Relation between Self-Efficacy, Mental Health Status, Perceived Stress and Acculturative Stress level among International Students

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the relation between self-efficacy, mental health status, perceived stress and acculturative stress level among international students who are currently studying in colleges and universities in Ireland. This research was based on a quantitative cross sectional and correlational study. Participants consisted of 75 (Female N=56, Male N=19) international students studying 8 different colleges and university in Ireland. Participants completed self-report questionnaire of Self efficacy, General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12), Perceived Stress Scale, and Acculturative Stress Scale for International Student (ASSIS). Collected data was analysed using Independent t-tests and Pearson’s correlation, and one-way ANOVA. Overall, the result indicated that higher perceived stress, higher acculturative stress level. Finding of the current study revealed that there was significant difference on the level of acculturative stress between female and male. Also, the level of acculturative stress on non-EU students slightly higher than those EU students.
1. Introduction

As the society grows the need for higher learning cannot be ignored hence the high mobility of international students across the borders. If many international students enter a country, it will not only have positive effects on the country’s economy, but will make the students of the host country more interested in various aspects of foreign countries like language, history, culture, society and economy, and provide the students more chances to develop attitudes suitable as global citizens. International students over time will understand the Irish culture and society deeply, and they will become supporters of Ireland in the long point of view.

In general, individuals who must adjust themselves to a new culture go through lots of physical, mental stresses in the process (Berry et al., 1987). International students engage in a new environment with numerous changes thus they encounter several problems in the process of adjusting. Most of international students are exposed to various kinds of stresses in addition to stress from daily academic demands. For instance, homesickness, language barriers, lack of self-efficacy, inadequate social support, culture shock, and academic demands (Lin & Yi, 1997; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Mori, 2000; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994) as well as differences between the host country’s political, socio-cultural and economic issues and their home countries (Altbach, 1991) influence psychological wellbeing of international students. Since they should start again in a new country called Ireland, everything is the source of stress and they should adjust themselves to. The issue of adjusting to the culture of host country is one the greatest source of stressors for these students, while some adapt quite easily others are faced with enormous challenges which occasionally lead to acculturative stress. Research demonstrates that failure to adjust to the new environment may result into psychological and health problems for
instance stress, and in acute cases even depression which may affect the performance of the students (Gerry, Doreen, & Jean, 2006; Rosenthal et al., 2008; Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001), such a situation those international students are placed to make them be likely to become a high-risk group of those with psychological problems (Padilla, Alvarez, & Lindholm, 1986). It has been reported that international students can affected by depends on various factors such as gender, ethnicity, length of stay in the host country, personal ability, and mental health conditions of each individual (Kane & Blank, 2004; Misra & McKean, 2000; Mohammad, Tara, & Maryam, 2011; Prasad, Madhu & Bhaskara, 2000; Ying, 2005). Therefore, these concepts are correlated as demonstrated above thus they need to be addressed adequately by education policy makers and psychologists to ensure easy adaptability of international students to the new environment. In this study, by examining the levels of acculturation stress of international students, and analyzing the factors which are related to their cultural adjustment stress, intends to provide basic data in finding ways to help international students to adapt themselves better to their Irish college or new life.

1.1 International student in Ireland

Globally, many students are currently undertaking international education; there has been enormous mobility of students from one country to another adding to the diversity of students in learning institutions. An International student is thus defined as one who has left their country of origin and moves to another territory or country for the sole purpose of studying. Students are considered international in instances where they attain prior education qualifications from a different country the one they are pursuing their further studies. International students are not accorded permanent residence in the host country since their objective is to study, after which
they are deemed to return to their country of origin. The average length of stay for international
students is longer than that for the persons who visit Ireland for tourism or business purposes, but
shorter than the longer period of time for the persons who come here for working or marriage
immigration.

The number of international students is increasingly growing over the years as
globalization of tertiary systems of education fuels the effect (Arthur, 2004). According to 2011-
2012 Education in Ireland survey, the number of students registered in Irish higher education
institutions (above level 6 NFQ award) are about 32,000 and this is an increase of around 2%
over last year (Education in Ireland, 2012). According to this survey, during the years 2011-2012,
the numbers of international students in Ireland from different countries are as follows; those
from China (5,105), America (4,386), and France (2,447) in descending order. Compared with
the previous statistics, the number of students from the Middle East is increasing, and it is
expected that the number of student from Latin America will increase soon enough due to the
fact that Ireland has been signed the Science Without Borders Agreement with Barzil in 2013
(Education in Ireland, 2012). Therefore, the Irish society needs to pay more attention to
international students, and develop programs helping them.

1.2 Acculturation

Acculturation is the term suggested by the early anthropologists and sociologists to
explain the cultural changes in group levels which occur when two different cultures contact with
each other (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936). However, in recent years, it is commonly used
regardless of individual or group levels. Acculturation can be defined as the process of cultural
change and adjustment to a strange culture which happens to a specific individual when he or she
contacts the culture (Gibson, 2001), or to change of behavior and values of the members resulte
in their contact with a strange culture (Kagan & Cohen, 1990). When a series of processes where
an individual changes oneself to an environment are referred as adjustment, cultural adjustment
or acculturation can be seen as the process where an individual tries to adjust oneself to a cultural
environment the individual is placed. It means the change of behavior and attitudes of an
individual through his or her incessant and direct contact with two mutually different cultures as
well as the changes in physical, biological, cultural, psychological changes, and the results of
new social relationships (Berry et al., 1987). What it means is not only simple learning and
getting familiar with the new language, customs, and cultural values, but learning symbolic
meanings, and adjusting oneself to the new system of values, and giving up the past cultural
customs, belief systems, and behaviors, and beyond what are mentioned above.

As an explanation of acculturation, there is the culture shock theory by Oberg (1960).
Culture shock is the term used to describe emotional uncertainty one feels when he or she
confronts a cultural or social environment completely different from what he or she has been
accustomed with. Oberg classified culture shock into four stages of emotional response: The first
stage is the honeymoon period when one feels enchanted and admiring at a new culture. The
second stage is culture shock stage where one feels increasingly stressful at the difference
between one’s own culture and the new culture. At this stage, one searches for an escape or
persons with whom he or she shares the same culture. The third stage is that of recovery where
one tries to understand people in the new culture, accept them emotionally, and build sympathy
with them. The final stage is what one realizes assimilation, adjustment, and acceptance of the
new culture (Oberg, 1960). The international students are faced with a culture shock as they try
to maintain their native culture while the host group expects them to acquire and adapt to the
host culture (Berry et al., 1987). Phillips, Norsworth and Whalin (1997) have noted that international student studying in America reported that the most frequently difficult experience during the first six months is culture shock.

