

The Interaction Effect of Perceived Social Support and Perceived Stress on Acculturative Stress among Ethiopian International Students in India

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Abstracts—The current study has investigated the interacting effect of perceived social support, components of perceived social support (support from family, friend, and significant others) and perceived stress on acculturative stress among Ethiopian international students (N=280) in India. Purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents from five identified universities of the country. Acculturative stress scale, perceived stress scale, and multidimensional perceived social support scale were used for data collection. Descriptive statistics, Pearson moment correlation, and process macro of Hayes were applied in order to analyze the hypotheses coined. The results of the current study showed: perceived social support, components of perceived social support (support from family, friend, and significant others) were significantly and negatively associated with acculturative stress, however, with varying degrees. Perceived stress was significantly and positively related to acculturative stress; i.e. when perceived stress increases acculturative stress also will increase. Perceived social support (in its total score) moderated the effect of perceived stress on acculturative stress, i.e. those international students who report a high level of perceived social support have a lower association between perceived stress and acculturative stress in comparison to students who report low levels of perceived social support. Moreover, components of perceived social support (support from friend and significant others) buffered the effect of perceived stress on acculturative stress, i.e. those international students who report a high level of support from friend and significant others have a lower association between perceived stress and acculturative stress in comparison to students who report low levels of support from friend and significant others. However, in the current study support from family could not moderate the relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress. Limitations were discussed and recommendations were forwarded for institutions which give admission to foreign students and ministries which send these students abroad for study.

Key words—Perceived social support, Perceived stress, Acculturative stress, International students

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I. INTRODUCTION

Now a day internationalization of higher education is gaining interest due to various needs of the international community (Baharak & Roselan, 2013). As a result student prefers to cross their home country for further education. International student are individuals who temporarily reside in a country other than their country of origin in order to participate in international educational exchange as students (Paige, 1990);with the expectation of higher quality education compared to what can be obtained in their home country (Marcketti, Mhango & Gregoire, 2006 cited in Loretta G. E., 2009; UNESCO, 2013).Due to the effect of globalization, student mobility is rising, in 2014 alone over four million students left their home countries to study overseas and it is expected that this figure will double by 2024 (British Council, 2014; OECD, 2014). Statistics data shows India and China are the leading source countries in sending students to overseas for educational career (King, Findlay, & Ahrens, 2010; Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007). According to data provided by Project Atlas in 2010, 200,621 Indian students were studying abroad, up from 139,459 in 2006 (Project Atlas, 2015).

At the time of transition to university level may create stress on students; however, international students have the added pressures associated with life in a new environment, learning the new language and culture. The combination of these stresses reduces their ability to perform than native students (Mehta & Beri, 2017). Moreover, Mori, (2000) and Sandhu, (1995) reported that upon arrival to a new country, international students struggle with challenging tasks related to acculturation. As indicated in the above, India is a huge source for international students, however, in recent time the country (India) has become one of the important centres of education for international students. Many students from different parts of the world are now enrolled in Indian universities and colleges (Mehta & Beri, 2017). The growth in the number of foreign students in India has been impressive and in 2011-2012 alone received about 5625 international students from different part of the world (AISHE, 2014).

Acculturative stress

Since, International students have limited personal resources that enable them to cope when they enter the foreign country and, as a result, are likely to show considerably greater difficulty acculturating than established ethnic groups, so called acculturative stress (Hayes & Lin, 1994; Berry & Kim, 1988). According to Berry (2003) acculturative stress occurs when acculturation experiences cause problems for individuals; it is a negative side effect of acculturation (Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008). It is the stress caused by mental and physical tension and difficulty one experiences in the acculturation process (Hovey & Magana, 2000).Acculturative stress can produce a reduction of individuals' psychological, physical, and social health (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987). It is known that a certain extent of stress is helpful in providing and promoting motivation in studying and acculturation process (Bovier, Chamot, & Pernege, 2004; LePine & Jackson, 2004). However, International students experience unique transitional issues that contribute to far higher levels of acculturative stress than individuals of origin (Hofmann, 2010). Berry & Kim (1987) pointed out that there are five different acculturating groups, including immigrants, refugees, native peoples, ethnic groups, and sojourners. Studies made so far do not pay equal research attention to different acculturating groups. Though, studies have found that international students have a higher level of

acculturative stress compared to other acculturating groups (Berry et al., 1987; Kuo & Roysircar, 2004), however, less attention is given in this regard.

