UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ADJUSTMENT NEEDS AND COPING STRATEGIES OF

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHERN

GHANA.

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature…………………………….. Date……………................

Name:…………………………………………………………………………

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature…………………….. Date………………....

Name:…………………………………………………………………………

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the coping strategies that international students of the universities in southern Ghana adopted for the adjustment needs they encounter. The study further sought to find out if significant difference existed between the adjustment needs of male and female international students, and how the respondents cope with these adjustment needs together with the different coping strategies adopted by international students of public and private universities. The study also explored the adjustment needs and coping strategies of the young and mature international students. The single, married and those in relationships' adjustment needs, significant differences and their coping strategies were sought. The descriptive design of the quantitative research approach was employed in this study. The questionnaire was the research instrument used to elicit responses. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (Independent samples t-test and Kruskal-Wallis H test). The findings were that there was no significant difference in the adjustment needs experienced by male and female international students. It was also revealed that coping strategies were not dependent on gender. It is recommended, among other things, that policy makers and management of the universities must take into account the reality of the adjustment needs that international students encounter and look for effective ways of making their stay in Ghana's universities less stressful.

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DEDICATION

To Oforiwaa, Adwoa, Fremponmaa, Yaw and Baffour. Glory be to God.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Education is increasingly seen as a major contributor to national wealth, economic development and personal development. Many people from different parts of the world have been attracted to other countries in pursuit of academic laurels. The practice of international students undertaking studies in countries other than their own is on the increase and has become a dominant phenomenon in this present era. This increase could be attributed to current trends of globalization. According to World Education Services (2012), the number of international students reached more than 3.5 million around the world in 2010, an increase of some 60% from the figure of 2.1 million in 2002. Some students choose to study abroad simply because the field they wish to study is not readily available in their home country. In particular, this is true for students from developing countries who want to avail themselves of the enriched learning experiences, new technology and the advances that are not available in their home countries. Some of these students plan to return to their home countries after achieving their qualifications in order to help develop their countries. Others stay in the host country permanently, contributing to the so-called "brain drain which has become a problem for some developing nations (Altbach, 2013).

International students go through many challenges. Some of the challenges that international students in Ghana's universities go through include the following:

1. Cultural challenges
2. Social challenges

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3. Academic challenges

4. Financial challenges

5. Emotional challenges

6. Accommodation challenges

International students have a hard time in grappling with their problems. It is with this background that the researcher decided to research into the adjustment needs and coping strategies that international students in the universities in the southern part of the country (Ghana) are going through. Other researchers have conducted research in similar areas like challenges of international students in some particular universities, but this work is taking a broader terrain by looking at both the public and the private universities in southern Ghana.

Background to the Study

The role of education in human resource and national development has been realized since time immemorial. Consequently, nations have made strenuous efforts of giving their citizens quality education at all levels of education. Individuals and countries sponsor students either in or outside their home countries to enroll in programmes at universities that would satisfy their developmental needs. Some families and individuals also expend their limited resources on university education in local and foreign institutions. Since the inception of university education over eight hundred (800) years ago, it has spread to all continents and all countries, and students' enrolments have increased markedly (Mazzarol, 2012).

According to the Institute of International Education (IIE), the number of international students in the United States' colleges and universities has

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increased from 34,000 students in the academic year 1953-54 to 974,926 students in the academic year 2014-15 (IIE, 2015).

Studies show that international students undergo different challenges during their education abroad. These issues vary from challenges in mastering a foreign language, cultural norms, and food tastes, as well as the social shock of being away from family and friends. These challenges are serious especially for those students who are travelling into countries with different cultures (Lee, 2015). A research study published in the *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, found that nearly 40 % of international students report having no close American friends and say that they wish they had more interactions with American students (Gareis, 2012).

In spite of the economic and non-economic benefits that international students bring to their host countries, the research shows that more efforts should be made by college and university administrators to promote better adjustment of international students in higher education institutions.

Many researchers have been interested in studying what factors relate to students adjustment to colleges and universities and what is the relationship between adjustment and student's persistence and graduation from college. Spady (1970), Bean (1980, 1982) and Tinto (1975, 1986) are among the most cited studies that researchers consider while studying the adjustment of college students.

Spady (1970) wrote that students who drop out of college exhibit behaviors similar to those individuals who decide to commit suicide. Spady used Durkheim's suicide theory (1951) to formulate his hypothesis of students' attrition, which later influenced Tinto's theoretical framework.

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According to Durkheim's suicide theory, individuals who decide to commit suicide withdraw from their communities due to feeling of lack of support from their environment and lack of shared values with them. Spady connects this theory with the college student's decision to withdraw from college. In a study of 683 first year undergraduate students at the University of Chicago, Spady (1970) concluded that college students who did not socially interact with other students and did not feel integrated in their colleges were likely to drop out of college. On the other hand, students will persist and graduate if they get a strong feeling of shared value and support from their colleges and universities.

Tinto (1975) studied the process that students go through before dropping out of college. Tinto emphasized the academic and social atmosphere of the university on the student's decision to drop out. He believed that both social and academic adjustment to college increased the commitment to college and led to student's persistence and graduation. Tinto (1986) also discussed how students who struggle with or fail to successfully work through the new experiences (such as separating from the family, and accepting new values, beliefs, and behaviors into their worldview) at college are less likely to persist and graduate from college.

Bean (1980, 1982) emphasized the importance of student's beliefs, attitudes and actual experiences on the student's decision to persist or drop out from college. He noted that students' beliefs are influenced by their experiences and their beliefs affect their attitudes toward their college experiences. Bean concluded that these beliefs and attitudes are important

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factors that affect students' decision to drop out from college or their decision to persist to graduation.

Russel and Petrie (1992) have studied other factors in students' adjustment to college. They found that personal/ individual factors such as self-esteem/efficacy, depression and anxiety are important factors influencing students' adjustment to college. The inclusion of personal factors to social and academic integration expanded the works of Tinto (1975) and Bean (1980, 1982).

Russel and Petrie's study show that these personal factors, in addition to those of previous studies, play important roles in students' decision to withdraw from college or persist and graduate. Baker and Siryk (1989) presented a comprehensive dimension of adjustment. They incorporated the theories of Bean (1980, 1982) Tinto (1975, 1986), Russel, and Petrie (1992) in developing a comprehensive measure for studying student adjustment to college. They assumed that starting university life, which is a significant change in many students' lives, requires adjustment to a variety of demands and is a multifaceted process. They stressed that social, academic, institutional attachments and individual/personal factors are important aspects that affect students' adjustment and their decisions to graduate.

Humans are social animals and a supportive network is vital, especially when coping with stress and problems. International students are in a peculiar situation, as they have left their social support networks behind. This makes them particularly vulnerable. They need to build a new social network in their new environment. The importance of sojourners' available social networks in mediating stressful circumstances has been shown repeatedly (Brein & David,

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1971; Hechanova-Alampay, Beehr, Christiansen & Horn, 2002; Lee, Koeske, & Sales, 2004).

Being a university student is stressful for everyone, but domestic students do not have to deal with the same problems as international students. In addition to being deprived of their social network, international students may face language barriers, immigration difficulties, culture shock and homesickness (Sümer et al., 2008). Many researchers have highlighted the fact that international students encounter more, and other, difficulties than domestic students do (L. Bradley, Parr, Lan, Bingi & Gould, 1995; Forstat, 1951; Furnham, 2004; Kaczmarek, Matlock, Merta, Ames & Ross, 1995; Sandhu, 1994).

Sümer, Poyrazli and Grahame (2008) found that international students with better social support are less depressed. They also found that depression and anxiety are interrelated among these students. Khawaja and Dempsey (2007) name social isolation as a contributor to the psychological distress of the international students. Thus, we see that a lack of adequate social support networks is correlated with depression and anxiety.

Some students feel more comfortable around people from their own country; people who speak the same language and share the same cultural and historical frame of reference (Al- Sharideh & Goe, 1998; Antler, 1970; Bochner, McLeod & Lin, 1977). To rely on the presence of fellow citizens is a strategy that is dependent on the number of compatriots who are around. Many universities around Europe have a large population of Norwegian students, so it is perfectly possible to form cliques consisting of Norwegians only, including other Scandinavians; the odd Swede or Dane. Such social groups do

not make an effort to learn the local language or get to know people who are not Norwegian (or at least Scandinavian) and they may hang out at bars/pubs that are targeted at Scandinavians. (Altbach, 2010).

Such places are common in many European countries, catering to expatriates from different nations. These venues often serve Norwegian drinks and food and even provide Norwegian newspapers. In other words; the students are doing their best to find a tiny version of Norway abroad, in which they can feel safe and at home, socialising only with co-culturalism. A similar situation pertains at Zenith University in Ghana, Nigerian students outnumber their Ghanaian counterparts in this University. This has resulted in the creation of Nigerian food joints and restaurants where they sell local Nigerian dishes. Al-Sharideh and Goe (1998) observed that many international students establish social relationships with people who share the same (or a similar) cultural, national, ethnic or religious background. They contended that social relationships with locals only occurred when the international student was unable to form such relationships with others from the same or similar background. Forming ethnic communities within the university context provides international students with social networks that can help them with problems they have in the host society. Of course, what can easily happen is that if there are enough people of the same background, they can form an adhesive ethnic community and then they have no incentive to get to know the locals.

Al-Sharideh and Goe (1998) suggest that international students experience difficulty when trying to interact with locals because they are unfamiliar with the local customs and etiquette. This accidental ignorance may

cause social faux pas' and misunderstandings. Another problem frequently mentioned in the literature (Al-Sharideh & Goe, 1998; Bochner, McLeod, & Lin, 1977; Church, 1982) is the sudden loss of status experienced by international students. All of a sudden, they find themselves in a new environment in which their previous status may not be recognised. This can be a blow to self-esteem and confidence. Not all societies and cultures share the same standards so even if a student enjoyed high social status in his or her home country, this status may not be retained in a new environment. This loss of status can cause emotional stress; thus seeking out social relationships with people of a similar background makes it easier to reclaim the social status that the student was used to in the home country. Marion (1986) contended that co-national groups offer a temporary surrogate for the society the student has left behind and thus alleviate feelings of loneliness, isolation, alienation and homesickness.

As Khawaja and Dempsey (2007) pointed out, some international students are not motivated to interact with the locals of the host country and this could arise because they (the international students) know that they are residing in the host country for a limited period. It is a temporary situation so they are not prepared to expend too much time and effort on getting to know the locals. One could speculate that it might seem easier to merely be acquainted with co-nationals who can provide social support and be a network that the student can keep even after returning to the home country.

International students are often frequently reminded that they are outsiders (Hendricks & Skinner, 1977). Language barriers, cultural

differences, financial and legal situations, lack of ties with the host society and many other factors are clear signs that they do not really belong.

This constant emphasis on the fact that they are merely transients, that they do not belong in the society where they currently reside, could very well be an important contributor to seeking the company of co-nationals. Such milieus create an atmosphere of them" and "us instead of the more ideal "we". Another, related reason for international students to prefer the company of their own kind is that when abroad, they can become insecure about the value of their own culture (Bochner et al., 1977). This insecurity then prompts defensive feelings and a need to maintain their cultural/ethnic/national identity, thus students seek the companionship of co-nationals and/or co-culturals. It is especially the case when the home culture is less affluent or in other ways may seem to be devalued by the host society. Such tension can contribute to international students forming national/ethnic/cultural cliques.

Antler (1970) found that those who interacted most with co-nationals were characterized by a more nationalistic attitude. In his study, students who spent more time with co-nationals were less well adjusted to the host country and also performed less satisfying in their training program. On the other hand, the subjects who had more interaction with the locals, reported themselves to be more active, self-assured and assertive. Naturally, there is a question of causality here. It could be the case that less assertive people would seek out co-nationals because they are not confident enough to approach the locals. It is also plausible to hypothesize that braving the cultural and linguistic barriers by interacting with the locals, could build confidence and assertiveness.

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World Education News and Review (2013) released a report that the percentage of international undergraduate enrollment in the four leading countries in 2009 has significantly increased in comparison to the figures of 2002 (e.g., 67% in Canada, 62% Canada welcomed approximately 260,000 new immigrants, which translates to approximately 712 immigrants arriving every day, one of the highest levels in over 100 years (Statistics Canada, 2016 in the United Kingdom, 43% in Australia, and 13% in the United States) In 2014, Ghana hosted about 10385 foreign students which represented about 3.2% of the entire tertiary students' population of about 315,000. (myjoyonline.com). As the higher education system is increasingly becoming more internationalized and a degree from prestigious foreign countries hold comparative advantages (e.g., higher social status, better professional career, networking opportunities), the number of international students is expected to continuously increase for years to come (Ghazarian, 2014; Lee & Brinton, 1996; Varghese, 2008; Wenhua Zhe, 2013). As the number of international students is on the rise, a variety of problems and challenges involve in overseas study also occur (Andrade, 2006; Gebhard, 2012). Wenhua and Zhe (2013) identify five major adjustment problems international students face in foreign countries, these are: personal psychological issues, academic issues, sociocultural issues, general living issues and language proficiency. According to University World News (2012), the most popular destination with the number of international students was the United States (19%), followed by the United Kingdom (11%), Australia (8%), France (7%), Germany (6%) and Japan (4%). Therefore, it may seem plausible that majority of the research on the challenges facing international students is concentrated on the top three

destinations, namely: the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia (Andrade, 2006); Gebhard, 2012; Huang, 2004; Huang & Brown, 2009; Li et al., 2014; Lin & Scherz, 2014; Marui & Lee, 1995; Roy, 2013; Wenhua & Zhe, 2013). However, some scholars have also maintained that the research on the challenges of international students in non-English speaking counties is still in its infancy and should receive more attention (Ikeguchi, 2012) Murphy-Shigematsu & Shiratsuchi, 2001; Tamaoka & Murphy., 2003). Recently, the Japan Student Services Organizaiton (JASSO) (2014) released a report on trends for a number of international studies. In 1993, there were 48,560 international students in Japan. In 2003, this figure increased to 109,508.By May of 2013; the total number of international students in Japan was 135,518. If international students enrolling in Japanese language institutes are included, this figure rises to 168,145. Although Japan's share of international students seems disproportionately lower than in western countries (e.g., the United States, the United Kingdom), Japan is the top destination in Asia.