Berry et al., (1987) divides the process of acculturation into three periods: The first is the contact period where the two different cultures meet together. The second is the conflict period where the host society pressures the new migrant to observe the rules of the society, and the new migrant may feel chaotic in his or her identity. The third is the resolution period where conflict is solved into one of the following four stages of models: integration, assimilation, separation, or marginalization. While Integration is the type where one keeps his or her own culture and accepts the new culture at the same time, marginalization is the type where one can neither keep one’s own culture, nor accept the new culture. Assimilation is to accept the new culture, discarding one’s own culture, while separation is the type where one sticks to one’s own culture, while refusing to accept the new culture (Berry, 1997). Their ideas can be illustrated the below.

<Figure 1> *Four-fold Model of Acculturation Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Relinquish home culture</th>
<th>Maintain home culture</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept host culture</td>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject host culture</td>
<td>Marginalization</td>
<td>Separation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Berry (1994)

Zhang, Sang & Wang (2003), in their study on the relationships between acculturation and subjective happiness among Chinese students in Australia, found that keeping of one’s own
culture and accepting of the culture of the host country are highly related with subjective happiness among the students. Depending on what strategy each of them chooses in the acculturation period, he or she can have either positive or negative effect of it. While both keeping one’s own culture and accepting the host country’s culture can have positive relationship, those students who choose marginalization where they reject and are isolated from the two cultures are very likely to belong to the psychological high-risk group (Lee, 2003). In other words, it is desirable to see acculturation as not a single dimensional process where one is increasingly assimilated to the host country’s culture, or selects a certain point between the two cultures, but a two-dimensional process where, while contacting and accepting the host country’s culture, one keeps one’s identity related with one’s native country’s culture.

1.3 Acculturative Stress and Major Stressors

The stress caused by mental and physical tension and difficulty one experiences in the acculturation process is called acculturation stress (Hovey & Magana, 2000). Acculturation stress is tension or stress sources, or stressors which occur when one contacts mainstream values and standards of the host country, at the same time the stress caused by those stressors. In this context, international students frequently experience such acculturation stress derived from perceived discrimination by the people of the host country, identity chaos, and sense of loss caused by losing one’s support system (Ying, 2005). Acculturative stress levels are predetermined by the amount of stressors and acculturation experiences of an individual or group. A certain extent of stress is helpful in providing and promoting motivation in studying and acculturation process. On the other hand, most of stressors can be problematic in physical and mental health of international students (Bovier, Chamot, & Pernege, 2004; LePine, LePine, &
Jackson, 2004). There are various variables that can moderate the correlation between stress and acculturation. First is the nature of host society whether multicultural or a pluralist, the larger society where the international students are based can determine the magnitude of acculturative stress; a society that pressure international students to conform to its cultural setting pose more stressors for students as opposed to a society that allows them to conform to their native cultures. Another factor for international students is that they may lack social support thus more likely to experience high levels of stress (Webster, 2002). Based on the above descriptions and definition of stress, the acculturative stress of international students staying in Ireland is defined in this study as ‘the stress on international student to overcome difference with Irish culture’. And, this study will examine what elements the stress is related with.

International students face numerous stressors in the process of acculturation which affects their general wellbeing. In the previous researches, variables cited as elements affecting acculturation stress consist of two kinds: general characteristics like gender, ethnicity, length of stay, and linguistic capacity (Berry, 2005; Yeh & Inos, 2003), and psychological ones such as self efficacy, general mental status, and psychological wellbeing status (Chan, 2006; Lee, 2008).

**Gender**

Previous literatures have shown various findings on acculturation stress levels of international students for male and female students. Several researches have been reported that females are more likely to experience greater stress level than male students (Bang et al., 2008; Dahlin et al., 2005; Msengi, 2003; Virta et al., 2004). However, it has also been supported that male students face greater problems than females (Cheng, 1999; Yan & Berliner, 2009). Bang et al. (2008) insisted that gender is a key variable in successful adaptation of international students
and reported that females having more stress but also have more social provision. The researcher argued that the observed difference in gender might be a consequence of different cultural roles that were attributed to male and female and perceiving stress is different between male and female (Bang et al., 2008). Another studies claimed that it was revealed that there is no significant gender difference on the level of acculturative stress (Misra, Crist, & Burant, 2003; Summer, Poyrazli, & Grahame, 2008; Yeh & Inos, 2003). The international student acculturative stress literature remains inconsistent in regard to gender difference as it relates to general acculturation problems. Therefore, focused study is needed to understand the relationship between gender and acculturative stress level among international students.

**Length of Stay in Ireland**

International students’ the length of stay in a host country has been related to acculturation (Berry, 1989; Lysgaard, 1995; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). In the four periods of culture shock mentioned above, Oberg (1960) argued that the longer one stays in a foreign country, the better one can adjust oneself to the host country’s culture. Among the researches focusing on the relationship between acculturative stress and length of stay among international students, Lysgaard (1995) have found a U-curve between the two variables. In his research on psychological acculturation for Norwegian fulbright students, he found that international students adjust themselves well for 6 months, then, get worse, and again get better in 18 months. In other words, at the beginning stage, international students tend to accept everything in the host country with expectation and curiosity. However, after 6 months on average, they feel culture shock. Brown & Holloway (2008) examined adjustment situations among international post-graduate students in universities of the South of England, and reported that those international
students experience an excitement with distress symptoms or negative symptoms related with acculturation such as tension, depression, loneness, sense of being adrift, and dissatisfaction. Several studies have found that have shown length of stay to be significantly related to acculturative stress; the longer the student resides in the host country, lower the acculturation concerns (Wilton & Constantine, 2003; Amer, 2005) as well as the level of acculturative stress (Brown & Holloway, 2008; Msengi, 2003). A number of other studies have shown that with increasing duration of stay people experience less acculturative stress (Guan & Dodder, 2001; Zhang & Rentz, 1996).

*Figure 2* Lysgaard (1995) U-curve

As cited Liu and Lee (2008)

**Culture distance**

Culture distance defined by Babiker et al. (1980) that as the distance between culture of origin and the host culture. Many researchers have been examined relationship between culture
distance and acculturation and have been reported that higher the culture distance between the students original culture and the host country culture lower the acculturation to the new culture (Pan et al., 2007; Poyrazli et al., 2004; Yang et al., 2007; Yeh & Inose, 2003). For instance, according to a comparing study about Chinese students studying in Australia and Hong Kong, it was reported that higher acculturation stress and more negative affects for the students in Australia (Pan, Wong, Joubert, & Chan, 2007). Furukawa (1997) argued that the highly perceived culture distance increased, the emotional distress of the students affected. However, a few studies did not find any relationship between culture distance and adjustment to a new culture (Bektas, 2004; Ciftci, 2006).

Language is the one of element for representing own culture and learning a language of the host country is a significant element of acculturation stress (Constantine, Okazki, & Utsey, 2004). Language barrier is a major stressor that may lower the international student’s self efficacy and self-esteem. Many researchers have reported that the greater the differences between the host and country of origin cultures, the greater the stress (Berry et al., 1987; Leavell, 2001; Knowles, 2003; Poyrazli et al., 2004; Yeh & Inos, 2003).