Perceived social support and Acculturative stress

Perceived social support is the perception of the availability of support if it is needed (Barrera, 2000). It is confirmed that social support acts as a fence to stress by providing enough resources to cope with the negative results of stressful events (Cobb, 1976). Zimet et al. (1988) confirmed that perceived social support should be seen and measured from three domains: support from family, support from friends, and support from a significant other. As far as the relationship of perceived social support and acculturative stress is concerned there are inadequate evidences in published research data. Thus, the current study will strive to fill the gap. Nevertheless, there are few evidenced works in this regard. Ditzen et al. (2008) investigated that social support reduces psychological responses to stress and there is a significant negative relationship between social support and stress (Park et al., 2013).

Perceived social support and Perceived stress

Phillips (2013) stated that perceived stress is the perception an individual feels about the general stress situations of their life and their ability to handle it. Originally the idea of perceived stress scale was developed by Cohen et al. (1983), and it refers to the measure of the extent to which events in one's life are considered as stressful (Cohen, Kamarck & Mermelstein, 1983). Thus, perceived stress is not actual stress, but has to do with what we tell ourselves we are experiencing (Justice, 1987). The causes of stress include life changes, chronic pressures and hassles which, according to Lazarus and Folkman, interactions with the environment that were essentially negative as cited by (Seaward, 1994). Social support includes social resources that individuals perceive to be available or that are actually offered to them, which could help protect against psychological problems and suggested that it is found to be one of the most important protective factors for students in stressful events (Tao et al., 2000). Teoh and Rose (2001) mentioned that lower level of social support is one of the predictors of psychological problems and associated with higher levels of depression, anxiety, attention problems, thought problems, social problems, somatic complaints, and lower self esteem. It was also found that students who perceived their social resources increased had lower levels of psychological problems. This shows when students have good social support that the impact of a stressful situation can be decreased. Moreover, receiving emotional support and companionship may encourage effective adaptation among students in facing and coping with uncontrollable events; social support can buffer the impact of stress by increasing the effectiveness of coping efforts, which in turn decrease distress among students (e.g., Lakey & Cohen, 2000; Holahan et al., 1995).

Justification of the study

Hypothetically, perceived social support and its components (support from family, friend, and significant other) have been discussed with respect to psychosocial adjustment, mental health and distress symptoms and so on. Yet, there are no plenty research findings looking into the correlation with perceived social support and acculturative stress as well their moderating effect of perceived social support in the relationship between perceived stress and

acculturative stress among students who cross their home country and reside in host culture, it is insufficient. Even if, India has become the host of large number of foreign students (Mehta & Beri, 2017), however, the problems that will inevitably occur in international students, perceived stress and acculturative stress seem lacks attention or ignored; literature search indicated there were no published studies on acculturative stress among international students (Kefale & Nalini, 2019). Therefore, researchers should give attention and study on the acculturation of international students.

Hence, the current study is coined to examine the interaction effect of perceived social support (its composite score), its three components (support from friend, family, and significant others) and perceived stress on acculturative stress on Ethiopian international students in India. Hopefully, the findings of this study will greatly assist institutions or Universities of India which give admission to foreign students to better plan and enhance the learning and living experiences of international students and give information to the Ethiopian ministry of science and higher education. Thus, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. Perceived social support and its components would be significantly and negatively associated with acculturative stress.
2. Perceived stress would be correlated significantly and positively with acculturative stress.
3. Perceived social support (its composite score) will moderate the relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress.
4. Components of perceived social support (support from friend, family, and significant others) would moderate the relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress.