There has been an increase in the number of people's attainment of higher education in the recent times. Students enrolment had passed the 100 million mark and that if universities were a country, that country would rank twelfth among the world's largest countries, just after Mexico (UNESCO, 2008). It is not only the numbers of university students that have increased astronomically, but also the range of courses that universities offer has increased manifold. Universities have been providing litany of courses to meet the diverse needs of individuals and nations. Higher education can no longer be discussed in strictly national context but borders on internationalization, which is an embodiment of the whole operation of higher education (Okoli,

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2013). The internationalization of higher education has been a major growth industry worldwide (Bodycott, 2009). People from all walks of life move to different countries to receive higher education with the view to acquiring knowledge and skills that would enable them achieve success in personal, academic and professional endeavors. Across the world, more students choose to study abroad, enrolling in foreign education programmes (Okoli, 2013). In 2009, more than 367 million students attended tertiary education outside their native countries (OECD, 2011). International students have become a respectable population group in academic institutions in most countries the world over. Educational institutions that admit international students also derive immense benefits from them. It is asserted that international students enhance the academic environment by providing resources for the internationalization of the curriculum and promote global understanding through their diverse educational backgrounds and cultures (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004, Popadiuk & Arthur, 2004). In this modern era, curricula of educational institutions that help serve as *pot purri, mixing bowl or melting point* are cherished by well-meaning educationists, especially educational sociologists, who are highly interested in promoting unity in diversity in multi-cultural societies (Denzin, 2012).

Myriad of issues motivate people to opt to study in countries other than theirs. Mazzarol and Soutar (2013) found that demand for international education is driven by expectation to raise the graduates' economic and social status especially within the higher education. They also found that the historical and colonial link between host and home countries play a role in determining where students travel for study. Their study revealed that for

many countries in Asia and Africa in particular, lack of access to higher education is a key driver for international student flow. Hendricks & Skinner (1999) opined that international students are often frequently reminded that they are outsiders. They have peculiar needs created by language barriers, cultural differences, and lack of ties with the host society. The constant subtle reminders on the fact that they do not "belong" in the society where they currently reside could create a situation that is capable of hindering their academic success and social adjustment.

It has also been realised that economic and cultural forces play an important role in shaping international students' migration market (Dreher & Potvaara, 2005). A study conducted in Ghana to ascertain factors influencing graduates' decision on where to have further studies indicated that the availability of quality academic facilities and supervision, employment prospects after graduation, desire to have international touch and society's regards for foreign education pull graduates to pursue advance studies in universities outside the country of origin (Kuranchie, Sarkodie & Acquah, 2014).

Commencing academic journey in a foreign land is usually daunting. This is because there are marked differences in cultural, social and economic orientations of different countries. International students come with diverse cultural and educational orientations from their home countries, which can hinder their adjustment and commencement of their academic pursuits. The early days of their stay are daunting and bewildering. Foreign students face a number of challenges, which negatively influence their academic work. The challenges may act alone or in conjunction with others to affect foreign

students' adjustment and studies. Students adjustment to university is one key variable linked to student attrition. A student's ability to successfully move into and 'fit' into the culture of an institution dictates whether that student will terminate his/her education prior to completion of a degree (Tinto, 2004). Cameron and Kirknan's (2010) metaanalysis also disclosed that entrance into universities was a crucial time for those from international locations. They, therefore, suggest that universities ought to provide support and guidance for international students to enable them acquire the necessary academic, social and cultural competence to come to terms with the challenges of cultural shock.

To avert or minimize the challenges that students face, universities do offer orientations for both domestic and international students to facilitate their adjustment on campus. An orientation, which usually lasts a number of days, is given to students to make them familiar with the academic and social demands of university education. While some institutions have separate and distinct orientation programmes for foreign and domestic students, others have same orientation for all students. It is unsound, therefore, to assume that all students (foreign and domestic) have the same orientation needs, hence fashioning the same programme for them. Clearly, international students are heterogeneous and multi-cultural, and the students imbued with different experiences. Appropriate strategies are required to help them adjust and adapt themselves to the new learning environment. In addition, existing international students who have knowledge about the newness they encountered do assist the fresh students to adjust smoothly on campus. Foreign students and their groups at advance levels of their education do offer social support to fresh

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students. Colvin and Jaffer (2011) assert that international student groups offer key support to first year international students although they recognize the importance and value of the relationship they forge with domestic students as well. Social support was found to be a strong predictor for International students' academic success. In the study, social support acted as an insulator from harmful effects of stress, which resulted in perceived control and ability to cope with the stress from the first year experience (DeBarard, et al, 2010). Regrettably, it has been found that many foreign students, most often, do not seek assistance from foreign students in advance levels to deal with the challenges they encounter (Wilson & Lizzio, 2008).

Many foreigners are now attending universities in Ghana compared to some years back. This influx of international students especially Nigerians to Ghana may be attributed to the quality of university education that exits in Ghana and the political stability that prevails in Ghana. Thus, since the inception of Ghanaian fourth republic, there has been transfer of power from one democratically elected president to another, this makes Ghana's political stability unique compared to other countries in the West African sub-region. University education has become fascinating to many young people because for many of these young people, university is the best time of life. These years of blissfulness can be undermined by several adjustment situations and experiences in the university even to those who are natives of the home country, this adjustment needs are therefore very cumbersome to international students due to the cultural shock they are likely to go through. As indicated by Dyson and Renk (2006), attending a university for the first time can be a stressful experience for university students in general and international

students in particular. This means for international students, the stress levels can be very serious.

A university is a new setting or environment, therefore it could trigger different reactions among non-native students. Habibah, Noordin and Mahyuddin (2010) opined that life at the University for the International Student could be both exciting and challenging.

The increased personal freedom of being in the university can be a wonderful feeling, presenting the opportunity to become more individualistic. O'Neill (2009) as cited in Mudhovozi (2012) added that since parental control ceases, the student is confronted with a newfound freedom. On the other hand, Tao, Dong, Pratt, Hunsberger, and Pancer (2000) indicated that a foreign student in a university has to reconstruct his or her personal relations in a new environment and this often causes mental and physical distress.

The university environment is drastically different from what pertains in the normal rural or urban life of the country so even for Ghanaian students, adjustment becomes an issue. This situation is compounded for international students since they have to adjust not only to the university setting but also the culture of the country of study (in this case, Ghana).

Statement of the Problem

In addition to the normal weight of challenges, which all university students encounter, international students bear additional challenges as part of their university study experience. Some studies appeared to address some of the challenges that international students go through. Most of these researchers found the presence of stressful situations in the first year of university education for all international students. This may be because of the transition

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from pre-university schooling to the university. An example of such studies is that of Grebot and Barumandzadeh (2005), which found that during the first year, there is an increase in the experience of stress. This work sought answers to some of these questions: Do foreign students seek assistance for the challenges they encounter? How do they handle the challenges they encounter? Are they satisfied with the responses they get? The questions need empirically-based answers, hence the study. In spite of the fact that all students' first days in new environments require different forms of adjustment, the challenges of international students make them particularly vulnerable.

In Ghana, some studies such as those by Forde and Brenya (2012), Akwensivie, Ntiamoah and Obro-Adibo (2013), Tenkorang (2017) and Ackah and Kuranchie (2015), and Nyarko-Sampson (2017, 2017a) have been conducted on students' adjustment in universities.

Apart from Tenkorang (2017) who looked at the adjustment experiences of first year students of the University of Cape Coast and Nyarko-Sampson (2017a, 2017b) who studied depression and anxiety, and coping strategies of first year undergraduate education students of the University of Cape Coast, all the others studied international students adjustments in one specific university. Although the studies by Tenkorang (2017), Nyarko-Sampson (2017a, 2017b) were not about international students but rather on first years students of the University of Cape Coast, there is a bearing of their studies on the current study.   All these studies were about transition and students adjustment in universities.

This study therefore aims to bridge this gap created. In other words, since none of the above studies looked at undergraduate international students

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in both the public and private universities in southern Ghana, the current effort was geared towards studying the adjustment needs and coping strategies of international students in both the public and private universities in the southern part of Ghana. The main thrust of the present study, therefore, is to examine the adjustment needs and coping strategies of International Students in Universities in Southern Ghana. The researcher decided to use southern Ghana for this study because most of the international students in Ghana's universities are concentrated there.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the adjustment needs international students of universities in southern Ghana have during their period of study in the country and the coping strategies they adopt to cope with the adjustment needs. This study sought to provide answers to this aspect of students' life, which have been ignored by earlier studies. Specifically, the study aimed at finding out:

1. the academic adjustment needs of international students of public and private universities in southern Ghana .

2. the personal-social adjustment needs of international students of public and private universities in southern Ghana.

3. the emotional adjustment needs of international students of public and private universities in southern Ghana.

4. the coping strategies that international students of universities in southern Ghana adopt to mitigate the adjustment needs they experience

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5. the difference in adjustment needs of male and female international students of universities

6. the difference in coping strategies of male and female international students.

7. the difference in adjustment needs of young and mature international students.

8. the difference in the coping strategies of young and mature international students.

9. the difference in the adjustment needs of international students in the public and private universities.

10. the difference in the coping strategies of international students in the public and private universities.

Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the academic adjustment needs that international students of universities in southern Ghana have?

2. What are the personal-social adjustment needs that international students of universities in southern Ghana have?

3. What are the emotional adjustment needs that international students of universities in southern Ghana have?

4. What coping strategies do international students of universities in southern Ghana adopt to mitigate the adjustment needs they have?

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Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the conduct of the study:

H_01:   There is no significant difference between male and female international students of universities in southern Ghana in their adjustment needs.

H_11:   There is significant difference between male and female international students of universities in southern Ghana in their adjustment needs.

H_02:   There is no significant difference in the coping strategies of international students of universities in southern Ghana based on gender.

H_12:   There is significant difference in the coping strategies of international students of universities in southern Ghana based on gender.

H_03:   There is no significant difference in the adjustment needs of international students of universities in southern Ghana based on age.

H_13:   There is a significant difference in the adjustment needs of international students of universities in southern Ghana on the basis of age.

H_04:   There is no significant difference in the coping strategies of international students of universities in southern Ghana on the basis of age.

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$H_1 4$:   There is a significant difference in the coping strategies of international students of universities in southern Ghana on the basis of age.

$H_0 5$:   There is no significant difference in the adjustments needs of international students of the public and private universities in southern Ghana.

$H_1 5$:   There is significant difference in the adjustment needs of international students of public and private universities in southern Ghana.

$H_0 6$:   There is no significant difference in the coping strategies of international students of public and private universities in southern Ghana.

$H_1 6$:   There is significant difference in the coping strategies of international students of public and private universities in southern Ghana.

Significance of the Study

The study uncovered the adjustment needs and coping strategies of international students of the universities in southern Ghana. The findings of this study will be of benefit to policy makers, university management, counsellors, lecturers, prospective and current international students and other researchers.

For policy makers, a good idea of the challenges of international students is of paramount interest to them because the country benefits from the foreign currency these students inject into the economy. The results will therefore enhance policy formulation and implementation for a better

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integration of international students into their host societies. In view of this, policy makers will do everything humanly possible to ease the pressure that is exclusive to international students, thus making policies that will be international- students- friendly.

For university management, it is anticipated that the findings of this study would go a long way to expose some of the challenges of international students in the universities in Ghana. This would help the university authorities to enhance the content and guidelines of the orientation service rendered to international students. Orientation service is one of the guidance services, which is geared towards providing relevant information to newcomers of the university or any organization. Furthermore, management of universities would be abreast with (when they read the findings of this study) and make provisions for any facility or facilities, infrastructures, or anything that would be beneficial to international students with regards to making their living conditions less stressful or if possible stress-free, during their stay of study on the various campuses across the country.

For counsellors in the universities, it is expected that they will gain more insight into the challenges of foreign students when the read the results of this study, which will equip them plan appropriate and timely guidance programmes for international students, to help them handle the stressful life situations in the university. The findings of the study would again help counsellors to be aware of   some counselling needs of foreign students and so help the counsellors provide counselling to such students who might be referred to them. This calls for the counsellors to have an in-depth knowledge in multicultural counselling which is an emerging trend in contemporary

counselling. Since culture is dynamic and relative, counsellors must be aware of the differences in culture when having any therapeutic relationship with any student who is not a Ghanaian.

On the part of lecturers, an insight of the adjustment needs of international students, especially those linked to academic work, would help the lecturers adopt the right strategies in order to create a conducive atmosphere for both international and native students. There can also be seminars or workshops in collaboration with sister universities, particularly the affiliates, so that international students would be assisted. The results of the study would also add to existing literature in the area of university life challenges, adjustment needs and coping strategies of international students.

