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Perceived Stress And Adoptive Coping Styles Of International Students: An Exploratory Study.

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a psycho-physical condition found in human beings with no relevance to their gender, age, creed, religion, ethnicity, economic status etc, because it is mainly an individual's assumptions and perception about what he or she is not comfortable with. The perceived stress as a common problem among the displaced and migrant students has been researched extensively. An exploratory research was conducted in the University of Northern Philippines, Vigan city to study the impact of stress on its international students and the means to lead them out of stress and learn to adapt themselves to their life abroad. The participants of the study were 315 international students selected as stratified random samples. A customised questionnaire was used to elicit the data from the participants. The study revealed the influence of peers, homesickness, financial difficulties and academic life as the most commonly perceived stressors among the international students. On a high average, problem focused coping strategies were used as a defensive mechanism by the sophomore students. This study identified an association between perceived stress and adopted coping styles that it suggests teaching students to use desirable coping strategies may reduce stress among them.
Keywords: International students, stressors, coping mechanisms, self-efficacy

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INTRODUCTION

Every one of us experience stress in our day-to-day life. To be precise, we are living in a world completely filled with stress all over. Stress is a particular relationship between the individual and his surroundings which is judged by him to be threatening or to overwhelm his resources and which put his well-being at risk. The causes of stress vary widely, but these feelings often correlate with real world responsibilities and concerns and are typically more pronounced in people who bear greater burdens of responsibilities, [1].

Physiology of stress starts with the Hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis as a multi-stage pathway responsible for the transfer of information via chemical messengers from one point to another point of our body. Cortisol, released by Adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) which is secreted by the pituitary gland balances the intensively regulated response to stress. Amyglade regulates and controls emotional response such as fear and anxiety, during stress response. It is much easier to be stress free when our body is physically and emotionally healthy. College students experience different kinds of stressors during their education abroad. Sources of stress include academics, feelings of loneliness, family, life goals, and social pressure. International students who leave their home town to study in another country especially Philippines are mostly in their late adolescence/young adult years. Students develop individual competencies as they maintain their own values while adjusting to practical, interpersonal and emotional challenges in order to survive in a host country. Students experience stress either caused by external environmental source or by internal individual perceptions which may have greater impact on their ability to cope with life, [2] [3]. Students' ability to cope reduces stress and paves way to procreate a stress-free student community. As adolescent students, individuals undergo physical, mental, emotional and social changes and it is essential to figure out these changes in a chronological manner so as to lift them as mature adults in future. Students need to develop different coping strategies that help them to adapt to the stressful condition. As cited "what is taught should not be separated from how it is taught", [4], this study not only explores the different perceptions of 'stress' among the international student community but also focuses on their ways of coping mechanisms adopted to deal with the problem.

Literature Review

To gain better insight and comprehension of the concepts and factors that have significant bearing on this study, the researchers reviewed some pertinent literature and journals related to causative stressors leading to stress and coping strategies among the international students. For students, college represents a new level of independence in life. Students pursuing higher studies abroad have the difficulty in developing resilience, as various factors contribute to their stress related crisis. Young adults are very much involved in active transactions with their environment across academic and personal development. "Human psychological stress involves a state of emotional strain from a demanding circumstance", [5]. It can be perceived as a momentous experience to pursue studies abroad but there are challenges like environmental threats, sociocultural developments and physiological changes, where we need to adjust our emotional needs and overcome with endurance and perseverance. International students in particular, develop feelings of weakness due to unfamiliar educational environment, language barriers, and relationship with other students that isolate them into loneliness and financial challenges with insufficient resources to perform academic work and cultural abilities, [6].

Due to the intensive and developmental academic tasks and their need to adjust with the changed situations, students have less time to accomplish the given modules. So, they are prone to anxiety that leads to stress. Academic stress of international students refer to the factors that affect their academic environment such as group projects, course work, organizational involvement with the native students and their perceptional attitudes and behaviors towards academic demands, [7]. Peer-bonding among adolescents and young adults plays a vital role as they develop the sense of love and deep friendship among them. Students influence each other directly or indirectly by their attitudes in decision making and their opinions, [8]. Peer pressure is a mutual influence that invades a person to involve in certain type of behaviour which the person himself doesn't want to do. Stress arises when a person finds it difficult to develop or maintain friendship with his fellow mates.

