is considered to be the communicative purpose. It is crucial in acculturation as communicating effectively is paramount for a person to perform socially and academically in a new environment adequately. Language difficulty can affect students in many ways. It may hinder the adaptation process due to the inability to truly express themselves due to the lack of knowledge of the local language. Students may find it difficult to interact with the locals and form social groups and friendships. The inability to develop friendships with fellow students and professors may create learning challenges inside the classroom. Many students may feel intimidated to participate in classroom discussions and may have difficulty understanding lectures. This may be positively related to low academic achievement. A study has also found that language proficiency is positively correlated with freshmen's academic performance (Stoynoff, 1997). Over time, these issues often lead to feelings of isolation and low self-esteem. It can be said that English proficiency affects international and non-resident students academically and contributes to their social, cultural, and personal adjustment.

Other sources of acculturative stress include food preference, cultural values and perceived discrimination. Adapting to new dietary behaviour can be challenging to students when they move to a new place. Of the many other stresses resulting from acculturation, making changes to eating patterns and food items is found to be one of the challenges to overcome. Many of our values are rooted in our families and the culture of where we are born and raised. Moving to a new place involves living in a new culture and adapting to a new culture that students are not used to. Students who wish to maintain their traditional cultural lifestyle may have adjustment issues. Students who have difficulty balancing different cultures are more likely to experience adjustment difficulties and a high level of acculturative stress. A study has also found that difficulty with the dominant language and limited affiliation with new culture and customs may lead to academic, psychological, and social challenges (Mori, 2000; Pedersen, 1991). On arrival to a new place, students have to face many challenges, including perceived discrimination. The most studied types of racial discrimination on immigrants and international students have been based on race and ethnicity. It has been found that experiences of daily racial discrimination and major racist events were significant predictors of acculturative stress (Dawson & Panchanandeswaran, 2010) and are associated with more significant psychological distress (Chung & Epstein, 2014). The perception of being a target of discrimination (isolation and unfair treatment) has been adversely related to physical and mental health, leading to a high level of acculturative stress (Cormack et al., 2018).

Despite all the adaptation issues and acculturative stress, it is essential to note that these stressful life situations can lead to positive changes and outcomes. With guidance on healthy coping skills from institutions and professionals, students can develop positive emotions cultural awareness, foster social relationships, and even thrive for stress-related growth. This study is necessary to identify the primary sources of acculturative stress and attempts to advocate providing assistance and guidance to non-resident students attending the university from across the country.

Objectives of the study

- To find out the primary sources of acculturative stress among non-

resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

- To determine the level of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.
- To find differences in acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education concerning gender.

Hypothesis of the study

There is no significant difference between males and females on acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education.

Methodology

A survey method was employed in this study. The non-resident students of different HEIs of Mizoram are the study population. This study is limited to Mizoram University only. The sample consisted of 51 non-resident students (31 male, 20 female) of Mizoram University. The respondents included non-resident students with six undergraduates, 27 postgraduates, five M. Phil, 12 Ph. D and one Post-Doctoral Fellow of Mizoram University. The age of participants ranged from 20 to 39 years, with a mean of 25.4 (SD=4.35). The participants are from 13 states across the country.

A self-developed "Acculturative Stress Scale for Non-Resident Students in Higher Education Institutions in Mizoram" was used as the research tool. The tool consists of 34 items measuring six dimensions viz. Homesickness, Food Preferences, Social Behavior and Language, Cultural Values, Prejudice and Racial Discrimination, and Isolation.

In order to measure the internal consistency of the scale, Cronbach coefficient alpha and Split-half Spearman-Brown Coefficient were employed. The reliability for Cronbach alpha was found to be 0.87. By splitting into odd-even items, Spearman-Brown Coefficient was also computed and is found to be 0.90, both indicating high reliability of the scale.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Study

Objective 1: Major source of Acculturative Stress among Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in Mizoram

Students may face a multitude of stressors in the process of trying to adapt to the changes in daily living, language, food, transportation, purchasing groceries and clothing items, inability to make new friends and may even lead to the feeling of isolation and homesickness. Further, the majority of students in this study indicated the issue of the 'language barrier' in the new set-up. The issue of language has always been a concern for international students globally and for non-resident students across the country as well. It can be said that a lack of language in a new place can impede the process of adjustment and adaptation in many areas of daily functioning. Recent studies have also found that language is undoubtedly a barrier in international students' acculturation process, either social or academic (Shan et al., 2020). A low English proficiency predicted homesickness and acculturative stress among international students (Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007). Lack of language proficiency can hinder interaction with the locals, purchasing items, and getting transportation which are the basic needs for the non-resident students. It can also have an impact on how students communicate with the other students as well as the professors during lectures. This issue can significantly correlate with acculturative stress and/or academic performance. As language barriers cause difficulty in relationships with peers and teachers, it is considered to be the critical factor deterring academic, psychological as well as socio-cultural adaptation and impeding the adjustment process of learning in the new educational setting. It is assumed that the language barrier has a considerable impact on students' communication with locals and peers. The intimidation to form friendship and participation in classroom discussion results in a lack of social interaction. Studies have also found that lack of language proficiency and social interactions are significant sources of acculturative stress (Lee, 2008; Nasirudeen et al., 2014). It has also been found that students' comfort level in using the English language significantly predicted acculturative stress (Zhang & Jung, 2017).

This study finding indicated that the language barrier has the most significant effect on acculturative stress. Other studies discussed above have also found that language

proficiency is the primary source of acculturative stress. In this study, it is essential to note that lack of English skills and lack of local language skills significantly increase the likelihood of high acculturative stress. This pointed out the need of the educational institutions and native peers in putting efforts to provide assistance and programs according to the needs of the non-resident students.