II. METHODOLOGY

Sample

In this research purposive sampling technique was employed in order to obtain the respondents. A total of 330 questionnaires were distributed in five universities of India (Andhra University, KIIT University, IIT Delhi University, Symbiosis International University and Punjabi University) with the help of Ethiopian students' association of the respective universities and 299 responses were obtained (91% response rate). From 299, some 19 responses were voided because of incomplete items (11) and some 8 questionnaires look carelessly filled and not included in the analysis. Finally, only 280 students' response was considered for actual analysis. The proportion of male students was high 251 (89.6%) as compared to female students 29 (10.4%). The largest number of students are married 152 (54.3%) and 128 (45.7%) of them were single or not married. The large proportion of the respondents 124 (44.3%) age was between 31-40 years; 82 (29.3%) were age 41 and above; and the rest 74 (26.4%) were age 30 and below. The majority of the students 118 (42.1%) reported that they had been in India for one year and below, followed by 108 (38.6%) students stayed from one year to three years and the rest 54 (19.3%) were been in India for three years and above.

III. MEASURES AND INSTRUMENTS

Acculturative Stress Scale

Respondents' acculturative stress was measured by Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (ASSIS) designed by Sandhu & Asrabadi, (1994). It consists of 36 items, to be rated on 5-point Likert-type scale (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3 = unsure, 4=agree 5 = strongly agree) that assesses adjustment problems. It comprised of seven subscales, including Stress due to Change/Culture Shock (3 items), Perceived Discrimination (8 items), Perceived Hate/Rejection (5 items), Homesickness (4 items), Fear (4 items), Guilt (2 items), and Nonspecific Concerns (10 items). The reported Cronbach's alpha for the 36-item scale ranged from .92 to .95 (Constantine et al., 2004; Zhang, 2012), which indicated a high degree of internal consistency.

Perceived Social Support Scale

The multidimensional perceived social support scale is formulated by Zimet et al., (1988); is a 12-item scale that measures perceived support from three domains: support from family, support from friends, and support from a significant other. Each perspective has 4 items to measure the perceived social support from the three perspectives. Participants completing this scale are asked to indicate their agreement with items on a 7-point Likert-type scale, ranging from *very strongly disagree* to *very strongly agree*. Total and subscale scores range from 1 to 7, with higher scores, suggesting greater levels of perceived social support. Both the Family and Friends subscales demonstrated high internal consistency (.88 and .90, respectively), whereas the significant other subscale demonstrated barely adequate reliability (.61). The total MSPSS demonstrated high internal consistency with an alpha of .86 and in the current research it was 0.93, which is much satisfactory to use.

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

Perceived stress scale created by Cohen et al. (1983) and used by various researchers. It consists of 10 items marked with a 4-point Likert scale of 0 to 4 for each an individual item. The scale results are acquired by reversing the scores on positively shaped items (Q. 4, 5, 7, & 8) and after summing the scores across all 10 items with a possible total score of 0-40. The results of the summing scales are interpreted as, the higher the total scores of perceived stress scale the more an individual is susceptible to fall into depression situations (Cohen, 1988; Hewitt, Flett & Moscher, 1992). Studies show this instrument has good reliability with Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.84 to 0.86 Cohen et al., (1983) and 0.85 on the study of (Lee, 2014).

Research Design and Procedures

The present study was carried out based on correlational design with cross-sectional data collection (one time data collection). The study was anonymous and no personal identifying information on the questionnaire. The confidentiality of the participants was strictly protected. In Table 1 below descriptive statistics (mean and reliability coefficients) of the study variables are presented. Pearson product moment correlation was applied to answer the first hypothesis; and for the rest hypotheses moderation analysis of process Hayes was used. Before anything to do normality of the data was checked through measuring skewness and kurtosis coefficients, histograms and it indicated most of the items are normally distributed. Thus, skewness and kurtosis statistics were acceptable because they are different from and not so distant from 0.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 1. Mean, Pearson Correlations and Reliability results for Research Variables.

Variables	Mean	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
I Acculturative stress	2.95	[.94]					
II Perceived Social support	4.79	-.501**	[.93]				
III Family support	4.18	-.250**	.601**	[.80]			
IV Friend support	5.60	-.230**	.697**	.249**	[.92]		
V Significant others support	4.58	-.362**	.714**	.355**	.526**	[.89]	
VI Perceived stress	1.69	.462**	-.396**	-.290**	-.144*	-.292**	[.84]

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). **

Results in [X] are alpha coefficients of the respective variables.