Homesickness is defined "distress caused by separation from home", [9]. Social connectedness in cultural, geographical and language compliances acts as a step to prevent homesickness and improve

academic concentration and reduce psychological distress of depression and anxiety attacks. International students, who leave their family, friends and home culture, hide their self-expressions, in adjusting to the environment, including language differences and cultural differences that make them more grieving for missed persons and places in their home county, [5]. As students head to pursue studies abroad they assume increasing individual responsibilities as a novelty of decision making and managing as they are living away from home for the first time. Students go through distressing constraints of financial demands when they are not able to afford the necessities of life and do not have sufficient funds to buy their desired products. Recent researches mention that due to lack of financial instruction and guidance students incur expenses beyond their limits and get into acute financial problems causing stress. Impending financial crisis will act as a key factor for students in shaping their attitudes and behaviours that they adopt toward their life journey, [10].

The human mechanism finds a way to free itself from the causative thoughts of stress by adopting coping strategy. Coping is an ongoing cognitive and behavioural effort to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person, [11] [12]. Coping is differentiated into two major domains namely problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping, [13] [14]. Problem-focused coping tends to predominate when individuals seek solutions to problems or change the source of stress itself. Emotion-focused coping predominates when an individual reduces or endures the emotional distress associated with the situation, [15].

Students' emotional and behavioural transition is the consequence of their leaving home county, family, relatives, and other social support networks. Positive self-belief and perceived self-efficacy scan help an individual perform new and challenging goal setting tasks, overcome hardships, emotional adaptiveness, persistence and recovery in face of barriers. Self-efficacy theory is an essential prerequisite for changing coping behaviour which states that "Receiving elaborative feedbacks promote students self-efficacy while receiving knowledge of correct response improved students' performance", [16] [17]. Spirituality seems to play a role in coping and overcoming moderate feeling of distress, [18].

Psychological adjustments in a new learning environment have turned out to be a difficult task for majority of the international students. Lack of time management in balancing academics, peer relationships and home life can be difficult which lead to stressful life events. This study may provide a contextual view on the risk of stressors among the international students that hinder them from achieving their future aims while causing social disconnection and emotions of isolations and dejection. Hence, it is important that international students develop effective strategies to manage stressful situations. The study also attempted to determine the factors that influenced the progression of international students through problems and challenges to bridging gap between their negative emotions and positive self belief to cope with the life outside their home town.

Significance Of The Study

Adolescence is a crucial and transitional phase in life; during this period, the college students take time to develop a sense of autonomy and self-directed behaviour. International students are no exceptions. In the process of developing their identity and personality traits to function with great responsibility of their own and also to get adjusted in an unknown land they are plagued with such problems as language incompliance and social avoidance. Accurate identification of stressors could help understand the impact of stress in international students and student educators could device plans to help them out of their tangle.

The study aims to explore the different stressors and their impact on the international students and the coping strategies adopted to manage the stressors by the international students in Vigan city. The findings of this study can help the University management to administer appropriate counselling services for the students who lack self-support and to develop better policies and practices towards the international student community that would boost their adaptive behaviour for positive and effective academic and social life in the new country.

Research Questions

This research study is guided by the following phrased questions:

i. What are the different stressors experienced by the international students?
ii. What kind of coping styles are most and least frequently used by international students?
iii. Is there a significant relationship between perceived stressors and coping mechanisms among the respondents?

METHODOLOGY

The participants of the study were 315 international students in the University of the Northern Philippines (UNP), Vigan City, Philippines. The method of sampling used here was stratified sampling using Slovin's formula. To draw the sample, random sampling strategy was applied. Research approval was sought from UNP ethical review committee with an approval code 0188. Informed consent which included a brief outline on significance of the study, the criteria for participation, research procedures and participants' rights, was given to each prospective participant. Data was collected by guided self-administered questionnaire consisting of two parts derived reviewing previous literatures and through discussion with a group of students. First part focused on the perceived stress of the respondents which included 40 items measured using 5 point likert scale (Table 1). Second part comprised of 31 self-reported items which students could use to deal with stressful events grouped into 10 dimensions under two main coping strategies, [13] employed to measure stress coping strategy using 3 point Likert scale as shown in table 2. Problem-focused strategy includes planning, active coping, suppression of competing activities, restraint coping and seeking social support for instrumental reasons. For the emotion-focused strategy, the coping strategies employed were seeking social support for emotional reasons, venting emotions, positive re-appraisal, denial and religious approach, [15] [19]. Completion of the questionnaire was voluntary. To assure privacy and confidentiality of the research participants, their identities were protected with number codes. The questionnaires were collected on the same day and the data were subjected to statistical analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The descriptive-correlational method was adopted for the study to provide a meaningful picture of events and to explain people's perception with greater confidence with regards to particular questions which are of great value to the researchers. The designed questionnaire was validated by three experts from the College of Medicine. Comments and observations made by these lecturers were noted and were used to improve the questionnaire. To ascertain the strength and weakness of the questionnaire, pilot testing was done with a sample population of 30% from the overall respondent distribution. The internal consistency of this questionnaire indicated by the Cronbach's alpha value is 0.88 for stress and in a range of 0.7-0.9 for coping strategies which is interpreted to have good questionnaire reliability. The regularity of use for each strategy was determined based on the criteria shown in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Point Likert scale for stress