Objective 2: Level of Acculturative Stress among Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in Mizoram

One of the study's objectives is to determine the level of acculturative stress among non-resident students. The norms for interpretations and the level of non-resident students on the Acculturative Stress Scale are as follows.

Table1: Norms and Students' Level of Acculturative Stress *(N=51)*

Range	Guideline	No. of students	%
145 - 170	Very High	0	0
100 - 145	High	10	19.61%
50 - 100	Mild	41	80.39%
Less than 50	Low	0	0
	Total	**51**	

The above table categorized the level of acculturative stress scale into four groups, i.e., Very High, High, Mild and Low Acculturative Stress. The minimum possible score is 34, and the maximum possible score is 170.

After analyzing the total scores of the students, it has been found that there is no student in the "Very High" and "Low" categories. The majority of the students, i.e., 41 students, fall under the "Mild" category. Ten students are found to fall under the range of the "high" category of Acculturative Stress. The lowest score was found to be 54, and the highest score was found to be 130. Although there are no students under the "high" category, the finding revealed that significant acculturative stress does exist to a certain extent among the non-resident students when they move away from home to a new place. The finding has been supported by a previous study done on graduate students, which indicated that students showed acculturative stress in their graduate programs (Stewart et al., 2014). Several factors have been identified that causes stress due to cross-cultural experiences. The factors include homesickness, isolation, language competency, food habits, social and cultural beliefs and values, perceived prejudice and racial discrimination, geographic origin, and social connectedness.

Further, acculturation experiences can vary from person to person in terms of the factors that impact them due to individual differences. Age can play an essential role in the level of acculturative stress of the students. Prior study has found that younger students reported a higher level of stress and depression compared to older students. It has also been found that age, years of residence, and perceived discrimination predicted homesickness and acculturative stress among international students (Monica & Supriya, 2016; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007). The duration of stay in the host place can also affect the level of acculturative stress of the students. It is assumed that the longer the duration of stay, the more the experiences and aids in better adaptation and adjustment in the new place. A study has also indicated that students with a short length of stay reported higher acculturative stress and poor health (Ayoob & Singh, 2011). The prior finding has also demonstrated that female students were significantly more depressed and anxious than male students in the process of acculturation (Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Rosenthal et al., 2008).

Any stress may be considered necessary and inevitable to motivate and challenge one to perform better in life. But when the stress becomes excessive, it can disrupt the students' functioning, either or both physically and mentally. It can also harm the students' academic achievement, relationships with friends and teachers as well as personal development. Attending higher education alone can be demanding with a rigorous workload with the pressure and responsibilities to achieve

a desirable academic outcome. Further, the added pressure in trying to adjust to new cultural norms at a new place can be challenging. Identifying the different stressors resulting from acculturation is of paramount importance for students themselves, institutions and professionals to provide appropriate help and guidance to minimize and overcome the stress for students' optimal functioning.

Objective 3: Gender Differences on Acculturative Stress among Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education

Another objective of the study is to find if there is a difference in male and female non-resident students in the scores of Acculturative Stress. To compare the difference among male and female non-resident students, a t-test was employed.

Table: Descriptive statistics with t-test of Male and Female on the scores of Acculturative Stress

	N	Mean	SD	t-value	t-tabulated value	Interpretation
Male	31	87.03	2.91	**0.01**	2.01	*No significant difference*
Female	20	87.1	3.58			

The table above shows the mean, standard deviation, and t-value. The mean is found to be 87.03 for males and 87.1 for females. The standard deviation is found to be 2.91 and 3.58 for male and female students, respectively. The t-value is found to be 0.01 at 0.05 level with t-tabulated value of 2.01. This indicates that we can accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between males and females on their scores of Acculturative Stress. The finding is supported by several other pieces of research, which also found that there is no difference in the level of acculturative stress concerning gender among international undergraduate and graduate students (Desa et al., 2011; Azizah et al., 2014; Jean-Paul, 2015).

Meanwhile, although no significant differences are found, it is necessary to examine the differences in gender as prior studies have revealed that several acculturative stress variables affect females more than their male counterparts. It cannot be denied that gender stereotypes are strong as gender is much emphasized in some cultures. There are different expectations for males and females. Further, men and women tend to have different reactions to stress. They tend to perceive and try to manage stress in very different ways. Women are more likely to report a great deal of stress than males psychologically and biologically. This may be due to the differing hormones resulting in more emotions and more exposure to stress as they have to shoulder many roles in their day-to-day lives. And though women may cope better with stress in some ways, previous researches have determined that women may be affected by stress to a greater degree, and are therefore more likely to experience anxiety or depression as a result of stress than men. Women also report higher stress levels overall than their male counterparts (Verma et. al, 2011).

Therefore, it cannot be denied that there is no difference among gender in the process of adjustment and adaptation in a new cultural environment. A study has found that although previous researches revealed that quantitative data analysis showed no difference among gender, qualitative analysis using interviews revealed that females tend to be more stressed than males in encountering acculturation (Thaker, 2013). Prior studies have also found the contradictory outcome that there is a significant difference in the level of acculturative stress in relation to gender. It has also been revealed that females experience more acculturative stress than males (Mehta & Beri, 2017).

Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are:

1) The majority of non-resident students, i.e., 41 students, fall on the "Mild" category. Ten students fall on the "High" category of Acculturative Stress. The major issue faced by non-resident students is reported to be the language barrier.

2) With the t-value of 0.01 at .05 level, it is found that there is no significant difference between male and female non-resident students pursuing higher education on the scores of Acculturative Stress.