As it can be displayed in the above table 1, perceived social support and its components (family support, friend support, and support from significant others) have significantly and negatively associated with acculturative stress ($r = -.50, p < .01$); ($r = -.25, p < .01$); ($r = -.23, p < .01$); and ($r = -.36, p < .01$) respectively. In addition, perceived social support and its components (family support, friend support and support from significant others) have correlated with perceived stress significantly in a negative manner ($r = -.40, p < .01$); ($r = -.29, p < .01$); ($r = -.14, p < .01$); and ($r = -.29, p < .01$) respectively. Moreover, perceived stress was significantly and positively related to acculturative stress ($r = .46, P < .01$). The correlation coefficient (Pearson r) is a standardized measure of an observed effect which is commonly used to measure the size of an effect, and the values of $+(-) .1$ represent small effect, $+(-) .3$ is a medium effect and $+(-) .5$ is a large effect (Field, 2013).

Moderation Analyses

Moderation analysis of process macro of Hays was applied to investigate the interaction effect of perceived social support on the relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress.

Table 2. Interaction effect of Perceived social support and perceived stress on acculturative stress (N=280).

Model Summary and Coefficient Results						
	Coefficient (b)	Se	T	P	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.3995	.0932	25.744	.0000	2.2160	2.5830
Perceived stress	.3422	.0533	6.418	.0000	.2372	.4472
P/Social Support	-.4516	.0833	-5.423	.0000	-.6155	-.2876
Interaction	.1041	.0419	2.486	.0135	.0217	.1865
R	R ²	MSE	F	df1	df2	P
.5899	.3480	.3305	49.100	3.000	276.000	.0000
Perceived Stress_X_P/Social Support		ΔR ²	F	df1	df2	P
		.0146	6.179	1.000	276.000	.0135

Product terms key: Interaction: Perceived stress x Perceived social support

Table 2 above reveals, the total variance explained by the model with predictors of perceived stress and perceived social support main effect accounted 34.8%, variance of acculturative stress, $F(3,276) = 49.10, p = .000$. In addition, the interaction effect (perceived stress \times perceived social support) accounted additional 1.5%, the variance of the outcome variable, $F(1,276) = 6.179, p = .0135$. Moreover, the predictor variable (perceived stress) and moderator variable perceived social support (its total score) significantly predict the outcome variable (acculturative stress) $b = .342, t = 6.42, p < .001$; and $b = -.452, t = -5.42, p < .001$ respectively. According to Field (2013) moderation is shown up by a significant interaction effect. Hence, in this study the interaction is highly significant, $b = .104, t = 2.49, p < .05$, so, in the present study the data supported by the hypothesis.

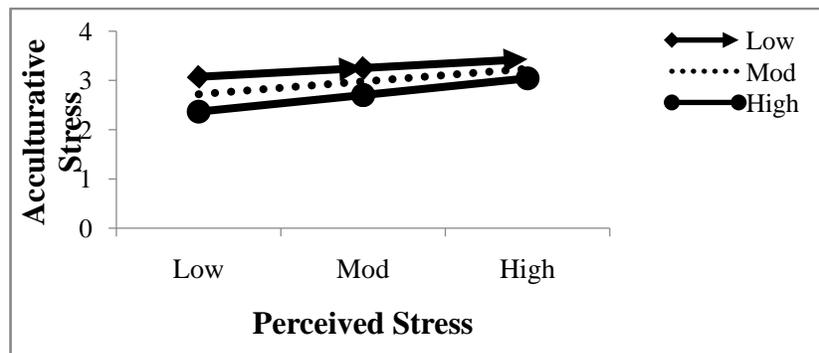


Figure 1. Interaction plots of perceived stress on acculturative stress at three levels of perceived social support (low, moderate and high).

