

Relationship of Acculturative Stress and Health among Kashmiri Students in Bhopal

Mohammad Ayoob Lone and Tara Singh

Barkatuallah University, Bhopal

The present study examined the relationship of acculturative stress to general health of Kashmiri students who have migrated to Bhopal (Central India) for study purpose. 219 Kashmiri students (52.10% male; 47.90% female) studying in different colleges and universities in Bhopal were given measures of acculturative stress and general health. One-way analysis of variance revealed significant differences in different domains of general health of students experiencing low, moderate and high levels of acculturative stress. Students experiencing higher acculturative stress have reported poor health. Results of simple regression analysis revealed acculturative stress as a significant predictor of different dimensions of health of students. Overall results indicated negative effects of acculturative stress on health of the Kashmiri college students. Findings have been discussed in the light of eco-cultural differences between Kashmir and Bhopal (Central India) and explained on the basis of Berry's (1987) eco-cultural model of acculturation. Relevance of present finding for student's health have been implicated.

Keywords: Acculturative stress, General health, Kashmiri students

Migration has become a common trend and an expected fact of life among the majority of underdeveloped and developing nations. The massive wave of migration of Kashmiri students to central India occurred predominantly after the turmoil in Kashmir from the last two decades from past 4 to 5 years a large number of students from Kashmir were migrated to Bhopal, central India for receiving higher education. There were approximately 5000 Kashmiri students studying in Bhopal, central India. So far, the culture is concern, Kashmiri students in Bhopal experience a new culture in terms of language, religion, dress material, food habits as well as attitude, beliefs and values, in addition to physical and geographical features. As a result, this wave of migration of Kashmiri students was identified to be very prone to developing psychosocial stress and psychological symptoms. These factors are

assumed to have interfered with their integration into Bhopal society by alienating them from their surroundings. A common theme emerging from the existing literature on immigration and ethnic populations points to acculturation as important variable in successful adjustment in the adopted culture.

Acculturation

The geographical displacement has exposed migrating Kashmiri students to a new experience: acculturation. The process of acculturation involves cultural and psychological changes that result from the contact between peoples belonging to different cultures and exhibiting different behaviors (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992). Kashmiri students like other immigrants experience acculturation when they enter into new culture. In order for the acculturation process to truly be experienced,