Homesickness can become a problem as international students trying to remember and keep their own cultures while in the host country (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). Rajapask and Dundes (2002) reported that although students felt satisfied with their decision to study abroad, about 30 % attested to frequent homesickness and 46% of the students felt they had left a part of themselves at home. The negative effects of homesickness on excessive acculturative stress and psychological well-being, such as eating and sleeping problems, low energy, and headaches (Ye, 2005). Moreover, numerous researches have noted that a strong positive correlation between
homesickness or acculturative stress and depression among Asia, African, and Latin American international students in the United States (Constantine et al., 2004; Wei et al., 2007; Ying, 2005).

The majority of researches have utilized that the construct of ‘geographical region’ to determine the cultural distance between the host country and international students’ country of origin (Lin & Yi, 1997; Zhang & Rentz, 1996). There are a few studies which have found strong relationship between different racial group and the level of acculturative stress. According to comparative study between European students and other racial group students in the U.S, it is proposed that Asian, Latin American, and African students experienced more acculturative stress than European students (Poyrazli et al., 2004; Yeh & Inose, 2003) and that the culture differences, racial prejudice, lack of proficient in academic English are potential contributory causes of acculturation stress among non European students (Constantine et al., 2004; Sodowsky & Plake, 1992).

Prejudice and racial discrimination is a common challenge among international students which affects their acculturation adjustment as well as their psychological health. Researches in various countries, such as Canada, the United States, and New Zealand, have shown that international students are victims of both deliberate and unpremeditated racial discrimination especially for international students who were raised in a racially homogenous society (Constantine et al., 2005; Poyrazli et al., 2004). For instance, Poyrazli and Lopez (2007) found that being a European international student significantly predicts lower levels of perceived discrimination compared with Asian and African. According to Poyrazli, Kavanough, Baker & Al-Timimi (2004), international students reported unfair treatment as compared to host students who were favored by the members of staff, and faculty in campus.
Stress caused by discrimination for those students is different from stresses caused by other elements such as negative accidents or daily conflicts for the following reasons: First, perceived discrimination block those students from getting access to important sources needed to deal with other general elements of stress as well as opportunities needed for growth and sense of stability (Clark, Anderson, Clark & Williams, 1999). Second, perceived discrimination is not only felt by mutual relations among individuals and accidents, but by social process, institutions and structures. And, even if the sense of being discriminated is felt in the mutual relations among individuals, it can be understood and accepted as being derived from institutional or political dimension (Harrell, 2000). Third, Discrimination felt by an individual or a group can potentially affect learned lethargy, damage of pride, and the increase of depression (Lee, 2003; Alvarz et al., 2006; Alverez, Juang & Liang, 2007; Liang & Fassinger, 2008). Forth, another negative effect of perceived discrimination among international students is that fact that it can destroy the positive and ideal image of the host country, and generate hatred of the country among those students (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994).

A discriminatory and stereotypical comment to international students causes stress and mental instability which could result into loneliness. Isolation is another source of stressor that may result as a result of racial discrimination during acculturation (Constantine et al, 2005; Klomegah, 2006; Mori, 2000). Acculturative stress is prevalent among international students who face racial discrimination and remain isolated due to inability to adjust to the new environment.
The various sources of stressors contribute to the phenomenon of acculturation stress which directly affects the mental status, psychological well-being status as well as self-efficacy among international students (Wang, 2011).

**Self efficacy**

Self-efficacy, which can be defined as the capacity and belief, one develops for oneself in the process of preparing for a project, affects decision-making of the individual, and helps the individual to adjust himself or herself to the stressful situation. Bandura (1977) argued that self-efficacy affects not only an activity he or she is currently involved in, but also future activities, and that it strongly affects the degree to which an individual can endure when he or she has to decide or challenge something. It is believed that the higher the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the intensity of goals international students set, which consequently results in greater commitment to achievement of the goals. Self is basically the identity of an individual while efficacy is the power behind the effect, thus self-efficacy is a conscious awareness or recognition of one’s capability to control their actions as well as be effective. International students are faced with many issues majorly in trying to settle down hence they need self-efficacy to be able to make the right choices and also to achieve their goals (Matthew, Minji, Jerome & Li-Ling, 2011). These set of self-beliefs are fundamental in the process of acculturation as the international students are faced with enormous challenges, the belief in oneself is what motivates them to press on towards academic excellence.

Self-efficacy is usually determined by an individual’s experiences; such experiences may raise or lower the self-efficacy (Maddux, 1995). For example, repeated good academic performance among international students raises their self-efficacy (Chan, 2006; Misra &
Castillo, 2004; Zajacove, Lynch, & Espenshade, 2005) whereas prejudice and discrimination towards international students may lower their self-efficacy (Leong & Ward, 2000; Robinson Kurpius et al., 2008) thus resulting into acculturative stress. The relationship between self-efficacy and acculturation stress cannot be ignored. Moreover, Self-efficacy influences a student’s self-confidence as well as self-esteem which are fundamental in dealing with stressors (Snyder & Lopez, 2002). High self-efficacy promotes the psychological general well-being of international students as they are able to manage the stress levels thus maintaining mental stability also the students will succeed in a certain activity and performance (Barlow, Wright, & Cullen, 2002; Faure & Loxton, 2003). For instance, with high self-efficacy an international student is sufficiently able to deal with acculturation challenges therefore exhibit low levels of acculturative stress consequently, the student enjoys psychological well-being. On the contrary, those who are low in self-efficacy tend to avoid or give up problems one can overcome due to negative evaluation on oneself, and if such avoidance or giving up is repeated, the level of psychological welling falls down (Benight, Flores & Toshiro, 2001; Bisschop et al., 2004). The students who do not have self-confidence is faced with various academic challenges such as failure which is a source of acculturative stress; such stress may lead to mental instability and other health problems which lead to psychological as well as mental problems. According to Goldberg & Williams (1988), the psychological well-being is correlated with the level of acculturative stress among international students. Psychological well-being is determined by the ability of international students to deal with stressors that emanate from the challenges they face in the process of acculturation. Such challenges include cultural distance, gender discrimination among others mentioned above. These challenges disrupt their mind and causes mental instability (Zhai, 2004).
Mental Health Status

Acculturative stress has a great influence on the international student mental status. Mental health was the term originally used to describe a mental disease. But, nowadays, it has become a common and comprehensive term to express the mental well-being of an individual (Park, Jo, & Choi, 2004). A high level of acculturative stress increases the risk for developing mental health problems particularly in the initial stage of acculturation (Berry & Zheng, 1991). Previous literatures on the effect of acculturation stress on mental health have revealed that the higher the degree of discrimination is, the higher the degrees of depression and acculturation stress are (Alderete et al., 1999), that the more inefficient social support to them is, the higher the level of anxiety is (Hovey & Magana, 2002), and that the higher acculturation stress is, the higher the level of depression is and the higher those students are tempted to commit suicide (Lin & Yi, 1997; James, 1997; Suarez-Morales et al., 2007). Consequently, even if the criteria to evaluate mental health are various, many studies suggest depression, anxiety, and perceived stress, as the most useful indicators of them. Poor mental health is usually related to important life changes during acculturations, such as loss of one’s previous social role or avocation, the need to rebuild one’s social network, and separation form family supports (Organista, Organista, & Kurasaki, 2003). For instance, a student who experiences a depressed mood, anxiety, and lack of self-control is likely to have difficulties in dealing with the people in the host society and is likely to get acculturation stress. This demonstrated the correlation between acculturation stress and general mental health status. Such experiences may result into withdrawal, poor academic performance, perceived stress, low self-efficacy all of which lead to poor mental health and general well being (Prasad, Madhu & Bhaskara, 2007). To maintain psychological well-being,
international students ought to learn coping mechanisms particularly on strategies of adapting to the host culture and academic demands.