The above figure 1 shows when perceived social support level is low there is a non-significant relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress; whereas at the mean and high value of perceived social support there is a significant positive relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress. Further, it reveals the slopes for the low perceived social support group $t(276) = 4.38, p = .000$; for the mean perceived social support group, $t(276) = 6.42, p = .000$; and the high perceived social support group $t(276) = 5.65, p = .000$, were significantly different from 0. This shows perceived social support significantly moderated the relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress.

Table 3. Interaction effect of Support from friend and perceived stress on acculturative stress (N=280).

Model Summary and Coefficient Results						
	Coefficient (b)	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.3620	.0926	25.512	.0000	2.1798	2.5443
Perceived stress	.3657	.0526	6.949	.0000	.2621	.4693
Friend support	-.4683	.0853	-5.489	.0000	-.6362	-.3003
Interaction	.1210	.0421	2.875	.0044	.0381	.2039
R	R²	MSE	F	df1	df2	P
.5825	.3393	.3349	47.251	3.000	276.00	.0000
Perceived Stress \times Friend support			ΔR^2	F	df1	df2
			.0198	8.2634	1.000	276.00
						P
						.0044

Product terms key: Interaction: Perceived stress \times Friend support

Table 3 above shows perceived stress and support from friends main effect accounted 33.9%, variance of acculturative stress, $F_{(3,276)} = 47.25$, $p < .001$, whereas the buffering effect (perceived stress \times support from friends) accounted additional 1.98%, the variance of the outcome variable, $F_{(1,276)} = 8.263$, $p = .0044$.

Moreover the independent variable (perceived stress) and moderator variable (support from friends) significantly predict the dependent variable (acculturative stress) $b = .366$, $t = 6.95$, $p < .001$; and $b = -.468$, $t = -5.49$, $p < .001$ respectively. Hence, in this study the interaction is highly significant, $b = .121$, $t = 2.88$, $p < .01$, hence the data supported by the hypothesis.

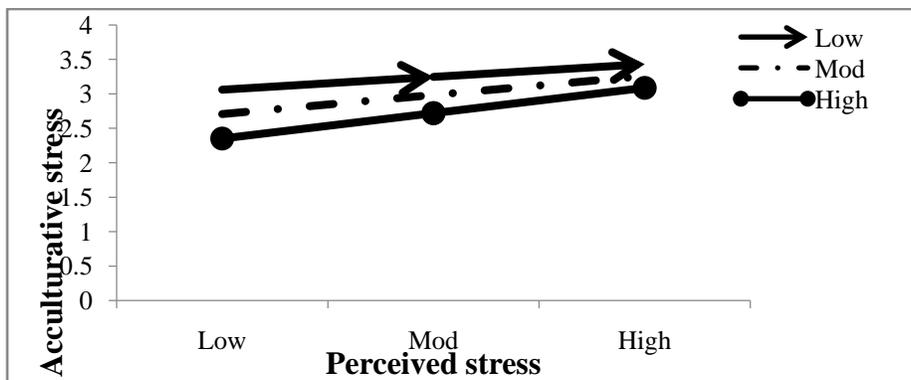


Figure 2. Interaction plots of perceived stress on acculturative stress at three levels of support from friend (low, moderate and high).

Figure 2 above displays the slopes for the low support from friend group, $t(276) = 3.87$, $p = .000$; for the mean support from friend group, $t(276) = 6.91$, $p = .000$; and the high support from friend group, $t(276) = 6.22$, $p = .000$, were significantly different from 0. Thus, support from friend is significantly moderate the relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress. Therefore, in the current research support from friend significantly buffered the effect of perceived stress on acculturative stress.

Table 4. The Interaction effect of support from significant others and perceived stress on acculturative stress (N=280).

Model Summary and Coefficient Results						
	Coefficient (b)	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.3579	.0918	25.682	.0000	2.1771	2.5386
Perceived stress	.3660	.0523	7.000	.0000	.2630	.4689
Significant others support	-.4576	.0818	-5.597	.0000	-.6186	-.2968
Interaction	.1136	.0423	2.688	.0076	.0304	.1968
R	R²	MSE	F	df1	df2	P
.5919	.3504	.3293	49.617	3.000	276.00	.0000
Perceived Stress \times Significant others support	ΔR^2	F	df1	df2	P	
	.0170	7.227	1.000	276.00	.0076	

Product terms key: Interaction: Perceived stress \times Significant others support

The table 4 above depicts, the total variance explained by the model with predictors of perceived stress and support from significant others main effect accounted 35.0%, variance of acculturative stress , $F(3,276) = 49.62, p=.000$.