Educational Implications

With the growth of higher education institutions in Mizoram, non-resident students also increase. The findings of the study revealed that acculturative stress does exist among non-resident students. This pointed out that educational institutions need to assist students in need. With the language barrier considered to be one of the significant issues students face, basic local language classes could help students learn the host language and aid in better communication with the locals within and outside the campus. Institutions can also help students expand their social network by organizing programs and activities that involve diverse students. This can help adjust to the new environment and adapt to the hosts' culture, thereby reducing the adverse effects of acculturative stress. The high level of acculturative stress scores among students advocated the need for institutions to provide counsellors or professionals for students in need. Counsellors and faculties play an essential role in helping students identify their cross-cultural issues and challenges. This way, healthy and effective social and coping skills can be inculcated to students and learn how these skills can be adapted to minimize their stress. Faculty members can help students adjust to the new academic norms by making the classroom an open and accepting environment and fostering a conducive environment that emphasizes opportunities for students' cross-cultural interaction.

Conclusion

After careful analysis of the findings, it may be concluded that 80.39% of the non-resident students' experienced 'mild' acculturative stress, and 19.61% of the non-resident students indicated 'high' acculturative stress. The primary issue faced in the process of acculturation is reported to be a language barrier. It has also been found that there is no significant difference between males and females on their scores of acculturative stress. This study pointed out the need for higher

education institutions to provide a welcoming and inclusive campus and professionals to cater to the needs of the non-resident students for ensuring a smooth transition to new institutions and balancing differing cultures in a new place.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Ethical approval: This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.

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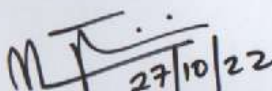
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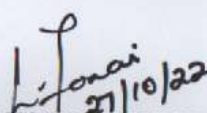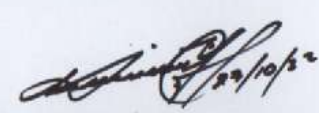
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ABSTRACT

ACCULTURATIVE STRESS, COPING STRATEGIES AND WELL-BEING AMONG NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION IN MIZORAM

AN ABSTRACT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ACCULTURATIVE STRESS, COPING STRATEGIES AND WELL-BEING AMONG NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION IN MIZORAM

BY

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Abstract

Introduction

In order to pursue higher education, many students from all over the world travel from their home countries to other countries. It is widely well known that internationalisation has increasingly been growing to get the best higher education available in the last few decades. India's higher education system is the world's third-largest in terms of students. Higher education plays a vital role in India's overall development. It creates skill development, generates employment and income, reduces poverty and rural development, and also empowers women. It also brings new technology development and industrial, social and economic development. It focuses on producing skilled human resources, training for a research career, job opportunities, and changing learning systems in the digital era. The main aim of Indian higher educational institutes is to deliver quality-based education systems in the field of education and research to empower youth for self-sustainability.

India has also become one of the most important centres in providing education, skills and professionalism for international students from different parts of the globe. It was recorded in 2018 that more than 750,000 Indian students are studying abroad (ICEF Monitor, 2019). Likewise, in India, an emerging destination for international students, the total number of international students enrolled in higher education in India is recorded to be 47,427 (The Economic Times, 2019). At the same time, students move from state to state within the country for higher education. According to the 2020 Indian University Ranking, there are around 877 Indian higher-education institutions nationwide. Students from different corners of the country migrate from state to state for higher studies and employment. Higher education is needed to meet the world's demands nowadays. With the pressure to excel, the competitiveness in schools and colleges intensifies as the years' progress. This migration may result in increased stress experienced by the students.

Acculturation is the alterations resulting from continuous and direct contact between two or more different cultural groups and/or individual members.

Acculturative stress is the stress due to the acculturation process between two cultures. It is the psychological impact of adaptation to a new culture due to cultural differences found between the host culture and an incoming culture marked by a reduction in the physical and mental health status of individuals or groups undergoing acculturation. Cross-cultural differences and transitions are challenging and often have unfavourable consequences for students' mental health and well-being. Once reaching college and higher studies, students in search of higher education institutions need to move from one place to another across the country. Adjusting and adapting to a new place and institutional setting can make the students highly vulnerable to the detrimental effects of acculturative stress.

Coping refers to "cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage (master, reduce, or tolerate) a troubled person-environment relationship" (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). It is an action, a series of actions or a thought process used to meet a stressful or unpleasant situation or modify one's reaction. Endler and Parker (1999) define coping styles as "cognitive/behavioural modes typically used by an individual in various stressful situations." In simpler words, it refers to an action, a series of actions, or a thought process used to meet a stressful or unpleasant situation or modify one's reaction to it. It typically involves a conscious and direct approach to problems. The main focus of coping strategies is to transform the stressor or to move attention away from the stressor. In this present study, the researcher tries to identify different coping mechanisms that are likely to be employed by the students to manage stress resulting from acculturation.

The World Health Organisation defines well-being as "a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and can make a contribution to his or her community." It includes the presence of positive emotions and moods, the absence of negative emotions, satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning. It may be defined as the state of being healthy and happy. Building well-being skills is perhaps most beneficial for students struggling with well-being, mainly if they have gone through stress due to acculturation. It may be harder to build well-being during this time for these students, but the impact may be more significant because there is

always more room for improvement. The entrance to higher education marks a period of transition for students. It carries many new responsibilities which are challenging and may pose to be a burden to some. It includes making independent decisions about their studies and lives, adjusting to the learning environment and fulfilling academic demands. It also often requires students to leave their homes for the first time, leaving their strong support network to interact with a diverse range of new people. This resulted in acculturative stress often tends to affect the well-being of higher education students. As 18-25 years of age is a transition period, a student may face different challenges and difficulties, leading to confusion and dilemmas. Institutions have the prime responsibility to promote and optimise the physical, social and also well-being of students. Creating a culture that enables the student to report safety concerns is essential. Counsellors or mental health professionals trained to handle behavioural, emotional, and lifestyle challenges are crucial to support the students' ongoing needs. Awareness of the importance of moral and academic support to the families for their child's well-being is still indispensable.