**Perceived Stress**

Acculturation process is a very involving process for international students as it involves various new events and adaptation to a new environment, these events can be very challenging for students thus could lead to perceived stress. Acculturative stress is directly related to perceived-stress as perceived stress may lead to high acculturative stress levels. Students thus need to learn how to cope with perceived stress before it impacts on their psychological well-being. In most cases, the common stressors are culture diversity issues, financial problems, gender/ethnic discrimination, academic demands among others earlier mentioned which leaves the students feeling isolated as the minority group. Especially, financial challenges are faced by majority of international students during whole period of study in aboard, particularly among students who personally finance their education and upkeep. The living expenses in the host countries are usually higher especially where students are restricted from working during the course of studies. Financial problem is a major stressor that can elevate the perceived stress level as well as the acculturative stress levels.

Stresses coming from the school environment like grades, class attendance, or future job give students mental burden, causing students to feel tense, anxious, depressed, and irritant. In the case of international students, the situation becomes more serious. Since they are required to command high proficiency English for doing assignments, dictation, composing essays, and giving presentation as well as for daily life (Koyaman, 2005), they face more problems in their studies than their counterparts of the host country (Lin & Yi, 1997). They experience learning
stresses derived from too burdensome work load, sense of isolation, lack of resources, failure to set successful goals, competition, learning deadline, and sense of responsibility (Koyama, 2005). Especially, perception of learning stress can vary depending on cultures. That is, Asian students look as if they have no problems in doing their study, but they are found to suffer from a considerable extent of stress. Asian students feel pressured to succeed scholastically to keep the names of their families, and stress becomes heavier because of his or her own family culture emphasizing collective values in the individual-oriented host country (Castillo & Phoummarath, 2007). Some researches done in America and Australia (Khawaja & Dempsey, 2008; Misra & Castillo, 2004) did not find any meaningful differences in the levels of anxiety and pressure from college between international students and those of host countries. However, the reanalysis of the same data dividing international students into regions of countries reported high anxiety among Asian student groups (Fritz et al., 2008).

Another challenge for international students is going back to the country of origin. This is a stressor as they try to fit into their former responsibilities in the family and future plan such as seek employment (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994).

However, perceived stress may depend on the individual attributes and the level of self-efficacy although the host environment also influences the attitude. Acculturative stress and perceived stress can hence be termed as correlated, high perceived stress levels leads to high acculturative stress levels while low perceived stress consequently leads to low acculturative stress levels (Kane, 2004). Core and Eckenrode (1994) have noted that stress is buffered by moderate variables like self-efficacy, rather than mediated directly to acculturation of the individual. That is, while all the people experience certain degrees of stress in their daily lives,
not all of them experience maladjustment. Depending on personal and environment factors, the
degrees of maladjustment vary (Core & Eckenrode, 1994). Thus, this current study, based on
previous researches, will examine the relationships among three variables - acculturation stress,
self-efficacy, and mental health – among international students, and what demographical factors
are related with levels of acculturation stress.

1.4 Purpose of Research

This study will be investigating how international students' potential abilities, mentally
stable related to adjustment of the new culture and social environment. The purpose of this
research is to investigate the relation between self-efficacy, mental health status, perceived stress
and acculturative stress level among international students who are currently studying in colleges
and universities in Ireland (Ireland’s Third-level institutions) to conclude if person’s ability and
mental state are associated with the acculturation. Additionally, this study will attempt to
examine the differences between gender, racial-ethnic group, length of stay in Ireland and the
acculturative stress level. Also, this study is intended to provide the basic data to support them
adapt to college or new life.

1.5 Main Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1. It is hypothesised that there will be a significant relationship between
International students’ self-efficacy and the level of acculturation stress.

Hypothesis 2. It is hypothesised that there will be a significant relationship between
mental health status and acculturative stress level.
Hypothesis 3. It is hypothesised that there will be a significant relationship between perceived stress level and the level of acculturative stress.

Hypothesis 4. It is hypothesised that there will demonstrate a significant difference on the level of acculturative between females and males.

Hypothesis 5. It is hypothesised that there will be a significant difference between and racial groups on level acculturative stress.

Hypothesis 6. It is hypothesised that there will be a significant difference on acculturative stress level between EU students and non-EU students.
2. Method

2.1 Participants

Responses of this research were 77 voluntary international students studying in different colleges and universities in Ireland. Two of them were excluded from the study owing to the fact that they had left unanswered more than half of the questionnaires resulted in the total participants in this study were 75. 59 (78.7%) of participants were female and 16 (21.3%) participants were male. The participants came from 6 different regions of the world; Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America, and South America. There are missing values on some items, therefore the response rate for some part of the questionnaire being less than 75.

2.2 Design

A correlational design study was used in this research to examine the relationship between self efficacy and mental status related level of acculturative stress of international students in Ireland. There were two types of variable: Predict Variables for self efficacy, mental health status, and perceived stress and Criterion Variable was level of acculturative stress. For demographic factors, gender, racial group, and length of stay in Ireland were the independent variables and acculturative stress level was the dependent variable.

2.3 Ethics

The study has received full ethical approval from Dublin Business School Ethics Committee. Only those over 18 years of age studying currently Irish the third education were invited to response the questionnaires. In the cover sheet, participants were informed that this
survey was voluntary, anonymous and confidential. It is also informed that they had the right to withdraw at anytime. Once responses were submitted then stored on a password protected computer.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data collected from the survey was analyzed using the SPSS version 21.0. To test reliability and validity of each measuring scales, Cronbach’s alpha was computed. Descriptive statistic was conducted based on demographic variables, self efficacy, mental health status, perceived stress, and acculturative stress. A Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used to find the relationship between self efficacy, mental health status, perceived stress and of acculturative stress level. An independent sample t-test was conducted to test the Hypothesis. 4 & 6 to find differences between gender, EU/non-EU students on the level of acculturative stress, A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to analyse the differences among the racial-ethnic group and acculturative stress level.