Further, the interaction effect (perceived stress \times support from significant others) accounted additional 1.7%, the variance of the outcome variable, $F(1,276) = 7.227, p=.0076$. Moreover, the predictor variable (perceived stress) and moderator variable support from significant others significantly predict the outcome variable (acculturative stress) $b=.366, t=7.00, p=.000$; and $b=-.458, t=-5.59, p=.000$ respectively. According to Field (2013) moderation is shown up by a significant interaction effect. Hence, in this study the interaction is highly significant, $b=.114, t=2.69, p=.0076$, hence in the present study the data supported by the hypothesis. In addition the following interaction plot also clearly shows us support from significant others moderates the relationship of perceived stress and acculturative stress.

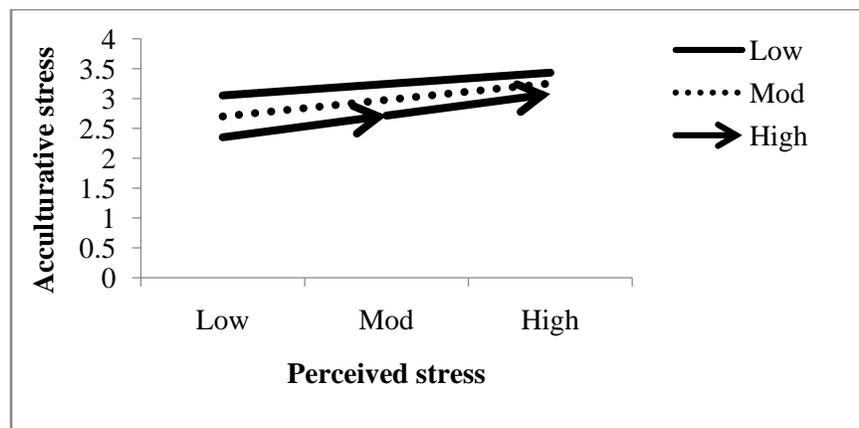


Figure 1. Interaction plots of perceived stress on acculturative stress at three levels of support from significant others (low, moderate and high).

As it is illustrated in the above figure 4.6, the slope for the low support from significant others group, $t(276) = 4.11, p = .000$; for the mean support from significant others group, $t(276) = 6.86, p = .000$; and the high support from significant others group, $t(276) = 6.05, p = .000$, were significantly different from 0. Thus, support from significant others is significantly moderate the relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress.

Table 5. The Interaction effect of Family support and perceived stress on acculturative stress (N=280).

Model Summary and Coefficient Results						
	Coefficient (b)	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.3109	.0957	24.157	.0000	2.1226	2.4992
Perceived stress	.3821	.0539	7.086	.0000	.2760	.4883
Family support	-.2275	.1028	-2.213	.0277	-.4298	-.0252
Interaction	.0425	.0537	0.791	.4297	-.0632	.1482
R	R²	MSE	F	df1	df2	P
.5069	.2569	.3766	31.812	3.000	276.00	.0000
Perceived Stress \times Family support		ΔR^2	F	df1	df2	P
		.0017	.6255	1.000	276.00	.4297

Product terms key: Interaction: Perceived stress \times Family support

As it is shown in table 5 above, the total variance explained by the model with predictors of perceived stress and support from family main effect accounted 25.7%, variance of acculturative stress, $F(3,276) = 31.81, p=.000$, whereas the interaction effect (perceived stress \times support from family) accounted additional 0.2%, the variance of the outcome variable, $F(1,276) = 0.63, p=.429$. Moreover, the predictor variable (perceived stress) and moderator variable support from family significantly predict the outcome variable (acculturative stress) $b=.382, t=7.10, p=.000$; and $b=-.228, t=0.79, p=.0277$ respectively. According to Field (2013) moderation is shown up by a significant interaction effect. Hence, in this study the interaction is not significant, $b=.043, t=2.69, p=.4297$, the result is against the hypothesis. It means support from family is not significantly moderate the relationship of perceived stress and acculturative stress.