The growth of higher education institutions strives to attract, retain, and continue to grow non-resident students' presence. Over the past several years, the rising number of non-resident students in Mizoram has contributed to a desire to understand the factors that add to acculturative stress. Students need to be aware of what will enable them to reduce the detrimental impact of acculturative stress on their mental health and what steps they are taking to adapt better. Despite all the adaptation issues and acculturative stress, it is essential to note that these stressful situations can lead to positive changes and outcomes. With guidance on healthy coping skills from institutions and professionals, students can develop positive emotions and cultural awareness, foster social relationships, and even thrive in stress-related growth. This study is necessary to identify the primary sources of acculturative stress and attempts to advocate the need to provide assistance and guidance to non-resident students attending the university from across the country.

Rationale of the Study

Higher education internationalisation has increasingly been growing in the last few decades. Recently, India has also become one of the important education centres for international students. Many students from different parts of the world are now enrolled in Indian universities and colleges. The international students' presence in our institutions helps to promote culture and international understanding among these students. As the number of international students increases, so is the number of acculturative stress cases. International students not only face problems similar to all university students but also have the added pressures associated with life in a new environment and learning a new language and culture. The combination of these stresses reduces the student's ability to perform. The earlier research on acculturation suggested that an individual can regain his/her ability to function better by increasing their understanding of the new environment's language and culture. Additionally, the research indicated that if they receive information and support, international students may adjust more quickly and easily (Chae et al., 2014).

Most studies on acculturative stress and coping strategies focused primarily on international students studying abroad. Focus has also been given to migrants worldwide. Students also move from state to state within the country for better and higher education to build their future careers. Every state has unique cultures and traditions in a diverse country like India. This differing culture, tradition, religion, and lifestyle require one to adjust and adapt to any place. The inability or difficulty to adjust to a new location may impact students' functioning, resulting in low academic performance and decreasing overall well-being. Only a few studies have been taken up in the country for students, especially in the north-east states.

Further, no previous studies have explored the status of well-being associated with acculturative stress among students in the north-east. Mizoram is inhabited by the Mizos, who are a family of tribes, friendly, closely knitted together by different and shared traditions, customs, culture, and language with distinctive mongoloid features from the rest of the country. Slowly things changed in the north-east, and Mizoram has also been growing with the establishment of higher education

institutions with students from all over the country. The Mizos are known for their impregnable society with no class difference and no discrimination on the grounds of gender. Despite that, interest and curiosity arise if non-resident students encounter perceived discriminatory practices, how they deal with acculturative stress and the strategies they use to cope during their stay in Mizoram. The present study results in acculturative stress to help non-resident students function at their full potential and achieve desired academic success from society and parents.

This study can also help the professionals consider acculturation and related stressors when working with non-resident students in practice, education and policymakers and the non-resident students themselves on adjustment and learning enhancement. Hence, it is the need of the hour to conduct this study and is therefore taken up.

Research Questions

1. What are the major sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in relation to their gender, education level, and length of stay in Mizoram?

2. What are the strategies non-resident students use to cope with acculturative stress?

3. How do acculturative stresses affect the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram?

4. What measures will reduce the present acculturative stress level and improve the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram?

Statement of the Problem

In the context of the above-mentioned rationale and quest to find answers to the research questions, the statement of the problem is "Acculturative Stress, Coping Strategies and Well-being among Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in Mizoram."

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To study the significant sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in relation to their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses in Mizoram

2. To find out the coping strategies used by non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram

3. To study the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram

4. To suggest the measures for reducing the present acculturative stress level and improving well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the study are:

1. There is no significant difference of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram in relation to gender, length of stay, educational level, and type of courses.

2. There is no significant difference of coping strategies among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram in relation to gender, length of stay, educational level, and type of courses.

3. There is no relationship between acculturative stress and well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram in relation to gender, length of stay, educational level, and type of courses.

4. There is no significant relationship among total acculturative stress, coping strategies and well-being.

Review of Related Literature

The present study investigated acculturative stress, coping strategies and well-being among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. For this purpose, the researcher has reviewed 78 related studies of literature on acculturative stress, coping strategies and the well-being of immigrants and international students globally. Relevant studies examined here range from the year 1987 to 2021.

Out of the 78 studies reviewed, 63 of the studies reviewed were conducted using survey method, five (5) studies were qualitative method, four (4) studies were mixed (qualitative and quantitative) method, four (4) studies were peer-reviewed studies, and two (2) studies were conducted using quantitative method. The majority of the studies reviewed were conducted in the USA (46 studies). The other studies reviewed were conducted in India (9 studies), the UK (4 studies), Canada (3 studies), China (3 studies), Malaysia (3 studies), Turkey (3 studies), Ireland (2 studies), Germany (1 study), Saudi Arabia (1 study), Singapore (1 study), South Korea (1 study) and Thailand (1 study). The samples in the studies reviewed were studied on international students (48 studies), immigrants (15 studies), general population (5 studies), college students (4 studies), medical students (3 studies) and technical students (3 studies).