2.5 Materials

Demographics

The questionnaire included demographic information designed by the researcher to obtain information on gender, region of country, length of stay in Ireland, residential status, and employment status.
General Self Efficacy

To measure one’s capability and belief levels of international students, this study used the General Self Efficacy Scale developed by Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995). It was used to examine the participants' self-efficacy to predict coping with daily life hassles and with adaptation it can be used after experiencing various kinds of stressful events in life (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). Scale is a 10-items and each question marked on a 4-point Likert scale of the responses range from 1 to 4 (1 = not at all true to 4 = exactly true). A possible total score of 10 to 40 with higher scores indicating higher beliefs in self efficacy. Questions include “I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events” and “I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough”. The General Self Efficacy Scale is used in a sample from 25 nations, Cronbach’s alphas ranged from 0.75 to 0.91 (Scholz, Dona, Sud & Schwarzer, 2002). Cronbach’s alpha for this study was 0.78.

General Health Questionnaires-12 (GHQ-12)

General Health Questionnaire designed by Goldberg (1978), which is a self-administered measurement, is to assess the severity of psychological distress (Goldberg et al., 1997). GHQ-12 is applied to measure the prevailing mental health of individuals. GHQ was devised to measure two important problems: One is to find out whether a respondent has any problem performing normal and healthy functions, and the other is to check whether one has a new symptom caused by stress (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979). As GHQ-12 deals with elements which can explain stress like compulsion, anxiety, social damage, and depression, it is effectively used to measure psychological conditions of international students (Jibeen & Khalid, 2003; Duru & Poyrazli, 2007). For instance, the questionnaire seeks to assess whether or not an international student has
been able to face up their problems or whether they have lost confident in their capability. GHQ-12 is made with the 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = Better than usual to 3 = Much less than usual(0-1-2-3). For the questions asking respondents degrees of negative feeling (Q 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11), scores are calculated in the reverse order. Total scores range from 0-36 and a score of 0-10 indicates ‘low psychological distress’; 11-12 is ‘typical’; 13-15 is ‘more than typical’; 16-20 show ‘evidence of psychological distress’; scores over 20 indicate ‘severe distress’ (Goldberg et al., 1997). The internal consistency measured by Cronbach’s alpha, range between 0.82 to 0.90 (Goldberg, 1992). Cronbach’s alpha in this paper was 0.79.

**Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)**

Perceived stress, which was developed by Cohen et al. (1983), is the measure of the extent to which events in one’s life are assessed as stressful (Cohen, Kamarck & Mermelstein, 1983). PSS consists of sentences designed to measure the degrees to which respondents feel unpredictable, uncontrollable, or oppressed (Cohen, 1988; Jonathan et al., 2006), and its scales consist of two sub-factors: positive perception and negative perception. Since most of the questions are to ask subjectively perceived stress on ordinary situations, it is possible to measure ordinary stresses even if there is no big stressful accident. And, since they measure not only whether there is stressor or not, but also how much can an individual control a given situation and overcome it, the questionnaire has a merit that it is helpful to diagnose the current situation of an individual (Barbosa-Leiker et al., 2002). This is administered to international students to get responses on their state of perceived stress and it may employ questions intended to give insights on the common perceived stressors among international students.
PSS consist of 10 items marked on a 4-point Likert scale of 0 to 4 for each item. The scores are obtained by reversing the scores on positively stated items (Q. 4, 5, 7, & 8) and summing the scores across all 10 items with a possible total score of 0-40. The higher the total scores of PSS, the more one is vulnerable to fall into depression or self-perceived physical diseases (Cohen, 1988; Hewitt, Flett & Moscher, 1992). The Perceived Stress Scale has a good reliability with Cronbach’s alpha ranging from 0.84 to 0.86, and the test-retest correlation is 0.85 (Cohen et al., 1983). In this paper, Cronbach’s alpha was 0.85.

**Acculturative Stress Scale for International Student (ASSIS)**

In this study included Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (ASSIS) developed by Sandhu & Asrabadi (1994). The ASSIS consists 36 items including 7 subscale such as Perceived Discrimination (e.g., I am treated differently in social situation), Homesickness (e.g., Homesickness bothers me), Perceived Hate (e.g., Others are sarcastic toward my cultural values), Fear (e.g., I feel insecure here), Stress due to change/culture (e.g., I feel uncomfortable to adjust to new foods), Guilt (e.g., I feel guilty that I am living a different lifestyle here), Nonspecific Concerns(e.g., I feel nervous to communicate in English).

The ASSIS consists of 36 items (See Appendix 1), a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and possibility score range from 36 to 180 where a higher score represents greater level of acculturative stress (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). The reported Cronbach’s alpha for the ASSIS 36-item from 0.92 to 0.94 (Constantine et al., 2004; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Wei, et.al., 2007). In this current study, Cronbach’s alpha was 0.95 and each subscale’ internal reliabilities are the below.
2.6 Procedure

After getting in advance permissions on the survey from international student department of 8 colleges (Dublin Business School, Dublin City University, Dublin Institute of Technology, Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, National College of Art and Design, National University of Ireland, Galway), a online survey form was linked on official international student websites or Facebook official pages for 3 weeks from the middle of January, 2014. The questionnaire was compiled using Google Docs Forms (See Appendix 1) and responses recorded automatically into the Google Docs Spreadsheet. The questionnaires took approximately 15 minutes to complete.
3. Results

The respondents of this survey were international students in Irish colleges and universities. There were a total of 75 participants voluntarily participated in this research of which 59 (78.7%) were female and 16 (21.3%) were male. In the length of stay in Ireland, they were distributed in the range from one month as the shortest to 7 years as the longest, with the largest percentage of those students being less than 6 months was 48 (64.9%), and the average staying period was 1.3 year (SD=1.72). The number of students from Europe was 40 (53.3%) which was the largest proportion, followed by students from Asia was 16 (21.3%), those from North America was 11 (14.7%), those from South America was 5 (6.7%), those from the Middle East was 2 (2.7%), and those from Africa was 1 (1.3%). In their residential types, the largest number of international student (N=24, 32%) used flat share or college accommodation share, followed by those who lived with his or her friends (N=18, 24%). Those who lived with family members or partners were 14 (18.7%), and 5 (6.7%) respectively. There were also 5 students (4%) who were living with host family members. On the other hand, the number of students who were living alone was 11 (14.7%). Most of the respondents did not have jobs (N=59, 78.7%), and the number of those who had part-time jobs was 10 (13.3%), and 6 (8%) had full-time jobs.