Scale	Item Descriptive Rating	Range of Scores	Overall Descriptive Rating
5	Always	4.21 – 5.00	Very High
4	Often	3.41 – 4.20	High
3	Sometimes	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
2	Rarely	1.81 – 2.60	Low
1	Never	1.00 – 1.80	Very Low

Table 2: Point Likert scale for stress coping mechanisms

Scale	Item Descriptive Rating	Range of Scores	Overall Descriptive Rating
2	Always	1.26 – 2.00	High
1	Sometimes	0.76 – 1.25	Moderate
0	Never	0 – 0.75	Low

Frequency and percentage were used for distribution of the respondents along sex (Figure 1).

SEX
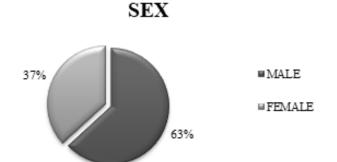
37% 63%

■ MALE
■ FEMALE

Figure 1: Distribution of the respondents according to sex.

Mean, standard deviation (Table 3 and 4) and Pearson's correlation (Table 5) was used in data analysis of perceived stressors and coping mechanisms.

Question I: What are the different stressors experienced by the international students?

Table 3: Stressors Ranked by Mean Degree of Stress as Perceived by Students.

Rank	Stressors	$\bar{x}$(S.D)	Rank	Stressors	$\bar{x}$(S.D)	Rank
1	I found it difficult to relax.	3.35 (1.28)	21	I start feeling very uneasy just before getting the test paper back.	2.72 (1.21)	1
2	Feeling of down-hearted and blue.	3.23 (1.27)	22	Pressure to fit in with peers.	2.72 (1.18)	2
3	Having to take on new responsibilities with growing older.	3.11 (1.26)	23	After you were separated from your parents, you experienced feelings of denial or abandonment.	2.71 (1.27)	3
4	Do your peers make you feel lonely for any cause?	3.03 (1.22)	24	Have you felt that your parents are more anxious, depressed or self-doubting after your absence with them?	2.71 (1.28)	4
5	Feel too embarrassed to eat alone, to attend movies and other activities without your parents.	3.00 (1.32)	25	Thoughts of doing poorly interfere with my concentration on tests.	2.70 (1.17)	5
6	Do your friends influence you to do things you don't want to do?	2.99 (1.21)	26	I wish examinations did not bother me so much.	2.70 (1.24)	6
7	Being caught cheating on a test.	2.97 (1.27)	27	I seem to defeat myself while working on important tests.	2.65 (1.09)	7
8	Depression with my best friend.	2.94 (1.29)	28	Peers hassling about the way you look.	2.65 (1.16)	8
9	Since you were separated from your parents, do you feel you exhibited problems with academic achievement, social adjustment or self-	2.92 (1.25)	29	Disagreements between you and your peers.	2.65 (1.06)	9

	concept?					
10	Not enough money to buy the things you want.	2.86 (1.23)	30	Do you think people want to hear your opinions?	2.65 (1.34)	10
11	Lot of assignments make me feel weak and tired.	2.85 (1.29)	31	Has your parent's separation from you caused problems in relationships with the opposite sex (emotional, sexual or communication).	2.64 (1.27)	11
12	I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy.	2.84 (1.26)	32	Have you ever tried to feel the feeling of your parents in your absence?	2.62 (1.41)	12
13	As soon as an exam is over, I try to stop worrying about it, but I just cannot.	2.78 (1.34)	33	Even when I am well prepared for the test, I feel very anxious about it.	2.61 (1.23)	13
14	The harder I work at taking a test, the more confused I get	2.77 (1.23)	34	During tests, I find myself thinking about the consequences of failing.	2.59 (1.24)	14
15	After you were separated from your parents, did you experience any depressions (sleep and eating disturbances, social withdraw or physical injury).	2.76 (1.20)	35	During a course examination, I get so nervous that I forget facts I really know.	2.58 (1.13)	15
16	No hope in having or spending the money wisely.	2.76 (1.19)	36	After you were separated from your parents, did you act out or express anger and hostility with peers.	2.57 (1.24)	16
17	Being judged by your friends.	2.75 (1.10)	37	Barely spending money on unwanted stuffs.	2.52 (1.22)	17
18	Have you felt you are very responsible after moving away from your parents?	2.75 (1.31)	38	Totally collapsed of more leisure.	2.50 (1.21)	18
19	I feel confident and relaxed while taking tests.	2.73 (1.28)	39	Don't have money to prepare or buy food?	2.43 (1.25)	19
20	Planning to get some self-defence training on how to spend money.	2.73 (1.33)	40	Changes in your physical appearance with growing up.	2.18 (1.20)	20
MEAN OF MEANS SCORES (S. D)						**2.76 (1.26)**