The reviews addressed the different types of stressors faced by international students and immigrants. The studies reviewed evidently indicated that acculturation is an issue for international students and immigrants. The related literature review on studies of acculturative stress, coping strategies, and well-being can be summed up as follows:

➢ Acculturative stress resulted in adaptation and adjustment problems.
➢ The primary sources of acculturative stress included the language barrier, higher levels of discrimination and homesickness, more negative career outlook, low achievement, leadership, educational aspirations, job search self-efficacy, and a stronger negative impact on social self-efficiency.

- ➤ Acculturative stress is found to be the major predictor of psychosocial functioning, influencing students' psychological well-being, depression, anxiety, trait anxiety, and more negative emotional reactions. Students are predisposed to adverse health outcomes resulting in poor mental health.

- ➤ The coping strategies employed by international students and immigrants to reduce acculturative stress included an individualistic approach to coping, social support, learning a language, self-reflection, and normalising results in adaptation, engagement in meaningful activities, and positive emotion, suppressive coping and reactive coping, among students with a high level of acculturative stress, emotion-focused coping, both adaptive and maladaptive strategies, and problem-focused coping strategy.

- ➤ A study found that more than 45 per cent of students with high acculturative stress may need counselling and psychological intervention to reduce and cope with acculturative stress. It has also indicated the necessity of proper counselling for students to minimise acculturative stress.

These studies proved that acculturative stress negatively impacts the process of adopting and adjusting to a new cultural environment. As can be seen, only a few studies have been carried out within India, one of the most diverse lands with 29 states, each with unique languages, cultures, traditions, clothes, food habits, and religions. Students move from one state to another across the country for better and higher education. As a result of this very uniqueness, one must be accustomed to becoming flexible and willing to adapt and adjust to regional differences. This dictates the need and importance to equip oneself for the culture shock they may or may not endure, specifically for students. The literature review revealed the limited research and lack of awareness of the issues faced by non-resident students in the process of acculturation within the north-east states. No study has been undertaken for the non-resident students in higher education institutes in Mizoram, where many non-resident students across the country have now enrolled. Moreover, these pieces of evidence prove the need for institutions to develop more culturally sensitive programs and adopt policies to sensitize the students, staff, faculties, and administrators towards the cultural needs of the students, to overcome acculturative

stress and help improve the general well-being to accomplish their goals successfully. Hence, the need for the present study is justified.

Method of Study

For the purpose of this research, a mixed-method approach is followed. Under this, an explanatory sequential design is considered to be the most appropriate choice for this study. It is a two-phase mixed-methods design wherein the qualitative data helps to understand and to support significant quantitative results.

QUAN→qual *The first step includes gathering and evaluation of quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by gathering and analysing qualitative data*

Population and Sample

The population in the study are non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. The researcher selected four higher education institutions in Mizoram, namely Mizoram University (MZU), National Institute of Technology-Mizoram (NIT-Mizoram), Zoram Medical College (ZMC) and Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences (RIPANS), for the study, using a stratified random sampling technique.

Table 1   **Total Population of Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in different Institutes of Aizawl, Mizoram**

Institutes	MZU	ZMC	NIT-Mizoram	RIPANS	Total
Total no. of non-resident Students	305	59	285	532	1181

Source: Statistical Cell, MZU; Academic Office, ZMC; Administrative Cell, NIT; Administrative Block, RIPANS. (MZU: 2018-19; ZMC: 2018-19; NIT: 2018-19; RIPANS: 2018-19 batches)

For phase one (Quantitative strand), the researcher selected non-resident undergraduates, postgraduates and research scholars from four higher education

institutions, with a total of 456 students (Male-265, Female- 191) using a purposive random sampling technique. The age ranges from 17 to 41 from 24 states across the country.

Table 2   **Sample for Quantitative Phase of Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in different Institutes of Aizawl, Mizoram**

S.N.	Higher Education Institutions	Under-Graduates		Post-Graduates		Research Scholars		Total
	Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	MZU	54	23	50	43	19	12	**201**
2	ZMC	12	14	-	-	-	-	**26**
3	NIT-Mizoram	66	19	1	-	19	1	**106**
4	RIPANS	41	73	3	6	-	-	**123**
	TOTAL							**456**

The stratified random sampling technique is used for phase two (Qualitative strand-Focus Group Discussion) with a total of 46 non-resident students from the four higher educational institutions.

Table 3 **Sample for Qualitative Phase (Focus Group Discussion) of Non-Resident Students Pursuing Higher Education in different Institutes of Aizawl, Mizoram**

S.N.	Higher Education Institutions	Under-Graduates		Post-Graduates		Research Scholars		Total
	Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	MZU	-	-	5	2	6	-	13
2	ZMC	6	7	-	-	-	-	13
3	NIT-Mizoram	8	1	-	-	5	2	16
4	RIPANS	3	-	1	-	-	-	4
	TOTAL							46

Tools of the Study

To measure the acculturative stress, coping strategies and well-being of the non-resident students, the following tools used were:

1. Acculturative Stress Scale for non-resident students developed and standardized by the investigator,
2. Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS-Adult) developed and standardized by Endler and Parker (1999) and
3. Friedman's Well-being Scale (FWBS) developed by Friedman (1992).
4. The researcher also prepared pre-coded themes for focus group discussion (self-constructed interview schedule).

Procedure of Data Collection

For the quantitative data collection, a self-developed and standardised acculturative stress scale for non-resident students, CISS-Adult developed and standardised by Endler and Parker (1999), and FWBS developed and standardised by Friedman (1992) were used for this study. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation, institutions were closed for two years where classes were conducted using online mode; therefore, data were collected using online questionnaire via Google form. Consent was first taken from the participants using phone calls. Students who agreed to participate were then sent the Google Form questionnaire via WhatsApp. Proper instructions on how to fill out the online questionnaire were given to each of the participant. Participants took approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaires. Students were thanked for their input and co-operation.