<Table 2> shows the mean and standard deviation scores of the data collected from the questionnaires used in this current study which were the General Self efficacy, General Health Questionnaires-12, Perceived Stress Scale, Acculturative Stress Scale.
<Table 2> Means and Standard Deviations for the Predictor and Criterion Variables

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<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self efficacy</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>30.22</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHQ-12</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>16.38</td>
<td>6.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Stress</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>18.84</td>
<td>6.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acculturative Stress</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>72.65</td>
<td>24.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 1. The mean scores for Self efficacy was 30.22 (SD=3.77) and for Acculturative Stress Scale was 72.65 (SD=24.38). A Pearson’s correlation coefficient found that there was no significant relationship between Self efficacy and Acculturative stress level (r(68)=0.259, p>0.05, 2-tailed). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 2. The means scores for General Health Questionnaire was 16.38 (SD=6.04) and for Acculturative stress level was 72.65 (SD=24.38). A pearson’s correlation coefficient found that there was no significant relationship between General Health Questionnaire score and the level of Acculturative stress (r(67)=0.08, p>0.05, 2-tailed). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 3. The mean scores for Perceived Stress was 18.84 (SD=6.90) and for Acculturative Stress level was 72.65 (SD=24.38). A pearson’s correlation coefficient revealed that there was a weak positive significant relationship between Perceived Stress and
Acculturative Stress level ($r(68)=0.242, p<0.05, \text{ 2-tailed}$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 4. Male ($M = 84.00, SD = 32.57$) were found to have higher level of acculturative stress than female ($M = 69.35, SD = 20.65$). The 95% confidence limits shows that the population means differences of the variables lies somewhere between -28.18 and -1.19. An Independent Samples T-test found that there was a statistically significant difference on the level of acculturative stress between males and females ($t(69)=-2.172, p=0.033$). Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected.

*<Table 3> Independent Samples T-test table displaying differences between females and males on Acculturative Stress Level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acculturative</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>69.35</td>
<td>20.65</td>
<td>-2.17</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>84.00</td>
<td>35.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* $p$ significant at .05 level

Hypothesis 5. The means scores for Africa was 134, Asia was 87.73 (SD = 25.40), Europe was 64.82 (SD = 19.22), Middle East was 97.50 (SD = 40.31), North America was 63.55 (SD = 16.63), and South America was 87.75 (SD = 25.53). However, before a one-way analysis of variance was performed, those students from Africa (1 student) and from the Middle East (2 students) were excluded from the analytical categories owing to the fact that both groups did not satisfy the analytical requirements. The one-way ANOVA showed that the level of acculturative
stress did not differ significantly among the four region of country group (F (3, 64) = 5.75, p< .001).

Hypothesis 6. Non-EU students (M = 81.67, SD = 26.77) were found to have higher level of acculturative stress than EU students (M = 64.82, SD = 19.22). The 95% confidence limits shows that the population means differences of the variables lies somewhere between -27.78 and -5.92. An Independent Samples T-test found that there was a statistically significant difference on the level of acculturative stress between non-EU and EU students (t(69)=-3.08, p=0.003). Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected.

*Table 4*  Independent Samples T-test table displaying differences between EU and non-EU students on Acculturative Stress Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acculturative</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>EU</td>
<td>68.82</td>
<td>19.22</td>
<td>-3.08</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-EU</td>
<td>81.67</td>
<td>26.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* p significant at .05 level
4. Discussion

4.1 Overall

This study examined the relationships among four variables, acculturation stress, self-efficacy, mental health, and perceived stress among international students studying in Ireland. It focused on the differences on levels of stress by gender and among different racial-ethnic groups for those students suffering from the same level of acculturation stresses. It conducted the online survey to international students studying in Irish colleges and universities specifically on acculturation stress, self-efficacy, mental health, and perceived stress. The number of respondents was 75 (59 females and 16 males). The findings of the analysis and its significance are as follows.

First of all, it examined hypothesis 1 assuming the relationship between acculturative stress and self-efficacy. Pearson’s correlation coefficient, however, did not show any significant relationship between them (r(68)=0.259, p>0.05, 2-tailed). The mean of self-efficacy was 30.22 (SD = 3.77), and the levels of efficacy between female students (M=30.08, SD = 3.86) and male students (M=30.73, SD = 3.47) were similar in this study. That is, self-efficacy does not work as a psychological protection element against acculturation stress among international students in current study. This finding is not consistent with previous researches (Constantine, Okazaki, & Utsey, 2004) which have reported that high self-efficacy lowers the level of acculturation stress.

Second, it was expected that international student’s healthy mental status will show lower acculturative stress level. However, it was found that between acculturation stress and mental statue did not have a significant relationship (r(67)=0.08, p>0.05, 2-tailed). This finding was not
correspondent to the earlier researches showing that international students suffer from stress, and, consequently, have problems in their mental health (Hwang & Ting, 2008; Pan et al., 2007; Kiang et al., 2010). The mean value among participants measured by GHQ-12 was 16.38 (SD = 6.04), showing that those international students were suffering from more than typical psychological distress. GHQ-12 is the measuring device for mental health focusing on the current condition (e.g., over the last few weeks) (Goldberg et al., 1997). Thus, it seems that international students who responded to this survey may have other recent elements of psychological distress not related with acculturation stress. Meanwhile, The mean value of students from the EU (M = 17.40, SD = 6.44) was higher than that of students from other regions (M = 15.15, SD = 5.36).

Third, it was found that there was a weak positive significant relationship between acculturation stress and perceived stress (r(68)=0.242, p<0.05, 2-tailed). In other words, the finding indicates that the higher perceived stress is, the higher the level of acculturation stress gets. Perceived stress scale measures subjective evaluation of the stressfulness of a situation which can be influenced by daily happenings and major life events. The finding is correspondent to the previous researches (Castillo & Phoummarath, 2007; Koyama, 2005) that international students challenge lot of stressor everyday life.

Forth, this current study showed that a significant difference in acculturative stress levels between male and female. Most of earlier researches have reported that the acculturation stress level for female students is either higher than that for male counterparts (Bang e Misra, Crist, & Burant, 2003; Summer, Poyrazli, & Grahame, 2008; Yeh & Inos, 2003). But, the finding of this research is consistent with the findings of a small number of studies displaying higher
acculturation stress level for male students (Cheng, 1999; Yan & Berliner, 2009). Lee and Padilla (2013) claimed that male from collectivism country tends to be the public domain and appears highly stress on new culture. It is considered that male’s acculturative stress level was higher than female due to the fact that 9 of 16 males from Asia in this current study.

Fifth, comparison of acculturation stress levels among racial-ethnic groups showed not significant differences among them (F (3, 64) = 5.75, p < .001). But, there were differences in such levels depending on regions students come from. The mean acculturation stress levels for students from different regions are as follows: Asia (M = 87.73, SD = 25.40), Europe (M = 64.82, SD = 19.22), North America (M = 63.55, SD = 16.63), South America (M = 87.75, SD = 25.53). It can be easily distinguished stark differences in this level among students from Europe and North America who share the same Western culture and those from Asia. In addition, students from South America who do not use English suffer from this kind of stress more than those from Europe who are more fluent in English (Poyrazli, Kauanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timmer, 2004).