As the above table shows, "Moderate" level of stress is perceived by international students in a home away country. Standard deviation value of 1.26 (> 1) signifies that the perceived stress is homogenous and scattered and is experienced by major portion of students pursuing studies in a foreign country. Stress is a mental, emotional and physical response to a real or imagined event or change that causes strain or distress to one self. The top ten ranks of stressors among students encountered are peer influence, homesickness, financial burden and academic stress. It is a general fact that in some situations, college students go with the flow of their peers as they do not want to be left alone.
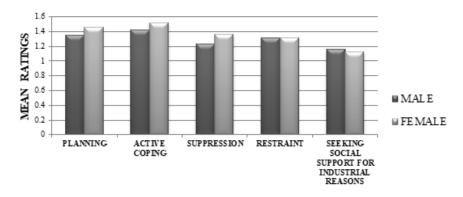
Peers pressurize the other person in doing circumstantial things that he/she was not ready to involve in and that becomes an unrealistic expectation when they are still adjusting to adapt to the new environment. International students report homesickness when their experiences fall short of their expectations. Students noted that sudden transition of living in an unfamiliar land away from their family with routines like eating alone or with any other less known person caused embarrassment. Continuous feeling of sadness and loneliness in the absence of their family leads to depression. Complex and expensive financial decisions,

sometimes taken by students exacerbate their stress and nervousness that they experience great deal of misery.
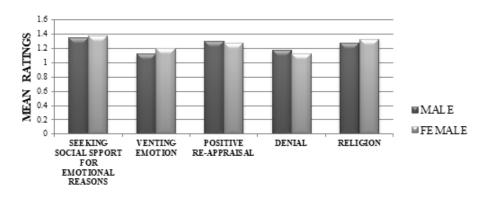
When they are not in a position to fulfil the urge to own costly mobile phones, world class bikes, cars etc, they consider it to be an influencing parameter of stress. It costs them early state of depression that leads to a negative self-esteem. Excessive assignments and fear of failure in educational attainment may lead to cheating. This can be due to the lack of time management skills of the students in accomplishing the given tasks. Growing older can mitigate the burden with a mature outlook to take care of one's self in relation to the surrounding.

Question II: What kind of coping strategies are most and least frequently used by international students? Based on the mean of means, coping styles predominantly used by the international students in the University of Northern Philippines were determined.
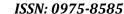

Figure 2a: Mean of means for problem-focused stress coping mechanisms

Figure 2b: Mean of means for emotion-focused stress coping mechanisms

Responses from the participants (figure 2a) showed that active coping strategy recorded the highest mean (males – 1.42, females – 1.52) while the lowest mean (males – 1.16, females – 1.12) was recorded for seeking social support for industrial reasons among the problem-focused coping. As seen in figure 2b, seeking social support for emotional response obtained the highest mean (males – 1.35, females – 1.37) while the lowest mean score (males – 1.18, females – 1.13) was recorded by denial of stressful circumstances along emotion-focused coping.

It is clear that females use problem- and emotion- focused coping strategies effectively than their male counterparts along planning (1.46), active coping (1.52), suppression (1.36), restraint (1.32), seeking social support for emotional response (1.37), venting emotion (1.20) and religion (1.33). However males are

highly susceptible to seeking social support for industrial reasons (1.16) which can be concluded that males due to their eagerness to gather more ideas voluntarily join with their surrounding social circle to clarify their doubts and get into a free state of well-being.