For the second phase of data collection, i.e., the qualitative phase, six FGD sessions were conducted using the Zoom Meetings Teleconferencing application. Six sessions were conducted for homogeneous groups; undergraduate, postgraduate and research scholars for each of the four institutions. A total of 46 students participated in the six sessions of FGD. Discussions on experiences in Mizoram as non-resident students were carried out, and suggestions were taken from the students. The duration of each session lasted for around one and a half hours.

Statistical Techniques for Analyses

For determining the effect of acculturative stress on gender and type of courses, the coping strategies on gender and type of courses, and the well-being on gender and type of courses Z-test was used. Furthermore, to study the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of non-resident students, a correlation test was also employed. To determine the level of acculturative stress, coping strategies, and well-being across the different educational levels and length of stay, one-way ANOVA with post hoc test (Hochberg GT2) for unequal sample sizes using SPSS was computed. To find the correlation between the scores of acculturative stress and well-being, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used. Pearson's correlation coefficient matrixes were computed to find the relationship between the dimensions

of acculturative stress and the dimensions of coping with the stressful situation. To determine the relationship between the scores of acculturative stress and coping; acculturative stress and well-being; and between the scores of coping and well-being, Pearson correlation coefficient matrixes were also computed.

The thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) is used to analyze the qualitative data collected using focus group discussion. The steps followed for analysis are familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and writing up. After these steps are followed, the appropriate data are included in the quantitative results to support the findings.

Major Findings

The major findings are presented in accordance with the objective of the study.

Objective 1   To study the significant sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education concerning their gender, education level, length of stay, and types of courses in Mizoram

To find out the possible sources of acculturative stress of the non-resident students, the researcher requested four hundred fifty-six (456) students pursuing their higher education in Mizoram. According to the multiple responses, the significant sources reported by the students included language, food issues, making purchases, transportation, biases and racial discrimination, lack of proper management of basic hostel facilities, lack of interest and motivation in academics, accommodation, NIT temporary location including hostel, homesickness, inability to make new friends, COVID-19 pandemic, future career and work, and students also reported that they do not have an issue in adjusting to the new place.

To study the major sources of acculturative stress among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram, a self-developed standardized scale, "Acculturative Stress Scale", for non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram was employed. The scale consists of six (6) dimensions: Homesickness,

food preferences, social behaviour and language, cultural values, perception of prejudice and racial discrimination and isolation. After analyzing the students' total scores, it has been found that 36 students fall under the "low" category. On the "mild" category of acculturative stress, the majority of the students, i.e., 390 students, fall under the category. As many as 30 students fall under the range of "high" category of acculturative stress. Correlation among the different dimensions of acculturative stress was computed using Pearson's correlation matrix. It revealed that all the dimensions are significant at the 0.05 level, signifying that all the dimensions correlate to one another to certain degrees, ranging from average positive to negligible positive correlation. To find out significant gender difference on the level of acculturative stress, a Z-test was computed. Significant differences are found where females experience higher stress on homesickness, social behaviour and language, cultural values and total acculturative stress. This finding could be attributed to the wide individual differences in both cognitive and physiological responses to stress, including personality (Steptoe, 1983). So due to the gender differences in emotions, attitudes, beliefs, values, and personality, the reactions and responses to stress, specifically acculturative stress in this study, could vary.

Analysis of the level of acculturative stress across the different educational levels indicated that significant differences are found in food preferences, prejudice and social discrimination. UG students find it difficult to adjust to the new dietary behaviour, while Ph. D students experience more bias and unequal treatment. A finding on acculturative stress and length of stay of the students found that there exist significant differences on food preferences and isolation. Students who have stayed for 3-5 years have the most difficulty in adjusting to new eating patterns and difficulty making new friends. Comparison of the acculturative level on the type of courses, the present study reveals that students pursuing professional courses experience more prejudice and racial discrimination, isolation, and total acculturative stress.

Objective 2   ***To find out the coping strategies used by non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram***

The present finding revealed that non-resident students used avoidance-oriented coping the most compared to emotion-oriented and task-oriented coping strategies. This is followed by emotion-oriented and task-oriented coping strategies, respectively. It was revealed that females (27.74%) use more task-oriented coping strategies than males (25.67%) to overcome acculturation-related stressors. It was found that males (58.50%), with a slight difference, tend to employ more emotion-oriented coping strategies compared to females (56.54%) to overcome their acculturation-related stressors. It was found that males (84.15%) employ more avoidance-oriented coping strategies than females (64.9%) to overcome their acculturation-related stressors. Correlation among the different dimensions of coping strategies was computed using Pearson's correlation matrix. It revealed that all the dimensions are significant at the 0.05 level, signifying that all the dimensions correlate to one another to certain degrees, ranging from low positive to a mild positive correlation.

Concerning significant gender differences, the findings reveal that males adopted more avoidance-oriented coping strategies than females. Analysis of the use of coping strategies indicated no significant difference across the different educational levels and the length of stay among the non-resident students. In comparing the type of courses, it was found that students pursuing professional courses engage more in emotion-oriented coping strategies than students in general courses.