Sixth, the mean acculturation stress level among non-EU students (M = 81.67, SD = 26.77) was significantly higher than that among European students (M = 64.82, SD = 19.22) sharing the same culture with the Irish (t(69)=-3.08, p=0.003). Unlike the case of Hypothesis 5, this hypothesis compares 40 students from Europe with 35 non-Europe students which is included students from Africa and the Middle East who were excluded in Hypothesis 5. The finding proved the finding of a previous research (Furukawa, 1997; Suanet & Van de Vijver, 2009) showing that acculturation stress level is affected by the culture distance.
4.2 Limitations and Recommendations

This current study had some limitations. First, the sample size was too small for more accurate analysis and difficult to generalization. Online survey has the merit which makes it possible to do survey respondents in any place in Ireland not limited by place. But, unlike the case of offline survey where the researcher and participants use paper and pen, it is impossible to predict how many people will respond to the survey. In addition, it was difficult to attract students’ attention only with a link on the homepages of international student departments of other colleges. In the future researches, in order to collect huge amount of data, it seems necessary to develop computer web pages or programs which can attract more attention of participants.

Second, due to the deadline of paper progress, data collection was done only one time. According to Ward et al. (1998), however, acculturation is a long process that takes time. Considering the four periods of culture shock theory of Oberg (1960), and the finding of Lysgaard (1995) showing U-curve shape in acculturation stress levels depending on length of stays, if it is possible to do long-term repeated surveys per length of stay for international students, it will be possible to grasp the problems of them per period of stay, and to support those students based on more organized systems.

Third, there is some problem in the period survey was conducted. The period of this survey was 3 weeks from mid-January. This period is the time when students begin a new semester after spending a long winter vacation for Christmas to New Year holidays. According to some studies, at about the time when they have to go back to school after long holidays, especially after Christmas or Thanksgiving holidays when they spend time with family members,
the levels of anxiety, depression, and stress among students go up (Bahri et al., 2011; Allan, Steger, & Shin, 2013). Moreover, some of Irish colleges and universities had semester exam period at the time data was collected. Allan and his colleagues (2013) claimed that anxiety and nervous from exam preparation and coping with the stress of exam result have brought numerous psychological symptoms into the students as well as physical symptoms, such as insomnia, anorexia nervosa, depress. and In future studies, it is necessary to consider various periods of survey (e.g. before and after the test, before and after vacation).

Forth, the male-female ratio among respondents of this survey was unequal. The number of female students (N=59) was 3 times as many as that of male students (N=19). It can affect in analyzing sample size of male students. While some previous researches reported that females are more subject to acculturation stress (Bang et al., 2008; Dahlin et al., 2005; Msengi, 2003; Virta et al., 2004), there are other studies arguing that males suffer more stress than females (Cheng, 1999; Yan & Berliner, 2009). Another studies claimed that it was revealed that there is no significant gender difference on the level of acculturative stress (Misra, Crist, & Burant, 2003; Summer, Poyrazli, & Grahame, 2008; Yeh & Inos, 2003). Though this study showed that males experience more acculturation stress (M = 84.00, SD = 32.57), we cannot exclude the possibility that this finding could be influenced by the unequal ratio in gender (t(69)=-2.172, p=0.033).

Finally, there was unbalance in proportions of students from different regions of the world. More than half of international students were from Europe whose people share the same Western culture with the Irish. Furthermore, 30% of non-Europe students were from countries in North America which use English as their official language. The researches using data collected
from international students in America have shown that acculturation stress level of students from Europe is significantly lower than those of students from Asia and South America (Poyrazli et al., 2004; Yeh & Inose, 2003). Students from Africa and the Middle East were excluded in the analysis because the numbers from those regions did not satisfy the requirements for doing post-hoc analysis. The students from four regions - Asia, Europe, North America, and South America – were used in the analysis, however, it is too small sample to make generalizations.

4.3 Conclusion

There is significant relationship between acculturation stress and perceived stress. That is, the lower the stress an international student perceives is, the more easily he or she can adjust himself or herself in a new culture. There was difference in acculturation stress levels among male and female students, and there was also difference in such levels depending on the cultural backgrounds students are from. However, since there were no significant relationships among acculturation stress, self-efficacy, and mental health, it is necessary to do researches on various variables which can serve as moderate variables between stress and acculturation.
References


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Signature: [Jinha Lee] Date: [20.03.2014]

DBS School: [Art in H.dip in Psychology]

Contact details: [1742410@mydbs.ie]
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<th>Explanatory comment</th>
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<td>Full title, including any subtitle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alternative Title:</strong> The level of Acculturative stress of International students</td>
<td>Other titles for the work, e.g. translations or abbreviations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Author:</strong> Jinha, Lee</td>
<td>Your name (author). Separate the surname (family name) from the forenames, given names or initials with a comma, e.g. Smith, Andrew J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Number:</strong> 1742410</td>
<td>Your student number.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Supervisor(s):</strong></td>
<td>Thesis supervisor, other supervisors, and advisors. Format as for author.</td>
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<td>Dr. Barbara Caska</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Higher Diploma in Arts in Psychology</td>
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**Student signature:** [Scan your full name here]  
**Date:** [20.03.2014]  

Jinha Lee
Appendix 3. Questionnaire
International students well-being life

To whom it may concern

I am a final-year psychology student at Dublin Business School and as part of my course I am conducting a research project entitled "International students' well-being life" under the supervision of Dr. Barbara Doherty. The main focus of this project is to investigate factors which might contribute to the social experiences of international students. This study has been approved by our ethics committee.

I am writing to invite you as a voluntary participant in this research.

The study takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

As a participant of this study,

- You must be over 18 years of age and currently study in Ireland at a third-level institution.
- Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.
- Your participation is anonymous and confidential.

For the purpose of anonymity, please do not write your name anywhere on the booklet.

If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me at

joebstrailey00@gmail.com

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

Joe Strailey
Higher Diploma in Adult Psychology
Dublin Business School

Questionnaires

1. A. Which region of the world are you from?
   - [ ] Africa
   - [ ] Asia
   - [ ] Latin America & The Caribbean
   - [ ] Europe
   - [ ] Middle East
   - [ ] North America
   - [ ] Oceania
   - [ ] South America
   - [ ] Others

   [ ] blank
2. Gender
Please click
both if that apply:

- Female
- Male

3. You have been in Ireland _______ years...
   months.
   Please write the below (Example: 2 years, 5 months).

4. 2.1. If you choose "other" please specify below:

5. 4. Currently, are you live with
   (Please only one box):
   - Next family
   - Family member
   - Partner/Spouse
   - Friend(s)
   - Alone
   - Other

6. 4.4. If you choose "other", please specify below:

6. How many hours per week do you usually work at your job?
   Mark only one box:
   - 35 hours a week or more
   - Less than 35 hours a week
   - I am not currently employed

Please read the sentences below and select an answer for each statement which indicate how much the statement applies to yourself:

1 = Not at all true, 2 = Slightly true, 3 = Moderately true, 4 = Exactly true
8. 1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.  
Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all true</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exactly true</td>
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9. 2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.  
Mark only one oval.