Hence, the components of perceived social support have partially moderate the association of the two stress variables (perceived and acculturative stress); support from friend and support from significant others significantly buffer the effect of perceived stress on acculturative stress, whereas support from family has not played a moderating role between perceived stress and acculturative stress..

V. DISCUSSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Unlike domestic students, International students who live in the host culture have the added pressures associated with life in a new environment, learning the new language, new education system, new culture and so on. The combination of these sources of stress reduces their ability to perform (Mehta & Beri, 2017). Thus, international students and acculturative stress issues should be given attention (Kefale & Nalini, 2019); unless with the increasing number of stressed post graduate students across the globe, neglecting the causes may inadvertently expand the problem (Par, Hassan, Uba & Baba, 2015). Therefore, the major objective of the current study was to examine the interaction effect of perceived social support, components of perceived social support (family support, friend support and support from significant others) and perceived stress on acculturative stress on Ethiopian international students in India. Accordingly, the results showed perceived stress was correlated significantly and positively with acculturative stress and; perceived social support and its components significantly and negatively correlated with acculturative stress (see table 1 above). The present findings are consistent with the findings of Bai (2016) and Mathew (2018), that perceived social support significantly and negatively predicted acculturative stress; perceived social support facilitated international students' socio-cultural adjustment process and it was stated that sources of support were linked to cultural empathy, impersonal endeavors and cultural relations (Yusoff, 2012 & Savicki, 2010). In addition, Lee (2014) and Kane (2004) also depicted that acculturative stress and perceived stress are correlated, high perceived stress levels leads to high acculturative stress levels while low perceived stress subsequently leads to low acculturative stress levels. Thus, acculturative stress is directly related to perceived-stress as perceived stress may lead to high acculturative stress levels.

Perceived social support was found to moderate the relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress. Thus, this finding is congruent with the following few research findings. Social support is a crucial instrument or determinant in overcoming acculturative stress (Cai, Zhang, Zhou & Zhu, 2013); social support can alleviate

acculturative stress and help people achieve a better mental health status (Han, Kim, Lee, Pistulka, & Kim, 2007) and social support also plays as moderation and buffering effect of distress symptoms (Zhang, Yue, 2012).

Of the three components of perceived social support, two of them (friend support and support from significant others) found to moderate the relationship between perceived stress and acculturative stress. However, family support could not moderate the association of perceived stress and acculturative stress in this study. As it was discussed, perceived social support is negatively associated with acculturative stress (Thomas & Choi, 2006; Yeh & Inose, 2003). In other ways, Thomas and Choi (2006) found that students who had less perceived social support were more likely to experience higher levels of acculturative stress than their counterparts. Similarly, Yeh & Inose (2003) also found out that higher levels of social support satisfaction and social connectedness predicted lower levels of acculturative stress. So, this indicates social support is a crucial instrument to bring out individuals from stressful scenarios.

Moreover, the findings of the present study might have some limitations and should be seen in light of its limitations. The data collected from five universities only and the data was quantitative and analysed quantitatively. Hence, future research as much as possible should include qualitative data, use mixed research approach to explore the problem of international students and include all those institutions which give admission for international students.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study investigated the moderating effect of perceived social support (its composite score), components of perceived social support (support from family, friend, and significant others) and perceived stress on acculturative stress in Ethiopian international students. Perceived social support and its components (support from family, friend and significant others) were found to be negated and significantly correlated acculturative stress; whereas, perceived stress was significantly and positively associated with acculturative stress. Moreover, perceived social support (its total score) moderated the effect of perceived stress on acculturative stress. Except, support from family, perceived social support components (support from friend and support from significant others) moderated the effect of perceived stress on acculturative stress.

In this research it is recommended that institutions which give admission to international students and ministry of science and higher education or ministry of education should support these students in many aspects. Equipping foreign students with necessary information about the host culture and providing both material and psychological resources enable them buffer stressful events during acculturation experiences and profitably minimize the problem.

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