Objective 3   ***To study the effect of acculturative stress on the well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram***

The major findings of well-being using FWBC reveal that 28 students fall on a "very low" level, the majority of students, i.e., 271 students, fall on the "low" level, and 157 students fall on the "average" level. It has been found that there are no students on the "high" and "very high" levels. It can be interpreted that the majority

of the students have a low level of well-being while pursuing their studies in a host state. Pearson's Correlation matrix between Acculturative Stress and Well-Being indicated an average positive correlation. The result signified that the students' high or low acculturative stress scores might imply low or high well-being, respectively. The correlation between coping strategy and well-being is found to be significant, with a high positive correlation. It indicated that the students' high or low well-being scores imply the use of various coping strategies. The correlation between acculturative stress and well-being stated that there is a significant negative difference between all the dimensions of acculturative stress and well-being. It indicated that the students' high or low levels of acculturative stress predicted low or high levels of well-being in the students, respectively. The computed z-values also showed significant differences in the means between all the dimensions of acculturative stress and well-being.

With significant gender difference, the study found that male has a significantly higher level of well-being compared to female non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. The study indicated that there is no significant difference in the level of well-being across the different educational levels, duration of stay, and the types of courses among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram.

Acculturative stress and Coping strategies

The computed Pearson's correlation matrix between the total score of acculturative stress and CISS-Adult is found to be 0.34, indicating a mild positive correlation. The result may imply that when acculturative stress increases, students also employ various coping strategies to alleviate the stress. The finding that most of the students have mild acculturative stress could also be attributed to the coping strategies used by students. The strategies used may be effective to a certain extent to alleviate the issues encountered in the acculturation process, depending on the individual differences and the varying situation. As found in this study, the avoidance-oriented coping strategy is the most preferred by students. As mentioned, this strategy may effectively deal with unavoidable and uncontrollable

circumstances. However, being considered an unhealthy and maladaptive coping strategy, consistent use of this strategy may deter students from focusing on the real problem. It can hinder students from focusing on the major problem.

Acculturative stress and well-being

The student's score on the different dimensions of acculturative stress was found to have a significant negative correlation with the scores of FWBC. It indicated that the more students have issues adapting to the new society, their level of well-being decreases. The present finding has also found that the majority of the students have mild acculturative stress. Although students may not have an alarming high acculturative stress on the quantitative study, it still causes concern as most students have low general well-being. As mentioned, students' level of acculturative stress can range from mild but may progress to worse if not provided with the appropriate resources necessary for their improvement. Moreover, the qualitative study has proved that many students struggling with issues in the acculturation process reported reduced productivity and motivation to achieve their desired goals.

Coping strategies and well-being

The study found that students' well-being and coping strategies have a high positive correlation. It indicated a high relationship exists between the scores of coping strategies and well-being. The result signifies that the student's high or low well-being scores imply using various coping strategies. Further, it has been found that avoidance-oriented coping is the most preferred strategy employed by students. This finding may prove that avoiding the issue and not focusing on the central problem may not be a healthy way of dealing with the stresses and does have an impact on the state of well-being of the students.

Objective 4   *To suggest the measures for reducing the present acculturative stress level and improving well-being of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram*

Suggestions on measures for improving well-being and present acculturative stress level of non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram:

Suggestions for Administrators and Faculties

1. First, an institution-based intervention program will benefit teachers, institute advisors, and other officials concerned with educational planning and implementation for non-resident students. As little is still known about the issues students face as a result of acculturation, this may help institutes take preventive measures to hinder adjustment. It may help administrators and faculties be aware of the importance of identifying acculturation issues their students face. This will enable administrators to be open to help, guide and direct the students to help solve their adaptation issues. The intervention programs can help pave the way for making specific implications to support diverse sets of students and determine the most adaptive acculturation strategy for an individual account of well-being.

2. Assigning trained and professional counsellors in every higher education institute is strongly recommended. Active and operative counsellor is crucial to help encourage non-resident students to seek their help in times of need. Directing students towards efficient and adaptive coping strategies according to their issues will prove to be beneficial for students struggling to cope with different stressors. Moreover, with the world recognizing the importance of students' well-being, counsellors may perform periodic evaluations and assessments of the students to identify the status of their well-being, thereby determining where students need support. This will help recognize how institutes can take measures and steps to support students. Understanding the challenges and obstacles faced by non-resident students can contribute to planning for supporting acculturative stress and academic help. Such support could be in the areas of academic advising, services in terms of coping with a new environment, and psychological services for hardships and financial matters.

3. Educational intervention for students to reduce acculturative stress can significantly benefit non-resident students. Each higher education institute can conduct this annually or at the start of the new academic year for newcomers from outside the state. An extended orientation program during the first few months of the student's academic life might also help them to find successful ways of dealing with these concerns. This will also help students comprehend what to expect from the new place, and they will have the opportunity to get insights into how to deal with their issues.

Suggestions for Institutions/Campuses

4. Basic local language class: To lessen the communication gap due to language, a short course on basic local language for interested non-resident students is strongly recommended. This will aid non-resident students in better transition in terms of interacting with locals within and outside the institutes to a great extent.

5. Organizing cultural festivals annually: This will help students be cognizant, appreciate, and respect the richly diverse cultures in the institutes; and help institutions in providing a welcoming and inclusive campus, ensuring a smooth transition to new institutions and balancing differing cultures in a new place.

6. An appropriate representation of non-resident students in the students' union: As discussed, students feel the need for representatives when their voices are not heard at times. A robust support system where significant issues and problems can be addressed is necessary for non-resident students. Moreover, there are several procedures required to join a new institute. This includes the process of applying, steps for securing admission, campus hostel and other accommodations. There are instances where non-resident students require assistance and support during their studies, which requires action from higher authorities. For such, a representative of non-resident students and/or establishing student support services where students can acquire help, directions and guidance, to address their needs and problems in each higher education institute is suggested.