International students and prospective international students would also benefit from the results of this study. This is because the study would provide international students information (when they read the findings) on how to cope with some needs of adjustment whiles seeking for a degree in Ghana, and also equip prospective international students as they prepare to come and study in Ghana. Researchers can also benefit from these findings as it can give them some directions of study on international students. For example researchers can focus on international students from only one country. This study would also enrich available literature on international students. Thus, prospective researchers would have reference material for research works similar to this current study; in other words, the findings of this study can serve as related empirical literature to future researchers who maybe investigating international students' challenges or any issue concerning international students.

Delimitations

The scope of this study was delimited to issues related to only the adjustment challenges that international students go through and the coping strategies they adopt to address these challenges. The study was also delimited to only international undergraduate students, thus those international students pursuing post-graduate degrees were exempted from this study. Geographically, it was limited to the University of Cape Coast in the Central region of Ghana, University of Ghana, Legon, Ashesi University, Berekuso (Eastern Region) and Zenith University also in Accra. Another delimitation of the study is that sandwich and distance international students were not part of it.

Limitations

The main limitation that the study encountered was with the collection of data. The questionnaire which was the main instrument in the collection of data may not elicit the accurate responses from the respondents, as some of them may not give the accurate responses. This limitation was however catered for through the assurance the researcher gave to the respondents on anonymity and confidentiality. Again, the rapport that the researcher built with the respondents created an atmosphere that brought out the truth and accurate responses. All these were done to ensure that the findings of the study are not affected.

Definition of Terms

The key terms that were used in the study, are defined with reference to what they mean within the context of the study (Thus operational definitions). These terms are:

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Academic Adjustment: The ability of international students to achieve stability in terms of the university academic structure and reaching a state of satisfaction with regards to lecture attendance, performance in assignments, quizzes, end of semester examination and adaptation to the whole academic pressure.

Adjustment: This can be understood as a process by which international students balance the educational, social- personal and psychological demands in an acceptable manner.

Adjustment Needs: The failure by international students to successfully meet the constantly changing and challenging demands of university life.

Emotional Adjustment: The ability of international students to achieve sound self-satisfaction within the university environment. This included but will not be limited to international students feeling depressed, feeling anxious, being under stress and their general health.

International Student: A non-Ghanaian student studying in any of the public or private universities in Ghana.

Mature students: The classification of mature students according to all the official websites of universities starts from the age of 25 years.

Personal-Social Adjustment: The extent of stability and satisfaction between the student and the surrounding environment. In this study, it will include, but will not be limited to, how international students fit into the university environment, their relationships with roommates and relationships with the opposite sex.

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Southern Ghana: For the purpose of this work, Southern Ghana will comprise: the Greater Accra, Western, Eastern, Volta, Central and Ashanti regions.

Young Students: The universities in Ghana classification of a young student are those students below the age of 25years.

Organization of the Study

The study is structured into five chapters. Chapter One focuses on introduction, which covers background to the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations to the study, definition of terms, and the organization of the study.

Chapter Two deals with the literature review. It covers three main divisions: the theoretical framework and conceptual framework then the review of related empirical studies.

Chapter Three presents the methodology of the study. It covers areas such as: the philosophical basis of the study, the research approach, the research design, study area, population, sample and sampling procedure as well as the instrument that was used, the data collection procedure and how data was analyzed.

Chapter Four presents and discusses the results of the study. The demographic data were analyzed descriptively. Frequencies and percentages were specifically used to present the demographic characteristics of participants. The descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the research questions and hypotheses respectively.

Chapter Five covers the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations. Implications of the study for counselling and also for policy makers are also indicated in this chapter. Lastly, suggestions for further research were provided.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study sought to find out the adjustment needs of international students in universities in southern Ghana and the coping strategies adopted by these students in dealing with the adjustment needs. This chapter will deal with the review of related literature. It will have three main divisions: review of the conceptual framework, theoretical framework and related empirical studies.

Conceptual Framework

Robinson, (2011) defined conceptual framework as the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs a particular study. Miles and Huberman (1994) defined a conceptual framework as a visual or written product, one that explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied- the key factors, concepts, or variables- and the presumed relationships among them.

This section considered the conceptual framework for the study. Again, other concepts, which are related to the study, are discussed. The framework on which the study was based was an adapted model of the Baker and Siryk's (1989) Student Adaptation to College Model.

Student Adaptation to College Model

Baker and Siryk (1984) created the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) to compensate for what they believed was a shortage of psychometrically sound tools to measure adjustment to college. A model of four different types of students' adjustment was then developed (Baker &

Siryk, 1989) created in line with the questionnaire. The types included academic, social, emotional adjustment and institutional attachment. The researchers explained Academic adjustment to be a form of adjustment that depends on how well the student manages the educational demands of the university experience. On the other hand, the social adjustment relates to the interpersonal experience at the university. Elaborating on emotional adjustment, Baker and Siryk indicated that students experience general psychological distress and show somatic symptoms of distress in times of adjustment needs. Finally, Institutional attachment indicates the degree of commitment that the student feels toward the university.

In adapting the model of Baker and Siryk (1989) to this study, only three of the forms of adjustment were considered. Institutional attachment was however not added to the framework because it had to do more with whether students remained in school. In addition to those forms, an additional factor, coping strategies was added. Coping strategies was added to show how students adjusted to the adjustment needs they experienced in the various areas of adjustment. Below is the researcher's conceptual framework, which is an adaptation of Baker and Siryk (1989) Students Adaptation to College Model.Baker and Siryk (1989) Students Adaptation to College Model and Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) W-curve Model of Adjustment.

Baker and Siryk (1989) Students Adaptation to College Model and Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) W-curve Model of Adjustment.

ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT
- Understanding the language of instructors
- Joining study groups
- Ability to do well in exams and quizzes
- Personal

SOCIAL-PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT
- Interpersonal human relationship
- Language barriers
- Social barriers
- Cultural

EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT
Adjusting to:
- Homesickness
- Anxiety
- Loneliness
- Sadness

COPING STRATEGIES
Managing and doing well in:
- Academic life
- Social personal aspect of life
- Emotional aspect of life

TOTAL ADJUSTMENT
- **Ability to function properly in terms of all the needs since there is total adjustment due to coping strategies to academic, social-personal and emotional needs.**

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for this Study

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Academic adjustment reveals the extent to which students have adjusted to meeting the academic demands of the University environment. This includes their attitudes toward their course of study, adequacy of studying, and academic efforts. Academic adjustment can be demonstrated behaviorally and attitudinally in terms of seriousness of academic purpose. Thus, students identified as better adjusted on the SACQ are more decided about a major field (Pfeil, 2000). Better academic adjustment was found by Cemakilar & Falbo (2008) to be associated with lesser self-reported skipping of classes. Trilokekar & Kizilbashm (2013) also reported that academically better adjusted International students were more likely to report having perceived their academic work in the first year of university as manageable, having managed their resources well (e.g., time, money), and having interacted well with faculty.

Personal-Social adjustment

Personal – social adjustment refers to the issues related to the effects of the demands of the university environment on the individual. Specifically, the social adjustment involves how well students have integrated themselves into the social sphere of the university. This includes hall/hostel life, friendships, and other activities the university offers. Relationship quality is positively related to all aspects of adjustment to university (Swenson, Nordstrom, & Hiester, 2008). A best friend or close group of friends usually provides a context within which the student can truly express him or herself and have positive experiences. Ultimately, this will serve as a cushion against loneliness and the absence of positive experiences (Philips & Schweisfurth, 2012).

Regarding interpersonal activities, studies using the SACQ have indicated that better adjusted students spend more time socializing with friends (Gargano, 2012) and are more satisfied with their social relationships, platonic, romantic, and combined (Dacosta, 2010). Socially adjusted students may see themselves as having higher quality relationships with other students (Bettencourt, Charlton, Eubanks, Kernahan, & Fuller, 1999) and being more satisfied with their social life (Defina & Perrino, 2014).

Emotional Adjustment

Emotional adjustment addresses the sense of psychological well-being and sense of physical well-being. Emotional adjustment may be hindered by parents, as it was reported by (Canagarajah, 2013) that college students rate parental expectations and conflicts as their second most stress-producing event. These may be compounded by issues such as stress, anxiety, and/or physical reactions (e.g., sleeplessness). Students who were emotionally adjusted were more likely to have higher scores on test measures of general good mental health and lower scores on test measures of both general and specific aspects of mental ill-health, such as depression, anxiety, and eating disorders. Students scoring higher on SACQ (emotional adjustment), also score higher on measures of general physical health, report lesser incidence of physical symptoms, have fewer health center visits for doctor appointments, and fewer class absences due to illness.

Coping strategies

Coping with an adversity includes several ways of handling diverse person-environment transactions (i.e. transactions that lead to stress). Coping does not stand for a homogeneous concept; rather, it represents a diffuse

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umbrella term. Coping can be described in terms of strategies, tactics, responses, cognitions, or behaviour. Coping has been broadly defined as "...cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external or internal demands (and conflicts between them) that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person (Lazarus, 1991, p. 112).

However, there are two approaches in defining coping: These are the traditional approach and the process approach. The traditional approach describes coping as trait or style was based on the ego psychology model, which tends to assess coping traits and styles or disposition rather than processes (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). It attempts to identify what the person usually does or is most likely to do when he or she is confronted with a stressful encounter (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988).

Folkman and Lazarus (1988) opined that the process-oriented approach in coping differs from the traditional approach as it is directed towards what a person actually thinks and does within the context of a specific encounter. It addresses the major weaknesses of the traditional approach to coping which was seen to underestimate the complexity and unpredictability of actual coping processes and was unable to distinguish between automatic responses and those that require effort.

Cognitive appraisal and coping are sometimes confused in its meaning and usage, since, a distinction between appraisal and coping cannot be practically made. Nevertheless, it remains at least of heuristic value. Lazarus (1991, p. 113) tried to separate this overlap by stating: "... coping refers to what a person thinks or does to try to manage an emotional encounter; and appraisal is an evaluation of what might be thought or done in that encounter".

The Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) provides a framework of the various strategies of coping. The strategies can be seen in the eight scales within the WCQ. They include the Confrontive coping, Distancing, Self-controlling, seeking social support, accepting responsibility, Escape-avoidance, Planful problem solving and Positive reappraisal. Among these are what International students adopt to deal with the stressful and adjustment situations they encounter in their first year in the university.

Other concepts related to the study

Other concepts related to the study are reviewed in this section. They include:

Concept of students' adjustment

The concept of adjustment was originally borrowed from biology. It was modeled after the biological term 'adaptation', which refers to effect by a species to adjust to change in its environment. The term adjustment is often used as a synonym for accommodation and adaptation. Adjustment has been defined by Benoy (2006) as a positive capacity of an individual, which require appreciating reality, harmonizing with the environment and a consistent attempt to change the environment in the way it satisfies personal needs. Adjustment further refers to the dynamic processes that can ultimately lead to achievement of an appropriate fit between the person and the environment (Ramsay, Jones, & Barker, 2007). In its strict sense, the term denotes the results of equilibrium, which may be affected by either of these processes (Jackson &Mazzei, 2012). It can be used to emphasize the individual's struggle to survive in his or her social and physical environment.

These definitions are broader meanings of adjustment relating to all aspects of human life. Student adjustment however, has been defined by Baker and Siryk (1989) as a combination of students' social, personal-emotional, and academic adjustment along with their reported feelings of commitment to the institution. (Knight, 2011) opined that adjusting to university life involves the complementary processes of desocialization and socialization. Desocialization involves the changing of core values, beliefs and traits one brings to university in response to the university experience. Socialization, however, has been explained by Coles & Swami, 2012 as the process of being exposed to and taking on some of the new values, attitudes beliefs and perspectives to which one is exposed at university. These complementary processes are what influence how well an individual international student will adjust to the university environment.

International student's university life

International students in universities are required to successfully adjust to the inevitable transitional academic, social and personal-psychological difficulties. When international students enter the university, they are confronted with new challenges both personal and interpersonal. The challenges arise from their need to establish new relationships, modify existing ones and cope with the pressures of the new academic environment. The difficulties faced by international students adversely influence their academic achievement and life experience. If they cannot overcome the difficulties and adjust successfully, they are unable to reach their pre-set goals.

In the view of Hayashi (2013), international students may keep daily or frequent interaction with family by way of phone or computer, but they make

many more personal decisions and choices than they did in high school. Some of the choices that international students make include: when and how to study, socialize with new acquaintances, become involved in activities, budget money, exercise and time (Smetana, Campione-Barr & Metzger, 2006). International students typically experience changing demands on their time. Days are less routine and predictable (Seloni, 2011).

Some international students feel they have virtually no time for themselves because of the task of managing multiple obligations. International students have to adjust to new surroundings, and relate to unfamiliar people at the university. This is made difficult since other students often seem very different from family, friends and acquaintances from home (Lee, 2009). From the above discussion

, international students' year in the university is huge task that places great demand on students to be able to adjust effectively.

Specific changes to expect in the international students' year in the university

Several changes are expected to take place in the first year in the university. Among them are:

Increased personal freedom

The international student's year of university brings along a wave of freedom, which creates divergence of reactions. Some students may welcome the freedom while others may not. Casanave and Li (2008) argued that many students welcome the freedom to make their own decisions about what they want to do each day while in the university. Contrary to this, those who may not be comfortable with the new found freedom may try to still remain in

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contact with their families. It becomes the responsibility of the families to help encourage the new found freedom. The more this is done, the sooner the student will become comfortable with the new found freedom.