Positive re-appraisal (1.30) and denial (1.18) are more commonly used among male students as most of the male counterparts can be categorized as having a character of viewing everything in both positive annotations and/or to a contrary of avoiding circumstances or behaving as if the problem cannot be solved by him. Males are more commonly inclined to use negative coping strategies like, denial, avoidance or abandonment compared to their female counterparts, [20]. In this case, it seems like males are more exposed to excuses, as females practise more problem-solving skills to ensure stress free stay in a foreign country.

The findings of this study imply that international students use more positive stress coping strategies than negative ones which mean that when the students are stressed they employ healthy coping techniques to deal with the circumstance than denying or avoiding the current situation. Employing efficient coping strategies such as seeking and maintaining strong support networks with native students, setting of personal goals motivates students the resilience to persist with their studies and overcome barriers to achieve success, [21].

Table 4: Popular Coping Style among Students

Coping style	Mean of means scores		Standard deviation	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Problem-focused Coping	1.29	1.35	0.68	0.67
Emotion-focused coping	1.24	1.26	0.70	0.71

As the above table implies problem-focused coping strategies are more commonly used by both male and female international students in findings ways to solve their emotional- stress problems. Standard deviation value of <1 indicates that the coping strategies are homogenous and are very close to the mean. This can be best suited as planned problem solving is the frequently used coping mechanism among students, [22]. Problem-focused coping strategies protect self-esteem and endure way to increase one's self-belief towards the betterment of improving self-efficacy in performing certain activities and facing challenges.

On the other hand, emotion-focused coping strategy is also used by the students to defend themselves from problems but this type of coping mechanisms show low confidence and low self-esteem as the decision making authority is avoided or is dependent on others as an emotional barrier. Among the international students, female students have high strands of efficacy in using coping strategies in relation to their circumstances. Girls are inclined to a higher level of using both emotion-focused coping and problem-focused coping than boys in the institution, [23].

Question III: Is there a significant relationship between perceived stressors and coping mechanism among the respondents?

Table 5: Correlation coefficient between stress and stress coping mechanism among the respondents

Variables	STRESS COPING MECHANISMS
STRESS	0.11*

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The research result showed that there exists a statistical significance between the level of perceived stress of the respondents and the stress coping mechanisms among them (r= 0.11). This implies that higher the level of stress, higher will be the coping strategies of the individual along the major categories and dimensions.

Despite all challenges faced by sophomore students, the desire to carry on with their course rather than choosing to drop out is mainly due to their level of high perseverance towards achieving their goal of graduating as a medical doctor together with the native peers with a high sense of responsibility to fulfil the

dream of their family and support networks. This study coincides with a research finding which indicates that there exists an association between perceived stress and coping strategies, [24]. The students included in his study mainly used problem-focused coping strategies than emotion-focused strategies. It can be implied that teaching students to use desirable coping strategies may reduce the variety of stressors leading to stress among them. The findings of this study indicate a need for stress management workshops in all universities accommodating international students. This can be done to reduce stress or as a step towards counselling the students for effective coping strategies to overcome stressful conditions.

DISCUSSION

Adolescence is the period of self-identity and role confusion. In adolescence, the way the individuals see themselves changes in response to peers, family, and school, among other social environments. Adolescent students' self-identities shape their perceptions of belonging and living. Adolescents start exploring their emerging identities in ways that foster independence, autonomy and connectedness. A well-developed identity focuses on one's strengths, weaknesses, and individual uniqueness. A person with a less developed identity fails to define his or her personal strengths and weaknesses, and fails to project his self. During adolescence, students' state of stress has adverse effects on academics, interpersonal relationship with peers and pushes them to feel lonely without their family and triggers a sense of insecurity about financial and career explorations.

Coping can be defined as a process which an individual uses to successfully manage stressful life events/situations that exceeds the actual capital resource endurance of the person. International students are immersed in a new culture and educational system in an unknown environment which can be very different from what they were used to in their home countries. Cross-cultural experience is often a positive effect to the sophomores in experiencing a new change, social support, building relationships, enjoying activities outside of schoolwork and persevering through hard times. The learning process may take time, and the longer the students stay in the host culture, the more acculturated they become [25].

Effective learning to cope with new work and different interpersonal environment must be a key ingredient of success in the university life of each international student. Transitional approaches in coping emphasise individual styles in employing efforts to manage specific demands with different phenomenal strategies and plays a vital role in moulding their personality trait. It is inferred that international college students are matured enough and are capable to break the gender inequality and learn freely as they are equal. The use of both problem-and emotion-focused forms of coping strategies is prevalent among students when stress coincides with the situational context, [26]. For instance, students rely on problem-focused coping when they incur possibilities to change the situation itself. On the contrary, emotion-focused coping is the only realistic option when source of stress is outside their control in which little can be done to change the outcomes of the perceived stress. Positive re-appraisal of perceived threat removes cognitive basis of stress reaction, [27].