7. Build effective and efficient Human Resource Management: Proper maintenance of the facilities equipped in the institutes is crucial for a successful teaching-learning process. This also includes the need for an efficient and prompt response for repairs and replacements of hostel amenities. For such, it is of vital importance to take action in strengthening and periodic monitoring of the concerned authorities on their accountability and responsibility for different areas of work within the institute's campuses and hostels

Suggestions for Improvement of Hostel Facilities and Accommodation

After analyzing the students' issues, the different recommendations for improving hostel facilities and accommodation are given below.

8. To provide more hostel seats for non-resident students: If not on campus, arranging or renting more hostel buildings nearby the institutes is suggested to accommodate more non-resident students in the future.

9. Allotting a single hostel room for Ph. D scholars: The work culture of scholars requires a deep commitment to their project, a far more rigorous workload, managing time effectively, and may not have much time to socialize. All these and the need to work efficiently on their own time with minimal disturbances addressed the critical need for institutes to provide single hostel rooms for all Ph. D scholars.

10. Improvement in food quality and varieties: The lack of green vegetables and varieties for a healthy balanced diet was reported by the students. To improve the issue, strengthening the functions of the monitoring cell or the mess managers, improvising with more varieties, and a balanced healthy diet within the budget for the students are indispensable. Periodical monitoring by the higher authorities responsible for the concerned area is also suggested.

The above-mentioned can only be achieved with the awareness of the importance of exploring the different stress factors resulting from acculturation among institutions nationwide. This study is in itself the first to investigate acculturative stress, coping strategies, and the well-being of non-resident students

pursuing higher education in Mizoram. Suppose due measures and actions are taken on the suggestions and recommendations given above by higher education institutes. In that case, it may contribute to the progressive growth and development of making the state an educational hub, at present and for the future.

Recommendations for Further Research

The present study has led to several recommendations for future research in Mizoram and different parts across the county on non-resident students. The recommendations for further research are stated as follows:

1. It is recommended that longitudinal and in-depth studies are fundamental for future research. As students' acculturative experiences are subject to change over time, studying and observing the same students for a more extended period of time would contribute significantly to understanding the development and changes in the acculturation process. This will enable professionals or institutes to identify the impact acculturative stress has on students and detect any changes that might occur over time. It may enhance the present findings and give a precise and comprehensive map of the issues faced by non-resident students.

2. In addition to investigating the acculturative stress of non-resident students, studies on developing and evaluating an intervention program for acculturative stress are also recommended. This will aid in enhancing and fostering the adjustment of non-resident students to the new educational environment.

3. Research is recommended to pay more attention to the assessment of language incompetency. Researchers need to explore the role of language confidence in the adjustment and transition of non-resident students. In-depth study and implementation of more effective and efficient measures towards successful language proficiency for students are essential.

4. A study on the impact of acculturative stress on academic achievement is also strongly recommended. This will further help students identify the issues and take specific measures to improve and achieve more academic success.

5. An in-depth and periodic assessment of non-resident students' well-being status is strongly recommended. This will help identify the areas of weaknesses, thereby

providing the development of means to help students adopt healthy coping strategies and achieve optimal functioning to achieve their desired goals.

6. A comparative study is imperative between non-resident students and local/domestic students. This would provide greater insight into how the level of stress and well-being differ between the groups. Moreover, it could lead to the development of novel and creative solutions for the issues faced by either or both groups.

7. Finally, more studies on the effects and influences of acculturative stress and well-being on non-resident students in different parts of the county are strongly recommended. While the majority of studies on acculturative stress and its impacts have been focused mainly on immigrants and international students, issues and challenges faced by non-resident students moving across the country for higher studies are still overlooked. More studies across the country would help provide awareness and address the problems to educational administrators and institutes. This could be useful in implementing measures and actions to help students adjust to the differing and diverse cultures prevailing across the country.

A need for further studies, including longitudinal and comparative studies, is identified and stated above. It also identified the need for further in-depth studies on the primary sources and acculturation-related stress. These are given with the vision that acculturation-related phenomena may be understood in terms of their origins in variations across the host societies, across acculturating groups and their interactions in Mizoram and different parts across the country or differing cultures on non-resident students. Suppose these recommendations and suggestions are considered and taken up. In that case, it could further enhance the present findings. It will tremendously impact the implementation of more effective and efficient measures towards a successful transition to a new geographical and institutional setup for non-resident students.

Lastly, the results of this study indicated that many non-resident students struggle with different stressors related to acculturation. Many essential yet simple and undemanding roles can be easily achieved by educational administrators and higher education institutes with the slightest effort to reduce these issues. Among the many vital aspects, developing programs and activities and building different clubs

considering the diversity of cultures that emphasizes opportunities for cross-cultural contact can be one of the first effective steps. This may help in providing a conducive environment for newcomers in the institutes. With a multitude of challenges and difficulties, forming a non-resident students association and assigning operative counsellors for support and assistance in the institute campuses can significantly benefit the non-resident students. This will play a valuable role in assisting students in identifying their areas of difficulty as well as helping to develop effective strategies for adapting to new academic and cultural environments.

This is deliberated to be the considerably needed first study to examine the acculturation-related stress, coping strategies and well-being among non-resident students pursuing higher education in Mizoram. This research may illuminate factors related to acculturative stress and factors that result in more positive intercultural experiences for students. Suppose efforts and actions are taken to all the suggestions and recommendations mentioned in this study to improve the welfare of non-resident students. In that case, institutes will be able to facilitate a more welcoming, inclusive campus and community environment where the entire community can work together. This will further help non-resident students optimise their full potential, help in achieving their desired goals, and have a fruitful and productive stay in Mizoram.

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