Managing time

Time management is one of the biggest challenges in the international students' year at the university. This is because in the university, students spend much less time in class and are expected to do much more coursework outside of the classroom. There can be two extremes when it comes to time management in the university. On one extreme are students who may feel they have virtually no time for themselves because of the time needed to manage multiple obligations. Lectures at the university may seem difficult and draining, and/or may involve more hours of studying. On the other extreme are students who may find the academic workload manageable, but then feel they have too much free time and so end up relaxing for greater part of their time (Sawir, Marginson, Forbes-Mewett, Nyland & Ramia, 2012).

Increased responsibility

Along with an increase in personal freedom is greater responsibility for one's daily schedule. International students must make choices about when and how to study, socialize with new acquaintances, become involved in activities, budget money, exercise and make time to eat and sleep (Sawir et al., 2012) and must be ready to take responsibility for these choices. International students will be held accountable for themselves and their actions in the university. It may be a new experience for some of them to be held accountable and not be able to turn to parents to fend for them. Students are faced, often for the first time, with the need to take more initiative to address

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responsibilities such as scheduling classes, buying personal items, making appointments to take care of health needs and asking lecturers and staff for assistance or help (Uysal, 2010).

Changing relationships with family and friends from home

As students experience more freedom and responsibility in college, relationships with parents and other significant people change (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). International students may find that their relationships with friends from home are different after the time away at school. Some individuals feel closer and more appreciative of friends at home and may stay very connected to them. On the other hand, other students may realise that they have less in common with friends from home after being away at school. Many students may have to leave high school boyfriends or girlfriends when they go to college. There may be disagreement about whether it is okay to make new friends or see other people. One, or both, partners may struggle with feeling lonely, sad, or jealous, especially if the other partner seems to be happier and adjusting better.

In the home, international students, as well as their parents, may fear losing aspects of their relationship with each other. As a result, frequent calls home from international students are common, especially during the first few months away at college. It may be very hard to say goodbye at the end of holiday or semester breaks.

Importance of orientation in International student's adjustment

Orientation programme empowers students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to access an array of resources that can help them to have a more successful collegiate experience (Phakiti, Hirsch & Woodrow, 2013).

Researchers such as Wright & Schertem (2013), Montgomery and McDowell (2009) have reported that as students become more satisfied and involved with the campus and academic community, they are more likely to remain enrolled. Orientation and international students' seminars were found to be the most effective student success programmes to assist new college students (Kelly, 2010).

Wang (2016) noted that orientation at the host institution plays an important role in the adjustment of international students. Wang continued that most colleges or universities spend one or two days at the beginning of a semester to help new arriving international students adjust. In Wang's view, research concurs that orientation is helpful to adjustment.

Influence of counselling on adjustment

The international student is confronted with the adaptation challenges of living apart from family and friends, adjusting to the academic work, assuming responsibility for the tasks of daily living and developing a new array of social relationships with peers and faculty (Henton, Lamke, Murphy & Haynes, 2008).

According to Egbochuku (2008), the objectives of school guidance and counselling services include the provision of the following to the students:

(1) Opportunities to develop knowledge and appreciation of themselves and others;

(2) Opportunities to develop relationship skills, ethical standards, and a sense of responsibility;

(3) Opportunities to acquire skills and attitudes necessary to develop educational goals which are suited to their needs of intents and abilities and

(4) Information that would enable them to make decisions about life and career opportunities.

The provision of the above services to students can be vital to the adjustment process of international students especially within the first few weeks of their stay in the university. In this direction, counselors can be seen to play a major role in aiding international students in their transition to their new environment.

Approaches of counselling

Bedu-Addo (2000) citing the works of Pietrofesa et al. (1984) and Myrick (1987) gave four main approaches to counselling. The approaches are crisis, facilitative, preventive and developmental. In assisting international students adjust better to the university environment these approaches can be utilized:

Crisis counselling

This approach would be helpful to an individual who is completely confused, disorganized and unable to cope with events surrounding him/ her.

Remedial counselling

Remedial or Facilitative would help to bring to normalcy anti-social or unacceptable behaviours thus bringing positive adjustment in an individual.

Preventive counselling

This approach would provide assistance to people to prevent them from falling into unpleasant situations.

Developmental counselling

This approach would help students to achieve positive self and personal growth at any stage of their lives. Assistance is given to people to help them cope with needs associated with developmental stages of life.

Theoretical Framework

Theories that were reviewed in relation to the study included the General Needs Satisfaction Theory, Social Identity Theory, Social and Behavioural Adaptation Model, Transition Theory and the Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) W-curve Model of Adjustment.

The General Needs Satisfaction Theory was reviewed in the study because it is assumed in the theory that international students would adjust better in their new environment when their needs are satisfied. The Social Identity Theory will be of relevance in the study because the theory assumes that how international students are received in the new school environment influences their identities. This in turn influences their adjustment in the new environment. The interactions that international students have when they enter the new environment are considered to have an influence on their general level of adjustment. This is the focus of the Social and Behavioural Adaptation Model, making it a model of relevance to the study.

The Transition theory which views adjustment as a function of the situational factors, self-factors, supports and strategies will also have relevance to this study. This is because the adjustment of international students is assumed to be influenced by all the factors considered by the Transition theory. Finally, the W-curve model of Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) gave a

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presentation of the life stages of international students. This makes it a model relevant to the study.

General Needs Satisfaction Theory

The General Needs Satisfaction Theory started from the work of Deci and Ryan (1991). Needs have been defined by Deci and Ryan as the nutrients essential to the psychological growth, integrity and health of any living individual. There are several needs identified such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The need for autonomy deals with ownership and authenticity of an individual's activities. It has to do with the need to feel that a person's behaviours reflect his/her true interests rather than being a response to pressures from others. The need for competence is satisfied when a person achieves desired outcomes in an activity whiles being optimally challenged by the activity. This involves the feeling of being good at something. In terms of life at the university, this may involve enrolling in a creative writing class to learn new writing techniques, and noticing improvement in one's writing. In furtherance, the need for relatedness is satisfied by the feeling that one is close to and connected with significant others.

Perceived need satisfaction can be boosted by social and environmental factors that assist in the expression of and satisfaction of those needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When any of these needs are neglected or are not met, suboptimal psychological outcomes are likely to follow (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It has been revealed by the findings of Wei, Shaffer, Young and Zakalik (2005) that in a university student population, there is a correlation between the needs and the negative emotions of depression, shame, and loneliness. Attending lectures, completing assignment

and coursework, being successful in their studies, working toward a degree; having social interactions with peers and faculty as well as gaining experience for future career are significant aspects of the everyday life of most university students.

Feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the university environment, therefore, seem indispensable for the adjustment and growth of university students. In this regard, it can be assumed that the general needs satisfaction would better predict International students' adjustment to the university.

Social Identity Theory

Tajfel's (1978) work on social categorization began the Social identity theory. The theory emerged from social psychology. This theory is concerned with how group membership affects an individual's identity. There are two aspects of this theory. The first aspect considers the role of social categorization and social comparison in relation to self-esteem, coupled with in-group favoritism and out-group derogation (McLachlan & Justice, 2008). The second aspect is related to the varied effects of specific cross-cultural diversity such as individualism-collectivism on group membership, perceptions and interactions (Bartram &Bailey, 2009).

Social Identity Theory focuses more on group behavior and intergroup relations. In addressing issues related to group relations, the theory has concentrated on the causes and consequences of identifying with a social group or category. Rice, Choi, Zhang, Villegas, Ye, Anderson, Nesic & Bigler (2009) revealed that social identity theorists have claimed that because people define themselves in terms of their social group membership and endorse roles

as part of their acceptance of the normative expectations of in group members, the concept of role is subsumed under the concept of group. However, the focus of social identity theorists has generally not been on these roles.

Social Identity Theory has also strongly incorporated self-esteem as a motivator for outcomes in a group. Although, it has not always been empirically evident that self-esteem is important, it has been shown that group membership is often a source of self-esteem. This view of Deaking (2009) is predominantly true for those who not only classify themselves as members, but who are also accepted by others as members. In applying this theory to international student's adjustment, how a person is received in the school and the environment in the school influences the identity of the individual. This in turn influences how a person adjusts to the new environment.

Social and Behavioural Adaptation Model

The Social and Behavioural Adaptation Model was developed from the work of Bochner. Bochner's functional model of friendship networks (Bochner, McLeod & Lin, 1977; Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001) is still influential in contemporary studies of intercultural contact for students. The model suggests that students tend to belong to three distinctive social networks. Each of these networks serves a particular psychological function. These three are classified as monocultural, bi-cultural and multi-cultural friendship networks.

The primary network is made up of connections with their compatriots in the host community and those remaining in the home community. With the increasing ease of long-distance communication, international students are able to maintain their original cultural behaviour and values. The secondary

network involves the interactions that international students have with the students from the location of the school, lecturers and counsellors. Through this network, they are able to learn a series of culturally relevant skills to facilitate their academic success. The third network involves the friendships that international students have with other students who are not from the location of the school. They derive mutual social support and enjoy some social recreational activities from this friendship.

University international students can benefit from interaction with other students socially, psychologically and academically. Some empirically validated examples include, a greater amount of interaction with other students has been associated with fewer academic needs (Breuning, 2007), fewer social difficulties (Cemalcilar & Kennedy, 2008), improved communication competency, and better general adaptation to life overseas (Pope & Wedding, 2008). It can be observed that the interactions international students have with other students, lecturers and counsellors have an influence on their general adjustment to the university environment.

Transition Theory

The Transition theory was propounded by Schlossberg in (1981). She did further work on the theory in 1984. The theory was to provide a framework that would facilitate an understanding of adults in transition and lead them to the help they need to cope with the ordinary and extraordinary process of living (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). Later, the theory was given a broadened view to cover students' transition in college (Schlossberg, Waters, & Goodman, 1995).

Schlossberg makes a differentiation between transition and adaptation. In the view of Schlossberg (1981) adaptation is a process during which an individual move from being very preoccupied with the transition to integrating the transition into his or her life. Transition on the other hand refers to any event or non-event those results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles (Schlossberg et al., 1995). It can be inferred therefore that transition is the occurrence or non-occurrence that an individual perceives which changes the pattern of the individual's behaviour.

Reaction to change varies either interpersonal or intrapersonal. Different individuals react differently to change, the same individual reacts differently to different changes and the same individual can react different to the same change depending on the other variables in their life (Schlossberg, 1981). Adaptation which indicates how an individual reacts to and moves through the change created by the transition is influenced by how individuals perceive their balance of resources to deficits in terms of the transition.

Schlossberg (1981) categorized the factors that influence adaptation to transition in three main areas. The areas include the characteristics of the:

a) particular transition,

b) transition environments, and

c) individual

Chickering and Schlossberg (1995) later created a framework for the factors that influence adaptation to transition and called them Four S's. The aim of the framework was to help individuals determine their resources as they approach transition. This was referred to by Chickering and Schlossberg as "taking stock", determining resources in regards to "your situation, yourself,

your supports, and your strategies" (p. 49). The key areas of the Four S's are explained below:

Situation

The individual's perception influences how they deem the situation and assess their resources. Some of the key factors to consider in the situation are:

(a) Trigger: This involves finding out the catalyst for the change. In other words, trigger is what caused the change or transition;

(b) Timing: This involves finding out if the transition is occurring at what the individual perceives to be a good time;

(c) Control: This involves considering what is in the individual's control or what the individual can control;

(d) Role change: This is concerned with knowing if any changes in roles were deemed as positive or negatives changes;

(e) Duration: This involves finding out if the transition is short-term, long-term or permanent;

(f) Concurrent stress: Finding out what other stresses are presently occurring is also of importance;

(g) Previous experience: Finding out whether the previous experience associated with the transition was either positive or negative; and

(h) Assessment: This involves finding out who or what is seen as responsible for the transition.

Self

The self-factor is concerned with personal or demographic characteristics and psychological resources. The self-factor denotes the

strengths and weaknesses of an individual at the time of transition. Personal and demographic characteristics could include gender, socio-economic status, state of health and age. The psychological resources on the other hand could include coping tools or strategies, optimism, self-efficacy and values. The implication of this is that international students in the universities in Ghana would be able to adjust better if their personal and psychological resources are sufficient enough to match the pressure of the university environment. For instance, if an international student is of good health and has a high self-efficacy, his ability to cope with the stressors of the university environment would be higher and vice versa.

Supports

Supports involve recognizing the influence of relationships and networks on an individual's ability to adapt to transition. These influences could be either positive or negative. Positive means they enhance or strengthen an individual's ability to adapt to the transition while negative means they weaken or hinder the adaptation to the transition. The supports can be in the form of family, friends, co-workers, community and other institutions or networks which the individual identifies himself/herself with.

Strategies

This final S is concerned with the strategies or ways that individuals cope with the changes they face in the transition. Four main recognized strategies can be employed:

(a) information seeking,

(b) direct action,

(c) inhibition of action and

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(d) intrapsychic behaviour.

Chickering and Schlossberg (1995) opined that the four 'S's are not mutually exclusive or independent factors rather it is a combination of the factors that influences an individual's reaction to transition and ultimately their ability to adapt. Chickering and Schlossberg again suggested that an individual's ability to transition at one time is not permanent as the balances of resources and deficits for an individual can change over time.

