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Acculturation and self-esteem as predictors of acculturative stress among international students at the University of Wollongong

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**ACCULTURATION AND SELF-ESTEEM AS PREDICTORS
OF ACCULTURATIVE STRESS AMONG INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of**

Doctor of Public Health

from

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

ASHRAF GHOLAMREZAEI

Department of Public Health and Nutrition

December 1995

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis is carried out by me and it does not have any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in this thesis.

Signed

Date..December..1995

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ABSTRACT

International students travel from their homelands in search of continuing education in overseas countries and there is a general expectation that they will encounter acculturative stress.

This study highlights variables such as acculturation, self-esteem and socio-demographic factors which play an important role in the acculturative stress of international students at The University of Wollongong, in Australia.

One hundred and seventy-three international students from 11 nationalities at Wollongong University completed a questionnaire which assesses acculturative stress in relationship to acculturation, self-esteem and socio-demographic variables.

The results indicated that acculturation, self-esteem and nationality are the best predictors of acculturative stress. Multiple regression analysis indicated that these variables account for 59% of the variance in acculturative stress. As hypothesised, higher levels of acculturative stress are associated with lower levels of acculturation and self-esteem. Furthermore, the associations between acculturative stress and age, financial situation, visiting home, place of residence, language background and religion are significant. The study results pointed out that acculturative stress is not significantly associated with marital status, faculty, duration of stay in Australia, sex or fees payment.

The findings of this study suggest that it would be important for educators and target group assessors in the field of mental health to give special attention to international students in Australia.

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