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<tr>
<td>Not at all true</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exactly true</td>
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10. 3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.  
Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all true</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exactly true</td>
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11. 4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.  
Mark only one oval.

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<td>Not at all true</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exactly true</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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12. 5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situation.  
Mark only one oval.

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<td>Not at all true</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exactly true</td>
<td></td>
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13. 6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.  
Mark only one oval.

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<tr>
<td>Not at all true</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exactly true</td>
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14. 7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.  
Mark only one oval.

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15. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.  
Mark only one oval.

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<tr>
<td>Exactly true</td>
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16. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution  
Mark only one oval.

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<tr>
<td>Not at all true</td>
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<td>Exactly true</td>
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17. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.  
Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all true</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Exactly true</td>
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</table>

I would like to know how your health has been in general over the last few weeks. Please read the sentences below and select an answer for each statement which indicates how much the statement applies to yourself.

0= Better than usual, 1= Same as usual, 2= Less than usual, 3= Much less than usual

18. Have you recently felt capable of making decisions about things?  
Mark only one oval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better than usual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much less than usual</td>
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19. Have you recently been able to concentrate on what you're doing?  
Mark only one oval.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better than usual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Much less than usual</td>
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</table>

20. Have you recently lost much sleep over worry?  
Mark only one oval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better than usual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Much less than usual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Have you recently felt that you are playing a useful part in things?</td>
<td>0 = Much less than usual, 1 = Much less than usual, 2 = Much less than usual, 3 = More than usual</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Have you recently felt constantly under strain?</td>
<td>0 = Much less than usual, 1 = Much less than usual, 2 = Much less than usual, 3 = More than usual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Have you recently felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties?</td>
<td>0 = Much less than usual, 1 = Much less than usual, 2 = Much less than usual, 3 = More than usual</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Have you recently been able to enjoy normal day to day activities?</td>
<td>0 = Much less than usual, 1 = Much less than usual, 2 = Much less than usual, 3 = More than usual</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25. Have you recently been able to face up to your own needs?</td>
<td>0 = Much less than usual, 1 = Much less than usual, 2 = Much less than usual, 3 = More than usual</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>26. Have you recently been feeling unhappy and depressed?</td>
<td>0 = Much less than usual, 1 = Much less than usual, 2 = Much less than usual, 3 = More than usual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>27. Have you recently been losing confidence in yourself?</td>
<td>0 = Much less than usual, 1 = Much less than usual, 2 = Much less than usual, 3 = More than usual</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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</table>
25. Have you recently been thinking of yourself as a worthless person? Mark only one box.

0 1 2 3 4

Less than usual  Often More than usual

26. Have you recently been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered? Mark only one box.

0 1 2 3 4

Less than usual  Often More than usual

The questions in this scale ask you about your feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, you will be asked to indicate how often you felt or thought a certain way.

0 = Never. 1 = Almost never. 2 = Sometimes. 3 = Often. 4 = Very often

30. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?

Mark only one box.

0 1 2 3 4

Never  Often Very often

31. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control important things in your life?

Mark only one box.

0 1 2 3 4

Never  Often Very often

32. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and stressed?

Mark only one box.

0 1 2 3 4

Never  Often Very often
33. 4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problem?
Mark only one oval.

Never □ □ □ □ □ Very often

34. 5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?
Mark only one oval.

Never □ □ □ □ □ Very often

35. 6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things you had to do?
Mark only one oval.

Never □ □ □ □ □ Very often

36. 7. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritation in your life?
Mark only one oval.

Never □ □ □ □ □ Very often

37. 8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?
Mark only one oval.

Never □ □ □ □ □ Very often

38. 9. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that happened that were outside of your control?
Mark only one oval.

Never □ □ □ □ □ Very often
39. In the last month, how often have you felt diffidence when filling up on high fat, you could not even over the line?
Mark only one box.

Below are 36 statements, with which you may agree or disagree. Using a scale of 1-5 (as below) indicate your agreement with each statement by placing the number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly 
Not 
Strongly
disagree Sure agree
doubt
agree

40. 1. Homelessness bothers me.
Mark only one box.

41. 2. I feel uncomfortable to adjust to new foods.
Mark only one box.

42. 3. I am treated differently in social situations.
Mark only one box.

43. 4. Others are sarcastic toward my cultural values.
Mark only one box.
44. I feel nervous to communicate in English.

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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45. I feel and living in unfamiliar surroundings.

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<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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46. I feel my personal safety because of my different cultural background.

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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

47. I feel intimidated to participate in social activities.

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<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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48. Others are biased toward me.

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<th>5</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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49. I feel guilty to leave my family and friends behind.

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<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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50. Many opportunities are denied to me.

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<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
61. I feel angry that my people are considered inferior here. Mark only one oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Strongly disagree  o o o o o  Strongly agree

62. Multiple pressures are placed upon me after migration. Mark only one oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Strongly disagree  o o o o o  Strongly agree

63. I feel angry that I received unequal treatment. Mark only one oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Strongly disagree  o o o o o  Strongly agree

64. People show hatred toward me non-voluntarily. Mark only one oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Strongly disagree  o o o o o  Strongly agree

65. It hurts when people don't understand my cultural values. Mark only one oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Strongly disagree  o o o o o  Strongly agree

66. I am denied what I deserve. Mark only one oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Strongly disagree  o o o o o  Strongly agree

67. I frequently relocate for fear of others. Mark only one oval.

   1  2  3  4  5

   Strongly disagree  o o o o o  Strongly agree
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating Options</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60. I feel low because of my cultural background.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Mark only one oval)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Others don't appreciate my cultural values.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mark only one oval)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. I miss the people and country of my origin.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mark only one oval)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. I feel uncomfortable to adjust to new cultural values.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mark only one oval)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>64. Other people show hatred toward me through actions.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<td>(Mark only one oval)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>66. I feel that my status in this society is low due to my cultural background. (Mark only one oval)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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</table>
26. I am treated differently because of my race.
Mark only one box.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

27. I feel insecure here
Mark only one box.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

28. I don't feel a sense of belonging here continually.
Mark only one box.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

29. I am treated differently because of my colour.
Mark only one box.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

30. I feel sad about my people's problem.
Mark only one box.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

31. I generally keep a low profile due to fear.
Mark only one box.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree

32. I feel some people don't associate with me because of my ethnicity.
Mark only one box.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree
72. People show prejudicial bias towards me sexually.
Mark only one card.

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly disagree [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Strongly agree [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

73. I feel guilty that I am living a different lifestyle here.
Mark only one card.

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly disagree [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Strongly agree [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

74. I feel out of place in my rural habit.
Mark only one card.

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly disagree [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Strongly agree [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

75. I worry about my future for not being able to decide whether to stay here, or go back.
Mark only one card.

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly disagree [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Strongly agree [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

Google Drive