From the Transition theory, it can be realised that international students can adjust or adapt to the change or transition of being in the university by a careful assessment of their situation, self-factors, supports and strategies. In the Universities in Ghana, the view of the Transition theory if well taken note could help International students in their adjustment process. This is because correctly diagnosing an adjustment situation and determining the existence of personal factors, along with the support systems and better strategies, an individual can successfully cope with the needs he/she will face. This makes the view of Schlossberg suitable for the study.

Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) W-curve Model of Adjustment

The Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) W-curve model of adjustment was an extension of Lysgaard's U-curve. Lysgaard (1955) after conducting interviews with 200 Norwegians who stayed in the United States for varying lengths of time, noted that adjustment was a time process. Lysgaard's U curve hypothesis states that adjustment over time tends to follow a U-shape, with good adjustment during the first 6 months, adjustment crisis among 6 and 18 months, and good adjustment against after 18 months. Gullahorn and

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Gullahorn (1963) extended the U-curve to the W-curve. The curve is shown in Figure 1.
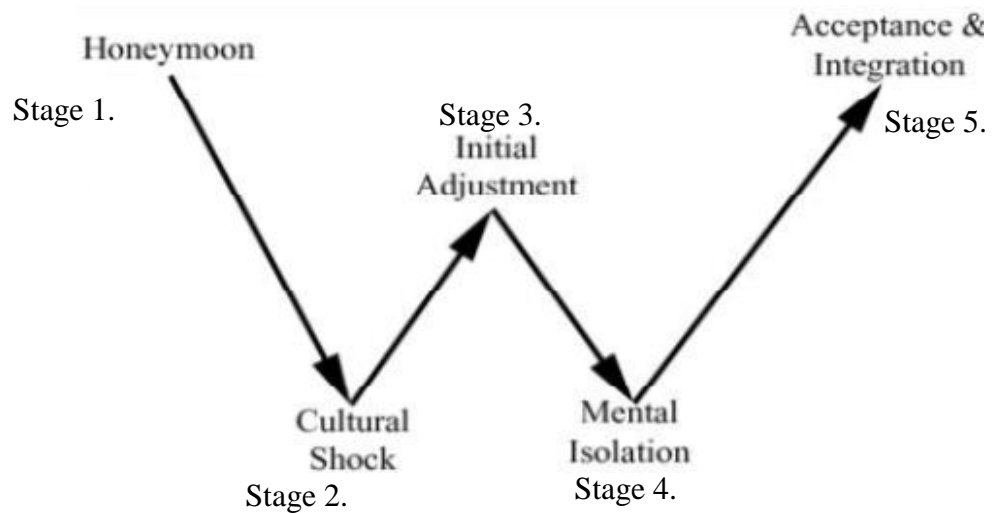
Figure 2: Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) W-curve model of adjustment

Stage 1: Honeymoon

This stage starts before the student arrives at school and continues for the first few days. For some students, this stage begins when they receive their admission letter from the university. The thought of being independent and starting fresh at a new school can be very appealing. The potential international student feels enthusiastic, wants to meet new people, be more independent and is excited about classes. They have started their orientation and feel like they have a pretty good introduction to the environment. This phase leads to homesickness.

Stage 2: Culture shock

The student must adjust to a new set of physical surroundings full-time such as a room-mate, finding their way around the building, finding class rooms, the cafeteria, and eating unfamiliar food. This is not like orientation, which ends after a few days. This is being here "full-time" and it feels more

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permanent, especially since they cannot go home every day after school. The language, type of food, in short, the culture of the new country creates a shock to international students.

According to Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963), there is also an adjustment to new social surroundings. This includes too many or too few people around (often affected by the size of the community the student is from). The student may also start to feel like a "little fish in a big pond": no longer the "smartest kid in the class" and experience a major increase in academic pressure. The initial excitement over being at the University wears off and the student may begin to feel overwhelmed and withdraw. At this point, homesickness may increase.

Stage 3: Initial adjustment

In this stage, adjustment to the physical surroundings has been accomplished. The student feels more "at home" on campus, knows their way around, has a favorite place to "hang out" and people to hang out with. Owusu, Tawiah, Sena-Kpeglo, and Onyame (2014) stated that students who are extroverted reach this stage quicker than those who are introverted, mostly because they are talking with fellow students about how they are feeling. The student also begins to feel like they have developed a personal routine and University is beginning to become their home away from home. Orientation is what helps them to regain some control and normality in their lives.

Stage 4: Mental isolation

At this stage, Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) posited that even though the student feels more comfortable with the physical environment, new issues begin to emerge. The student may begin to think, "It's hard to get to know

people here", "No one else feels the way I do", and "I'm all alone." A feeling of isolation and homesickness is then experienced. This is a critical stage for most international students because a "crisis of confidence" may occur due to an actual or perceived notion of intellectual inferiority. This is then experienced as a loss of status. It includes statements such as "I don't know if I can keep up"; "Maybe I'm not as smart as I thought I was". This leads to an increased level of stress thus resulting in an interruption in sleep and eating patterns.

Students will find it easier to go through this stage if they share their feelings with friends, parents or a counselor. International students must seek to resolve this second cultural shock, move from feelings of isolation, and join new university cultures. It requires integrating values and beliefs of their home culture with their new university environment.

Stage 5: Acceptance and integration

In this stage, Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) stated that students regain their self-confidence and they begin to feel good about themselves again. There is the realization that there are more similarities among their peers than differences. The student begins to feel like they have a role in this new environment and they feel more at home physically, socially, and intellectually. As this goes on the student continues to express individual differences, feels equal among their peers and no longer feels singled out as odd. They have their own interests, activities, favorite classes, familiar lecturers, some goals for the future and a readily available support system. A true sense of acceptance and integration occurs when students have successfully adapted to their new learning environment. It is obvious

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international students who are academically good and even teach students of the home country feel more accepted and even 'pampered' and will easily be integrated into the new system.

Review of Related Empirical Literature

This section reviewed related empirical studies. The studies were reviewed under the following subheadings:

a. Motivation for international students' mobility

b. **Adjustment needs**

    1. Socio cultural adjustment needs

    2. Theorization of cross-cultural adjustment

    3. Academic adjustment needs experienced by international students

    4. Personal-social adjustment needs experienced by international students

    5. Emotional adjustment needs experienced by international students

c. **Coping strategies**

    1. Problems- focused and Emotional focused

    2. Engagement and disengagement coping strategies

    3. Meaning focused coping

    4. Religious coping

    5. Proactive coping

d. Coping strategies of international students to adjustment needs

    1. Meaning focused

    2.   Religious focused

    3. Proactive focused

e. Gender and adjustment needs

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    f.   Gender and coping strategies

    g.   Age and adjustment needs

    h.   Age and coping strategies

    i.   Theorotical framework

        1.   Transactional theory of stress and coping

        2.   Coping based models of adaptive functioning

        3.   Social identity theory

        4.   Social and behavioral adaptation model

        5.   Transition theory

        6.   Gullahorn and Gullahorn(1963) W-curve model of adjustments

Motivation for international students' mobility

The general expectations that motivate students to study abroad are many and they include the following: international and multicultural exposure, enhancement of language skills, career prospects and to some for sheer prestige (King et al., 2010; OECD, 2013). Student mobility has gained prominence in higher education worldwide (Chan, 2012). Host countries have stakes in offering educational opportunities to international students because of the image it gives to host countries' universities. According to Verbik and Lasanowski (2007), such stakes include both short-term and long-term benefits international students bring to the host countries. The immediate boost to income is the short-term benefit, while the use of the skills of some international students for the benefit of the host country is considered long-term benefit. While this observation informs us of the immediate interests of the host nations in attracting international students, it also implies that for protecting and furthering those interests it is also necessary to take note of the

experiences of current international students, as these are likely to influence future student mobility. In short, the information can help host nations to design new strategies or revise the old ones to stay competitive in the international education market. In spite of economic and non-economic benefits that international students bring to their host countries, the research shows that more efforts should be made by university administrators to promote better adjustment of international students in higher education institutions.

From the perspective of international students, a personal journey to a foreign country for studies may not simply be confined to a short-term goal of attaining an educational qualification; it may extend to further long-term goals (Baas, 2010; Bandyopadhyay, 2010; Bethel & Ward, 2014). For example, Baas (2010) study in Australia conducted on Indian international students reported that other than the primary educational goal, the participants had other predetermined goals such as employment and immigration. Likewise, Bethel and Ward (2014) study on tertiary international students in New Zealand reported similar intentions of Indian international students. As these studies have pointed out, international students also have short-term and long-term goals when they enter a new country. However, the validity of the above claims needs to be re-examined as all these students may not have similar goals while considering different study destinations. Moreover, the levels of satisfaction of the current students in a host country can shape and influence their subsequent life decisions and consequently can also influence future flow of international students to that particular host country. Therefore, it is necessary to identify their expectations by looking at their own perceptions.

In addition, studies have indicated that students mobility to a new country is influenced by the prospects of new opportunities that such a journey offers, such as exposure to a new culture and language (Doyle et al., 2010; King et al., 2010). This phenomenon is more evident in student exchange programmes, because such programmes are specifically designed to provide opportunities to domestic students to travel overseas for such exposures. An empirical study conducted in New Zealand aimed at identifying factors that promote student exchange programmes revealed that exposure to a different culture and language was the primary reason for the participants to go for student exchange programmes and language (Doyle et al., 2010). Additionally, international students usually stay for a longer period in a host country compared to exchange students, and so they are expected to have specific strategies to handle issues that may arise because of unfamiliar culture and language. The exploration of different strategies applied by these students to overcome these challenges may be beneficial for future international students.

Beyond the previously mentioned mutual benefits for both the host country and international students, such mobility as observed in the literature, is also beneficial to the source country. This is true for those countries that encourage their students to take up studies overseas. For example, Tremblay (2005) notes that when opportunities in the home country are insufficient to the demand, such countries encourage students to undertake studies overseas. As she argued, such an encouragement would entail benefits to the 'sending country' upon the return of their students. According to her, the list of benefits to the sending countries are: transfer of technology learnt overseas, economic investments, and opportunity to participate in education of global standards at

little or no costs to the state (since the individuals who study overseas are often self-financed). Further, by encouraging its students to undertake overseas study, the source country may promote healthier relationships with the countries involved in international education market. In this context, the views and experiences of the participating students may be helpful in building cultural bridges between countries.

Overall, the above observations inform me of many reasons for international students' mobility other than the personal interests of the students. However, when a student enters a host country, he/she needs to adjust to the conditions in a different and unfamiliar environment to achieve the primary academic goals. This adjustment needs and the coping strategies adopted by the participants are the core of this current study. The experiences may be either positive or negative and may provide information alerting us to any concerns or challenges that could influence future inflow of international students.

Adjustment needs

Adjustment issues is individualistic, thus how one person adjust to a stressful event will be different from how another person does. Kelly (2004) posited that both positive and negative emotions affect university students' attention, motivation and limit their performance in all spheres of their university life. He demonstrated that negative emotions decrease the academic achievements of students by influencing negatively their focus on the subject, understanding and all intellectual functions in a negative way. This interaction according to Kelly takes an important place during the education process. Emotions can interfere with students' learning in several ways including

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limiting the capacity to balance emotional issues with schoolwork, creating anxiety specifically about schoolwork, and triggering emotional responses to classroom events. When emotions are heightened, our intellectual resources are used up (Gebhard, 2010).

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In a new host country, in a cross-cultural context, an individual may have a different experience because of the unfamiliar environment. Sometimes these experiences may constitute challenges affecting their positive adjustment to the conditions of the host country. Subsequently, it becomes priority for an individual to build or apply necessary strategies to cope with these adjustment needs.

Socio-Cultural Adjustment Needs

Socio-cultural adjustment refers to the international students' ability to adjust to their new socio-cultural environment (Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward et al., 1998; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). The literature to this aspect considers the challenges encountered by an individual in adapting to the social and cultural aspects of the new host country. While these needs could vary, based on an individual's specific context as well as the context of the host country, and also the similarities and differences concerning the source and host countries, for example Ghana and Nigeria have some similarities in their socio-cultural practices. This should not deter us from attempting to identify certain common factors encountered by the international students during their adjustment process. Such attempts could inform us of the challenges they encounter and coping strategies they deploy to adjust socio-culturally in any given context.

In general, socio-cultural adjustment is associated with variables such as cultural knowledge, social skills, language proficiency, and length of stay in the host culture (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Lack of these abilities or skills could land an international student in social difficulties during the transitional phase. In such cases, a student makes special efforts to adjust positively in a new host country. Even though such efforts could head in several directions, their primary goal is usually to understand the cultural differences that mark their new host countries.

Choi's study (2010) on Korean students in Australian universities suggests that intercultural understanding is an important factor in improving the relational abilities of international students. Such an understanding further

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facilitates their relationships with their lecturers and peers in the host country, thus enhancing their communication skills. Ultimately, the communicative abilities led to their effective adjustment in a cross-cultural atmosphere. Suggesting a reverse path, Andrade (2009) showed that the communicative ability of an individual helps that person to understand intercultural issues, leading to better adjustment. Consequently, this cross-cultural understanding helps a person to reduce the impacts of culture shock in a new place, and achieve an effective social adjustment along with academic success.