Positive thinking and high self-esteem are the most essential factors to experience eustress, a positive stress which motivates a person and makes him interested in the work. As there is a lot of thrill in it, it enables him to foster challenge with hope and confidence. It also enhances his positive attitude and creates a better environment to perform better, [28]. People with high self-control, intrinsic motivation, persistence, optimism and interest perceive any stressful situation as an enjoyable one to prove their ability to accomplish their job successfully. When international students are struggling to cope with their sense of loneliness, and a sense of incompetence to resist peer influence to indulge in extravaganza, the teachers who are their tutorial advisors should step in, to take steps to wean away the students' fear and depression.

A friendly face to face interaction and caring attitude of the teachers could make the young adult students to think they have people to care for their well-being and that they are not alone 'under another sky'. Such interactive sessions could help the teacher to lead her wards to make use of the times creatively and usefully instead of slipping into depression. The perplexing phenomenon of achievement and failure among the students at various levels is of great concern for parents and educationists alike, [29]. As for parents who are away from their beloved children should inculcate in their children, a sense of moral responsibility that stresses accountability for their own learning which involves money and time. The 'self- perception of learning

is my responsibility' could help the students drop the 'burnout feeling' in an alien country and could immune them against the onslaught of the painful stressors.

As for the Universities, which are homes away from home, have certain commitments to the personal and academic achievements of the students. Involvement of youngsters in latest technologies and increased use of social media have made them self-centred with reduced physical body movements and mental health. They should realise that they enrol in gyms for exercising and meditation centres to train their body and mind for better health. The students should take nutritious food and follow relaxation techniques etc., to increase the students' positive perceptions of handling the stress to attain optimal outcome for their study abroad. They can attend workshops to get enlightened on stress management and the process of building self-esteem. It is necessary that they communicate effectively with family and friends who can reduce impact of three-fold stresses. The time management skills of the students can be groomed as an activity plan in their academic curriculum. Developing extra-curricular competencies can be a part of their day-to-day activity. Native students can help international students to overcome their difficulties by lending a hand of support and friendship and preventing them from social offences.

The cultural shock, the lack of pragmatic competence and pragmatic knowledge become impediments in a foreign country. They can be dealt with explicit teaching sessions given by the universities and the students enrolling themselves in them. Cross-cultural communication in a classroom is not an expandable fifth skill, like grammaring and other language skills. It affects all aspects of learning. Conscious and explicit learning of the differences in the learner's culture and that of the target language speakers (here, the foreign university environment) will pave way for understanding the unfamiliar, [30]. By doing so, the students will become ambassadors of cultures and will learn to respect each other in spite of their differences. More than reflecting, the students should be taught to learn to develop empathy with others.

CONCLUSION

Globalization and its wash back effects are realised in the increased interest in pursuing higher studies abroad among the students passing out of schools. Their fascination for education abroad and the beneficial outcome in terms of handsome paid jobs drive them oblivion to the comforts at home. But once out of home, the home with parents and sibling is visualised as heaven. Various other factors like academic learning, restricted finance access and the cultural shock put together the young learners into stressful circumstances. From the findings, it is clear that the international students have anxiety and stress toward high to moderate level that may lead them to a state of psychological distress. It is identified that among the different stressors, students are more stressed due to the influence of peers on their social behaviour in the society followed by homesickness that emerges as trans-emotional experience among the students in the process of acculturative adaptation. It is likely that during any stressful life event or situation, a great number of factors are involved making it difficult to pin point the actual coping mechanism used. This study confirms the need for host institutions to provide extra support on knowledge and communication skills to its internationals to better integrate them in their new learning environment. At the best, the research could show only the tip of the iceberg; it provides initial insights into the stressors and the coping mechanism the mature students use to combat or relegate the stressors. Further research would benefit a greater understanding from examining the growing menace of stressors and establishing an association between demographic data and different coping mechanisms among the international students.

Scope And Limitations Of The Study

In view of the findings and their usefulness in planning and designing further course of action, the researchers feel such studies may be conducted for the benefit of international student community across the world. However, it is true that the study was limited to a limited number of students of the University of Northern Philippines, Vigan City, Philippines.

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Conflict Of Interest

The authors declare there is no conflict of interest.

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