Not only intercultural understanding, but also the consequent knowledge about the new environment further enhance international student's appreciation of the new host country. As Brown and Holloway (2008) note in an article (based on the findings from an ethnographic study of the post-graduate students at a university in the South of England), cross-cultural knowledge enhances acceptance of and tolerance towards new cultures. The significance of their empirical findings lies in the fact that they point to an on-going transformation of the sojourners, as they accept a new culture due to the cross-cultural knowledge. Further, they even become 'human bridges' between cultures at a later stage.

A lack of the cross-cultural knowledge on the other hand can hinder the acceptance and tolerance of the new host culture, making socio-cultural adjustment even tougher. A study in Britain (looking at Malaysian students of two ethnic groups, Malay and Chinese) to examine the factors that affect socio-cultural adjustment concluded that the perception of cultural distance by international students has greater impact on their cross-cultural adjustment (Swami, 2009). The study pointed at two categories of students who perceived

cultural distance differently. While, the Malay students who felt a huge culture gap showed poorer socio-cultural adjustment and low interactions with the host nationals, their Chinese counterparts had better socio-cultural adjustment and improved social interactions since they perceived less culture gap. These findings suggest that the lesser the sense of cultural distance, the greater the social interaction with host nationals and better the socio-cultural adjustment.

However, perceptions of individuals differ depending on different demographic variables such as age and gender of each individual. This phenomenon was illustrated through the observations of the following studies which suggest the influence of demographic variables on the adjustment process. A survey of studies between 1978 and 1988 revealed that age and gender directly impacted psychosocial adjustment process (Cigularova, 2005). Contrary to this observation, Duru and Poyrazli (2007) in their study found no impact of these variables on the adjustment process. However, just a year later, one of the authors, Poyrazli, along with others observed that older students had higher levels of anxiety compared to younger students (Sümer et al., 2008). Poyrazli and her colleagues since agreed that demographic variables impact on the adjustment process. Similarly, in an Australian study, Rosenthal, Russell, and Thomson (2008) too have noted that variables of age and gender have significant impact on the adjustment process. It is implicit that at the time of Church's (1982) review of the literature, 'gender' was not recognised as a variable associated with the adjustment process. Nevertheless, many later studies since have established its significance making demography an important variable to consider when discussing adjustment of a sojourner.

Apart from the intercultural understanding, knowledge, perceived distance and demographics, a person's adjustment depends on how well that person can socially interact in the new host country. Observing this phenomenon among international students, Ward and Rana (1999) based on an empirical study proved that, contacts of international students with host nationals helped them to minimise their socio-cultural difficulties, thus allowing a faster adjustment. A later study conducted in France too confirmed this view, by stating that intimacy between domestic and international students helped international students to adapt better to the new socio-cultural environment (Brisset, Safdar, Lewis, & Sabatier, 2010). Thus, the available studies affirm that friendship with domestic students is critical when adjusting in the new host country.

While building relations with domestic students, what implicitly influences such contacts is the financial condition of the international students. Swami and his colleagues (2010) who observed that international students from high-income families experienced better socio-cultural adjustment noted this interesting relationship between adjustment and financial conditions. This would mean, a person from high income background would be at liberty to spend his/her financial resources to take part in events or sports or social activities to which their domestic peers might invite them, ultimately resulting in more social contacts.

Apart from the above factors, literature suggests that, perceived discrimination is a significant factor that influences socio-cultural adjustment (Campbell & Jieping, 2006; Lee & Opio, 2011; Novera, 2004; Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007). The research indicates that international students often

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experience discrimination or they perceive themselves to be discriminated against (Lee & Rice, 2007). It has been suggested that students from particular regions experience discrimination from their lecturers and classmates at a significant level, and from other staff on a minor scale (Hanassab, 2006). Berno and Ward (2004) specifically noted that international students experienced different kinds of discrimination, and it was at a greater level in the case of Asian international students in New Zealand. Studies indicate that due to discriminatory practices or the perception of discrimination international students faced a substantial number of adjustment needs (Mason, 2010, 2012). On the other hand, low levels of perceived discrimination could foster healthy attitudes towards the new host country, thus contributing to easier socio-cultural transition (Lee, 2010; Swami, 2009; Swami et al., 2010). Therefore, in light of this discussion, it is evident that, international students often experience discrimination in the new host country. Such experiences could further affect their social skills and interactions.

Moreover, lack of special provisions related to food, religious practices, and differences in cultures could influence the socio-cultural adjustment of international students. A number of studies have indicated this problem facing international students due to non-availability of special provisions for religion, food and cultural habits (Alazzi & Chiodo, 2006; Mehdizadeh & Scott, 2005; Novera, 2004). For example, Novera (2004) alerted to the fact that the religious custom of Muslims requires a person to pray five times a day, as well as need *halal* food. The study highlighted that since students spend most of the time outside of their accommodation, they found difficulties in observing these religious practices. In addition,

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Mehdizadeh and Scott (2005) pointed out that international students were brought up in the culture of their home country where their leisure time activities also conformed to their religious values. In a foreign country where they did not find it conducive to follow those religious practices, they faced pressures from their family members and this significantly hampered their socio-cultural transition.

Additionally, length of stay in a host culture is also considered an important factor impacting on socio-cultural adjustment of international students. Searle and Ward (1990) found no significance of this variable either in psychological or in socio-cultural adjustment. However, a number of studies since then have identified impacts of length of stay on socio-cultural adjustment (Junius, 1997; Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). In a positive note, the review article by Araujo (2011) added that students with a longer length of stay were able to adjust to the host culture better than those who stayed for shorter period. While length of stay is a significant factor to consider in the socio-cultural adjustment, it is not a major challenge to overcome. In other words, unlike other variables, length of stay is not a variable that requires coping strategies. However, as a passive phenomenon, in a due course of time it helps an individual to acquire knowledge of the surroundings and develop social interactions, which ultimately is useful for positive socio-cultural adjustment.

Overall, the above discussion of literature on socio-cultural adjustment of international students highlights a few significant challenges. These challenges often arise because of lack of intercultural knowledge, skills and abilities of an individual to develop social interactions; lack of effective social

support and English language proficiency. However, it is well established that a better socio-cultural adaptation of an international student is possible especially through friendships with the host nationals. Some of the studies have suggested that international students should make individual efforts to develop relationships with domestic students, however, also asserting the need for support services when the students are found to be struggling in this respect. Besides this, it has also been noted that an individual's awareness of support services and the relevant information plays a crucial role in the socio-cultural adaptation.

Other than these issues, existing studies also suggest that international students face difficulties with a few academic conventions of the host country. For instance, Campbell and Li (2008) identified that even though students completed their undergraduate degrees in their home countries they were found to be lacking knowledge and understanding of certain academic conventions like independent learning, writing tasks, group discussions and group assignments. Essentially, the struggle of international students regarding the independent learning refers to taking up personal responsibility required to conduct and organise one's own research and study, particularly in an unmonitored context. Confirming this view, Eaves (2009) study stated that participants perceived that the learning process in England was stressful after reporting high level of differences in teaching learning process, independent learning, and assessment procedures.

Theorization of cross-cultural adjustment

Generally, the research on 'international students' experiences' constitutes a distinctive literature, a component of a research approach labelled 'internationalization of higher education' (Dolby & Rahman, 2008).

International students are a distinct academic subject of research, similar to other cultural travelers, such as immigrants and business people, on cross-cultural transition and adaptation (Ward et al., 2001). Because of their sojourning status, international students, unlike domestic students, experience more problems such as language issues, cultural differences in both academic and social life, social difficulties. Besides this, as they are burdened with additional academic stress and low levels of personal resources compared to other sojourning groups, international students experience higher levels of acculturative stress (Poyrazli et al., 2004). Being sojourners in a different culture, they need to undergo cross-cultural transition at a fast pace within a limited time span, to achieve their pre-set academic goals effectively. To achieve positive outcomes, they require better support services to cope with the conditions. However, as the adjustment issues of international students are aligned to cross-cultural transition, three key theoretical strands from the relevant literature are explained below before looking at their adjustment experiences in detail.

The concept of culture shock

When a person encounters a new culture, in the midst of an unfamiliar environment, that person will experience aggravation and anxiety (Oberg, 1960). Oberg labelled this experience as 'culture shock'. Oberg viewed the response of people to 'culture shock' in terms of occupational disease, a

condition that a transitioning sojourner goes through in a new place. Oberg (1960) noted that the effect of 'culture shock' in physical and psychological terms might sometimes even lead an individual to reject the host culture while stressing the superiority of one's home culture, and thereby significantly affecting any positive cross-cultural transition of that individual in a new host country.

Contrary to this view, Adler (1975) saw such a cross-cultural transition not only as an event causing frustration, but as also helping an individual to widen his /her knowledge while undergoing this process. Therefore, according to Adler, the response of individuals to the 'culture shock' may no longer be understood just in terms of an occupational disease as Oberg viewed it, but it could also be seen as a positive experience broadening the knowledge of an individual. This is because the transition process would transform a person from being mono-cultural to inter-cultural. Other than this, he believed that when an individual encounters a new culture, that person not only learns about a diverse culture, but also develops an awareness and understanding of one's own ethnocentrism. Adler's views were further echoed in a later study indicating that cross-cultural transition experience might stimulate a person to learn from the new experiences (Zapf, 1991). Thus, culture shock is no longer seen as a psychiatric disorder or occupational disease, but is considered as a routine phase encountered by any person walking into a cross-cultural situation (Mumford, 1998).

Church (1982) indeed highlighted that many studies he reviewed did not refer to the concept of 'culture shock'; instead, to understand the experience of international students they used other parameters such as

academic achievement, satisfaction related to personal and social aspects of life, and problems. Therefore, to resolve their issues or to achieve satisfaction with their personal, social and academic lives they need to adjust to the conditions of the new environment. Church referred to such an adjustment for international students, who spend a shorter period in a new cross-cultural environment, as a 'sojourner adjustment'. This shorter period of stay is typically between six months to five years (Ward et al., 2001). Usually, international students enter a new country with an aim to achieve specific academic goals within limited periods of stay, besides adjusting to the conditions of that host country. This situation obviously leaves them in a relatively vulnerable situation to experience additional pressures and challenges, compared to other cross-cultural travelers, requiring a different process of adjustment.

Searle and Ward (1990) also argued that the concept of 'culture shock' could not sufficiently explain the nature of difficulties or enlighten us about the requirements of sojourners like international students. Subsequently, Ward and Kennedy (1993) proposed the use of terms 'adaptation' or 'adjustment' to refer to such cross-cultural transition. In a similar fashion, Zhou and her colleagues (2008) in their review of literature contended that, 'culture shock' as a notion was no longer viewed in the literature as a passive phenomenon (i.e. passive recipients of trauma). However, it was transformed to include aspects of contact-induced stress together with skill deficit, which can be coped, thus accepting the terms 'adaptation' and 'acculturation'. Currently, the extant literature uses these terms to explain the adjustment process, thus making it the standard in recent cross-cultural literature. Apart from the

terminology employed to analyze cross-cultural transition, the literature also pointed to certain frameworks in which cross-cultural adjustment is perceived. According to the Institute of International Education (IIE), the number of international students in the United States' colleges and universities has increased from 34,000 students in the academic year 1953-54 to 974,926 students in the academic year 2014-15 (IIE, 2015).

Studies show that international students undergo different challenges during their education abroad. These issues vary from challenges in mastering a foreign language, cultural norms, and food tastes, as well as the social shock of being away from family and friends. These challenges are serious especially for those students who are travelling into countries with different cultures (Lee, 2015). A research study published in the *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, found that nearly 40 % of international students report having no close American friends and say that they wish had more interactions with American students (Gareis, 2012).

In spite of economic and non-economic benefits that international students bring to their host countries, the research shows that more efforts should be made by college and university administrators to promote better adjustment of international students in higher education institutions. In the following section, the research done on adjustment of the international students in American colleges and universities will be reviewed.

Academic adjustment needs experienced by International students

Generally, the primary goal of any international student (similar to any other student) is academic performance and achievement. However, from the above discussions it is apparent that international students face massive

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adjustment challenges in a new environment. So it can be assumed that in the academic front too international students encounter some challenges. Indeed, Chun and Poole (2009) emphasize that among all the reasons causing stress to international students, academic stress is the most important.

Church (1982) explored the adjustment struggles of international students especially in academic matters; his findings indicated the following significant challenging areas: inadequate language skills, lack of understanding of different norms and procedures associated with the new academic system, lack of information and guidance on a different kind of educational system. According to Church, lack of language skills could lead to difficulties in understanding lectures as well as difficulties in written and oral communication necessary for pursuing studies. Likewise, lack of understanding of different norms and procedures in a new academic system refers to such aspects as a credit-based study system, classroom protocols and teacher/student informality. In the same way, lack of information and guidance implies inadequate prior preparation, inadequate academic orientation and advice. In short, unfamiliarity with the language, norms and procedures of a new academic system, and information cause stress to international students.

Since Church's 1982 study various other studies at different times affirmed the significance of these three challenging areas, as well as added to this list a few more challenges that affect the academic adjustment of international students (Andrade, 2006b; Campbell & Li, 2008; Mehdizadeh & Scott, 2005). While Mehdizadeh and Scott (2005) further unpacked the issue of language proficiency to draw our attention to the problem of understanding different accents, Andrade (2006b) focused on problems of speaking and

writing in academic contexts. Campbell and Li (2008) added a few more factors such as insufficient learning support, unfamiliar concepts of group discussions and assignments, difficulty in developing friendships with host nationals, and incorporation of cultural values in the educational practices, which affected the learning progression of international students.

Similar to the issues associated with language proficiency, differences in academic cultures between the home and host countries of international students could also severely impact on international students' academic achievement. A review of literature by Ho, Holmes, and Cooper (2004) shows that different cultures are driven by unique features and objectives and will therefore have impacts on the learning, teaching and classroom interactions. Novera (2004) also makes a similar argument that academic cultural differences have greater impacts on the international students' learning process. The impacts of these differences are reflected in their learning styles, classroom interactions and student-teacher relationships. Holmes (2005) study on the Chinese students' communicative abilities at a New Zealand university revealed significant level of challenges experienced by them due to the cultural differences between their home country and host country. For example, Holmes, suggests that the inquiry-based learning (which assumes interaction in the form of questions, expressing ideas and opinions) is a foreign concept to many students from Asia. The differences arise due to the participants' own familiar educational system in which teachers are viewed as the moral authority, a source of knowledge and therefore questioning a teacher is highly discouraged in Asian cultures. Unfortunately, these familiar views

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held by international students hinders their classroom participation and interaction with the teachers in the new host country.

An academic environment like a university will definitely pose academic challenges and as such students are likely to encounter several academic adjustment needs, for international students these needs are even different and difficult as compared to students who are nationals of the country.Cooke, Beewick, Barkham, Bradley, and Audin (2006) did a study in the United Kingdom, and came out with several factors that create a lot of needs for international students with academic pressure being a major basis for increased levels of anxiety in international students. The subjects in the study of Cooke and his colleagues rated far worse than the general population in measures of psychological well-being, attributing this to the load and increased academic pressure.

Ahmad, Fauziah, Azemi, Shaari and Zailani (2002) did a similar study in Malaysia and found that the adjustment needs confronted by international students included difficulties in academic work such as: registration of courses, comprehension of textbooks, and very early morning lecture (Thus, waking up very early in the morning was a big challenge to the participants of the research). Ngwenya (2004) did a similar study in Zimbabwe and found out that international students had difficulties adjusting to the different styles of teaching compared to the high school of the home country whiles the natives found a close link with high school style of teaching and that of the university. Quite predictably, based on the above studies, Wong, Cheung, Chan, Ma, and Tang (2006) opined that many students in Hong Kong are folding under the academic pressure and expectations. These researchers further indicated that

students were identified as particularly vulnerable to mental health issues, with rates of depression measured at 20.9% (n=1657) and anxiety at 41.2% (n=3262). Their conclusion was   that the impact of such findings is expected to be seen more in international students with poorer academic attainment and quality of life. Han   (2007), for instance, discovered that international students across an American university's graduate programs had trouble participating in whole class seminar discussions because of anxiety as a result of perceived wrong pronunciation of words and insufficient content knowledge. In a similar vein Coward (2003) studied interaction between Americans and students from China, Korea, and Taiwan during graduate seminar discussions and concludes that these students were continuously trying to understand what was going on in class, when they could talk, and what role they should employ. This resulted in extra academic pressure. Adler, Acounis and Adamova (2008) asserted that adjustment to university is crucial for academic success. Thus, the academic pressure was aggravated because of how necessary it was seen to be. In a related study Burgess, Crocombe, Kelly and Seet (2009) found that inability to meet the broad challenges encountered by students during the transition from ones country secondary to a foreign land tertiary education impacts on learning outcomes. This was so because the pressure of the academic work in the university is different from that of the senior high school especially when the university is in a different country. The studies reviewed imply that students have a great burden of adjusting to the academic pressure of the university because of the transition process from senior high school to university.

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Personal-Social Adjustment Needs Experienced by International students

In an environment such as the university, it can understandably be a place for several personal and social relations, as such, as there can be adjustment issues. In the study of Ahmad et al. (2002) in Malaysia, apart from academic difficulties, participants were also found experiencing several health and financial needs. The health needs were attributed to feeling tired very often due to insomnia because of anxiety or inadequate sleeping patterns. The financial difficulties were however attributed to inability of students in receiving funds from significant others. Some of the financial needs reported by the participants were traced to lateness in receiving funds from guardians and sponsors, however, in some cases the funds received were insufficient to cater for the expenses incurred during the course of their studies.

The results of the study done by Ford and Brenya (2011) in the University of Cape Coast showed a clear picture of Nigerian international students' experiences as they interact with their academic and social communities in the university. The cardinal issue was that they lacked the necessary psychological preparation and mindset for studying abroad. Oberg (1960) opined in this regard, that training in socio-cultural, and problem-solving skills is crucial for international students because in the new cultural and educational environment, these students encounter a great deal of cultural shock that if not properly addressed, would stampede their academic success.

In a study of Constantine, et al, (2005) it was revealed that when international students have limited English proficiency and lack experience and familiarity with American interactive behaviors, some students find it difficult to make friends and establish a social network with Americans. Thus,

this makes their confidence level to be lowered and lowers their self- esteem. Often these students withdraw into the expatriate community, and this action appears to hinder adaptation and does not encourage the mixing bowl aspect of university education. In the view of Dyson and Rank (2006), social adjustment is s seen in the difficulty students have in their immediate environment, participating in social activities and their satisfaction with various social aspects of the university experience.

The study of Mutambara and Bhebe (2012) in Zimbabwe indicated that more than half of the respondents of 115 responded that it had not been easy being independent for the first time and having to take responsibility for their actions. However, a greater percentage of students in the study of Mutambara and Bhebe did not have any needs with coping with stress on campus. Parker, Summerfeldt, Hogan and Hogan (2004) indicated that upon entry into a university, international students are faced with new personal and interpersonal challenges that include the need to build new relationships and modify existing relationships with parents and their families. This was in confirmation to what had been indicated earlier by Tinto (2003).

These studies confirmed the presence of personal-social adjustment difficulties of international students. This has awaken interest in researching into the personal-social adjustment needs of international students in southern Ghana universities.

Emotional Adjustment Needs Experienced by International students

The emotional adjustment refers to the personal satisfaction or emotional well-being of an individual in a new host country (Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward et al., 1998; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). In the initial stages of

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adjustment, a person experiences unfamiliar physical surroundings, cultural aspects, food habits and languages. These encounters with a different culture produce stress in an individual undergoing such transition (Ward et al., 2001). As international students relocate to a host country to pursue their studies, these experiences are common to them as well. As a result of this stress, an international student may display symptoms of passivity, vagueness, lack of interest in physical appearance, physical complaints, and struggle with communication (Khawaja & Dempsey, 2007; Sandhu, 1994). Ward alluded to these symptoms at the initial stages of adjustment of an international student by the term 'foreign student syndrome' (Khawaja & Dempsey, 2007, p. 14; Sandhu, 1994, p. 230).

This difficult and stressful time of adjustment often presents emotional challenges to international students. Sandhu (1994) after reviewing the past literature lists a few emotional challenges faced by international students in a foreign land. These include: depression, loneliness, feelings of helplessness, homesickness, high levels of anxiety and disorientation. Sandhu's list has been further expanded in other studies to include even more negative signs of adjustment. For instance, Ward and her colleagues highlighted that international students struggled in dealing with emotional problems such as 'fear, anxiety, anger and feeling of helplessness' (Ward et al., 1998, p. 278). Given that the above list of challenges is extensive and there is a vast literature available on each of them, it would be difficult to deal with each of these in detail in this review. One key emotional need among the rest is homesickness. This particular emotional need will be taken as a sample to discuss their overall impacts on international students.

Poyrazli and Lopez (2007) in their exploratory study in the US define homesickness in terms of the reaction exhibited by individuals in the absence of the familiar people or surroundings. In addition, they note that homesickness could lead to loneliness, feelings of sadness, and difficulties in the adjustment process of an international student. Most importantly, they argue that homesickness affects an international student's behaviour, physical and psychological well-being (p. 264). Making similar observations, Thurber and Walton (2012) also noted that staying away from home in a new surrounding could lead international students to experience stress and anxiety. They further argued that, at times, due to physical and psychological effects of this stress, it could result in individuals withdrawing from their course of study. Not only that, studies have indicated that homesickness can affect the academic performance of international students (Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007; Tochkov, Levine, & Sanaka, 2010). Given the negative impacts of homesickness on a sojourner, these studies have highlighted the need to set preventative strategies for a better emotional adjustment of international students in a new host environment.

Apart from homesickness, other challenges such as depression, loneliness, and higher levels of anxiety, fear, anger, disorientation, and feelings of helplessness could equally impact an international student's emotional adjustment. Extensive attempts have been made to investigate a few common stressors that trigger this emotional maladjustment (Duru & Poyrazli, 2007; Kwon, 2009; Poyrazli et al., 2004; Sandhu, 1994; Spencer-Oatey & Xiong, 2006; Sümer, Poyrazli, & Grahame, 2008; Wang & Shan, 2007; Ward & Kennedy, 1993; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Most of these studies indicate

that the triggers behind the stressful situations are two common factors, a lack of language proficiency and friendships. For instance, based on their findings that language proficiency corresponds to emotional adjustment, these studies concluded that, an increased level of English proficiency decreases stress in the adjustment process (Duru & Poyrazli, 2007; Poyrazli et al., 2004; Sümer et al., 2008; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Thus, English language proficiency is presented as a significant stressor affecting emotional adjustment of an international student in a foreign country.

Similarly, lack of friendships significantly obstructs international students in their emotional adjustment. Ward and Kennedy (1993) suggested that co-national support networks helped sojourners to adjust better psychologically, while host national support networks result in better socio-cultural adaptation. This observation was further affirmed by other studies indicating that increased social interactions relieved homesickness to a considerable extent (Kwon, 2009; Spencer-Oatey & Xiong, 2006). Further evidence for the role of friendships is provided from the study of Wang and Shan (2007) conducted on Chinese postgraduate students in Australia. They identified that Chinese international students overcame the impact of loneliness and isolation by developing friendships, thus concluding that friendships can minimize the challenges of emotional adjustment.

On the whole, from the above discussion it is apparent that international students encounter several emotional challenges in the new host country. In addition, it was noted that stressors such as a lack of English language proficiency, and absence of friends could significantly affect their adjustment. In order to address such challenges, several studies have

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recommended coping strategies in the areas of individual abilities (English language proficiency) and social support (creating opportunities for friendships).

Decapua & Wintergerst (2004) stated that some students might have difficulty learning because their minds are cluttered with distracting thoughts and memories. Wong et al. (2006) conducted a web-based survey of depression, anxiety and stress in first year tertiary education students in Hong Kong. Their results indicated that 27.5% of the sample of 7915 students had a moderate severity level of depression, anxiety and stress. Similarly, Kranz (2008) in his study evaluated stress levels experienced by students in a pharmacy curriculum. Data was collected using an individual interview that consisted of both a demographic and stress questionnaire. The results indicated that: students rated stress to be average or above average, with a mean score of 3.8 out of a maximum score of 5.

A study done by Landow (2006) also found that maladjustment to university led to negative emotional states such as depression, OCD, stress and anxiety. The findings of Landow was confirmed by Yau, Sun, and Cheng (2012) who discovered that low level of social adjustment led to depression. The claims of a link between adjustment and emotional reactions has been confirmed through several studies including that of Kaur (2012) who found that there was a powerful relationship between adjustment and negative emotions.

Lee and Chang (2007) posited that the ability to deal with and/or manage emotional adjustment issues in interactions with people from other cultural background is essential to fruitful adjustment. Some of the emotional

adjustment needs identified by these two researchers are homesickness, physiological effects like headaches and stomachaches. Being anxious and stressful are natural reactions to interacting intensively with members of other cultures or living in another culture. It can therefore be deduced from these studies that international students go through many emotional adjustment needs.

Coping Strategies

In psychology, coping refers to efforts to overcome, reduce, or tolerate the demands created by stress or conflict (Weiten & Lloyd, 2008; Taylor and Stanton, 2007; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). It describes the way individuals employ psychological coping mechanisms, otherwise termed coping styles or strategies, to aid in the process of managing, minimizing or overcoming stress. Often coping mechanisms arise in situations that are appraised as taxing or exceeding of one's resources (Thompson & Greve, 2013; Taylor and Stanton, 2007). The effectiveness of an individual's ability to cope depends on the coping strategy employed, the type of stress/conflict encountered, and the situational circumstances. Coping strategies and styles often vary in their adaptive value with some forms of coping being highly adaptive and constructive in their ability to mediate or reduce the impact of a stressor. Over the years, psychological coping has been categorized into several different coping styles each with overlapping and distinct characteristics. The preceding section will discuss the main paradigms of coping as identified in the literature on psychological coping and explore the evolution of this broad and complex field.

Problem-focused Coping and Emotion-focused Coping

Early research separated coping into two broad dimensions, which included problem focused coping and emotion-focused coping (Lazarus, 1984). Problem-focused coping is aimed at problem solving and altering the source of stress: taking steps to remove, evade, or to diminish its impact. For example, if layoffs are expected, an individual may apply for other jobs or work harder at their current job to reduce the likelihood of being let go (Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010). Emotion-focused coping is aimed at minimizing the emotional distress that is associated with or caused by the stressor. Emotion-focused coping included a wide range of responses, such as self-soothing (e.g., relaxation, seeking emotional support) expression of negative emotions (crying, yelling), focusing on negative thoughts (e.g., rumination) and attempts to escape stressful situations (e.g., avoidance, denial and wishful thinking) (Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010).

According to Lazarus (1984), emotion focused coping dominates when stressful conditions are viewed as difficult to change; however, when they appear as controllable by action, problem focused coping dominates. In addition, the same goal (e.g., seeking support) can be both emotion-focused and problem-focused depending on the type of support that is sought after. It would be classified as emotion-focused if the desire is to obtain emotional support and reassurance, but problem-focused if the goal is to obtain advice or instrumental help (Lazarus 1984; Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010). As such, emotion-focused coping and problem-focused coping are not two distinct and independent coping strategies; they complement and support one another. To illustrate, emotion-focused coping used effectively can diminish negative

emotional distress, making it possible to problem solve more calmly and possibly allow for better problem focused coping.

Moreover, problem-focused coping can diminish the threat, and while doing so can reduce the negative emotional distress. While, the distinction between problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping is an important one, the research on coping psychology has evolved towards a much broader and more in-depth understanding of coping styles and strategies (Carver, Scheier & Weintraub, 1989). Paradigms of coping that soon followed emotion and problem-focused coping included engagement and avoidance coping, as well as meaning focused coping and proactive coping.

Engagement and Disengagement Coping

Engagement/approach-oriented coping is aimed at dealing with the stressor or related emotions, and includes problem-focused coping and some forms of emotion-focused coping (Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010; Thompson & Greve 2013). Within engagement/approach coping attempting to directly control the stressor has been termed primary control coping or assimilative coping. On the other hand, attempts to adjust or adapt to the stressor has been termed accommodative or secondary control coping. Within primary control coping an individual may try to maintain their goal when confronted with obstacles. They may engage in direct problem solving (e.g., taking action to find ways to fix or better the situation), or seeking out information or support to improve the situation (Compas, Champion & Reeslund, 2005). Primary control coping also involves emotion regulation (engaging in activities to calm oneself), as well as emotional expression (e.g., talking or writing about one's feelings and emotions) (Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010; Compas, Champion &

Reeslund, 2005). Secondary control coping is best understood when individuals are confronted with situations that cannot be changed or obstacles that cannot be overcome. Secondary control coping involves adaptation to the stressor through acceptance, positive thinking, and cognitive restructuring (e.g., revising one's goals to meet the current situation, reframing loss into a different perspective, focusing on different opportunities).

In contrast to engagement/approach-oriented coping is disengagement/ avoidance-oriented coping. Disengagement coping is aimed at escaping the threat or related emotions, and involves responses such as avoidance, denial, and wishful thinking (Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010). It is often more emotion focused, as it involves attempt to escape feelings of distress. Sometimes avoidance coping is almost literally an effort to act as though the stressor does not exist. In this way the stressor does not have to be behaviorally or emotionally reacted to. Often wishful thinking, fantasy creation and denial, distance the person from the cause of stress and create a boundary between reality and the individual experience. However, escaping distress is often an ineffective way to reduce distress over the long-term, as it does nothing to address or reduce the threat (Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010). To illustrate, an individual experiencing a threat in their life might respond by going 'to the movies' however the threat will remain to be there after the movie is over and in essence the stressor will not have been dealt with. Studies have shown that engagement coping is often associated with more positive psychological outcomes and less distress compared to disengagement coping (i.e. denial, avoidance, and wishful thinking) (Varni et al., 2012).

A study on adolescent mental health showed that those who transitioned over a one-year period from disengagement to engagement coping had a significant decrease in depressive symptoms (Herman-Stabl, Stemmler, & Petersen, 1995). While those who changed over time from engagement to disengagement coping evidenced a significant increase in depressive symptoms. The study implied that the adolescents who engaged in social support, cognitive restructuring and problem solving were more likely to successfully negotiate the challenges that they encountered.

Meaning-focused Coping

Another coping mechanism is meaning-focused coping where an individual attempt to re-evaluate a situation and infuse ordinary events with positive meaning (Tennen et al., 2007). It has been proposed that meaning-focused coping is distinct from problem-focused and emotionfocused coping (Park & Folkman, 1997; Gan, Guo & Tong, 2013), as it does not attempt to change a problematic situation, nor does it have a direct influence on decreasing the pressure caused by negative emotions or distress. Instead, it may include drawing on beliefs and values (e.g., religious, spiritual, social justice beliefs), as well as existential goals (e.g., one's purpose in life or guiding principles) in an attempt to sustain well-being during stressful times (Folkman, 2008).

However, meaning focused coping is said to relate to engagement coping, as it can involve reappraisal and accommodating to life's constraints. In the same way that engagement coping describes adaptation to the stressor (i.e. secondary control coping) or changing one's perspective instead of trying to influence the stressor, meaning focused coping can include viewing a

situation from an alternate viewpoint. In meaning-focused coping one can look to the lessons learnt from an unfavourable experience, or ascertain the benefits of misfortune, such as a sense of personal self-growth or an increase in wisdom and patience (Folkman, 2008; Gan, Guo & Tong, 2013). The result of meaning-focused coping can also include gaining a greater appreciation for life and a knowing of what is truly important in one's life.

Meaning focused coping is suggested to occur most often when stressful experiences are uncontrollable or are going badly, such as when illness or loss is involved (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000). Research suggests that engaging in meaning making can reduce distress levels and allow individuals to become more resilient in the face of loss (Davis, Harasymchuk & Wohl, 2012). Additional studies have suggested that failing to engage in meaning focused coping can lead to long term distress, especially in the face of sudden loss or unexpected events (Davis, Nolen-Hoeksema, & Larson, 1998). For some individuals meaning-focused coping arises more easily, though for others meaning making is a discussion and strategy that when reminded of can facilitate adjustment to unlikely events.

Religious Coping

Religious coping is related to meaning focused coping, but is distinct from nonreligious styles of coping due to its involvement of religious practices and beliefs (Sanchez, et al., 2012; Zinnbauer et al., 1997). Religious coping can include engaging in contemplative prayer or the belief in a higher power to support how one gathers meaning from an event (internal religious coping) (Sanchez, et al., 2012). It can also involve social behavioral strategies, such as attending religious places of worship, seeking guidance from religious leaders

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or becoming involved with religious events (external religious coping). Further research on reveals three methods of religious coping (the collaborative style, the deferring style, self-directing style) (Pargament, 1997). The collaborative style is based on viewing God as a partner in the problem-solving process. It consists of working together with God to sustain oneself through difficult times.

The deferring style includes feeling that one has less personal control over situations and delegating all problem solving to God. The self-directing style involves the belief that God endows individuals with the skills for problem solving and one must actively use those skills (Petruţa-Paraschiva & Turliuc, 2011). Those with a self-directing style are described as not necessarily feeling a close relationship with God. By examining these styles of religious coping, the collaborative style of coping has been found to have the greatest psychological benefits, related to increased self-esteem and lower levels of depression (Phillips et al, 2000). Individuals deal with traumatic events in a myriad of ways, and for some turning to religion can be a highly beneficial avenue of support. A national survey taken three months after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks showed that 75% of Americans turned to religion or spirituality to cope (Schuster et al., 2001). An additional study showed that 62% of undergraduate and graduate students reported that prayer helped them to cope with the stress that followed the attacks (Ai et al., 2005). The impact of religious coping has also shown to have a compounded effect depending on the level of religiosity.

A study by Gall and Guirguis-Younger (2013) found that religious individuals reported less pain splitting migraines when they were exposed to

meditations with religious content in comparison to non-religious content. Overall, when individuals endorse religious coping it seems to result in less anxiety, greater optimism and more positive outcomes (i.e. closer relationships with family and friends) (Ai, Ti & Peterson, 2005). While religious coping/spirituality may not resonate with every individual, it can be a helpful strategy to facilitate adjustment to challenging experiences.

Proactive Coping

While, many constructs of coping discuss how individuals respond to a threat or stressor, some coping can occur proactively before the onset of a threat or stressor (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997; Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010). In essence, proactive coping seeks to prevent threatening or harmful situations from arising. Proactive coping is often problem focused, as it involves an accumulation of resources that can be used to detect if problematic events may surface or if a threat arises. If a threat is perceived, a person can engage in strategies that will prevent or remove the threat. The anticipation of the threat can also help a person to avoid the stressor, or mentally prepare for its possible arrival if it cannot be avoided. In addition, proactive coping has been shown to reduce the number of stressful episodes or the intensity of the experience, as one is able to prepare beforehand and engage in any steps necessary to diminish its impact.

In career pursuits, proactive coping has been related to personal initiative and the ability to solve problems in the workplace (Crant, 2000). It has been further conceptualized as an aspect of self and job-improvement; for example, a sales employee might ask for feedback on their technique for closing a sale with the goal of improving their job performance. Crant (2000)

further emphasize that a proactive individual will seek out opportunities in the workplace instead of adopting a more passive or reactive approach. Research has also described proactivity as a personality construct, whereby an individual with a proactive personality is relatively unconstrained by situational forces and effects environmental change. A study by Crant (1996) demonstrated a positive correlation between entrepreneurship and a proactive personality. The study controlled for gender, education and whether or not one's parent was an entrepreneur, and found that the intention to own a business was positively influenced by a proactive personality. Proactive coping behavior is often contrasted with other work behaviours, such as proficiency and adaptability (Bateman & Grant, 1993; Campbell, 2000). Proficiency refers to the ability to fulfill predictable requirement of one's job. While, adaptability refers to the ability to cope with change initiated by others; this is contrasted with proactivity is which concerns initiating change instead of responding to it.

In summary, various paradigms of coping mechanisms exist including problem-focused and emotion-focused coping, engagement/disengagement coping, meaning focused coping, religious coping, as well as proactive coping. Within those paradigms of coping individuals may engage in wide array of processes as a method to cope with stress, difficulty or conflict. To illustrate, one may engage in direct problem solving or seek out information/resources as in problem focused or engagement coping. Additionally, an individual may attempt to seek out social support as means of both problems solving and emotional expression/regulation.

Alternatively, acceptance or positive thinking may occur as a form of secondary control coping/engagement coping. The use of prayer, seeking guidance or drawing on other values or beliefs as in religious or meaning-focused coping is another form of coping that would allow for sustained coping through difficulty. The ability to use multiple coping strategies, termed coping flexibility, has been related to positive psychological health effects, as well as reduced depression, anxiety and distress (Kato, 2012). It is suggested that more flexible coping will produce more adaptive outcome.

Coping Strategies of International Students to Adjustment Needs

Coping can be defined as cognitive and behavioural attempts or effort used to alter events or circumstances that are threatening (Dressler, as cited in Smith & Renk, 2007). Dressler suggested that the adaptive ability of new undergraduates depends a lot on their coping effort as well as the coping strategies used to deal with the challenges and demands faced on campus. from engagement to disengagement coping evidenced a significant increase in depressive symptoms. The study implied that the adolescents who engaged in social support, cognitive restructuring and problem solving were more likely to successfully negotiate the challenges that they encountered.

Gender and adjustment needs

The literature on gender differences in adjustment needs and coping strategies of International students have been consistent. The consistency has been in the view that there are gender differences. Enochs and Roland cited in Mudhovozi (2012) reported that there is support for the argument that male students adapt to the new university environment better than their female counterparts. Again, Price, McLeod, Gleich, and Hand (2006) in their study at

a Canadian university and found that 19% of female students and 13% of male students in their study meet the DSM IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder) (APA, 2000) criteria for a major anxiety disorder, while 14% of female students and 7% of male students meet the DSM IV criteria for a major depressive disorder. In a similar vein, the findings of Sulieman and Al-menezzel (1999) revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in the adjustment needs of male and female students. Thus, adjustment needs of male and female students were not the same.

A report of the National Health Ministries (2004) after a national college health survey indicated that 10% of college students had been diagnosed with depression. Women, who tend to be more forthcoming (or are less stigmatized) in seeking treatment for depression, recorded a rate of 13%. Women were also found in the same report to be five times as likely to have anxiety disorders. Eating disorders affect 5-10 million women and 1 million men. Some other previous studies revealed similar findings that women reported higher levels of stress and adjustment needs than men (Rubleand & Zhang,2013),women, more often viewed their stress and adjustment needs more negatively than men (Zhang & Goodson, 2011), and were more likely to report their stress and adjustment needs as unacceptable (Ellis-Bosold, & Thornton-Orr, 2013). In support of all these findings, Raju and Rahamtullah (2007) stated that males are significantly better adjusted than females on the emotional adjustment area while Roy, Ekka, and Ara (2010) observed that female students were better adjusted than male students. This implies that the findings on which gender is better adjusted than the other is inconclusive. In

the same way, Abdullah (2009) found significant sex difference in the level of adjustment problem.

Contrary to the studies reporting differences between the adjustment needs of male and female students several studies have reported there are no differences in the adjustment needs of male and female students. The study of Al-khatib, Awamleh, and Samawi (2012) on student's adjustment to college life at Albalqa Applied University showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the means of male and female students' responses on the domains of the scale attributed to adjustment. Thus, the adjustment needs of students were not influenced by their gender. Similarly, the study of Hsiao-ping (2015) revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in the adjustment needs of male and female students. This confirmed the findings of Neuman (2012) who found no significant gender differences in overall adjustment. Kaur (2012) also identified no gender differences in adjustment needs among College students. This was further supported by the findings of Nyamayaro and Saravanan (2013) that there were no significant differences in the overall adjustment between male (M = 380.35, SD = 61.12) and female students (M = 387.45, SD = 59.85), t (97) = -.58, p = 0.57. To give further credence to the view of Nyamayaro and Saravanan (2013), Mahmondi (2010) found that gender had no differential influence over adjustment scores in home, health, emotional and social area. The studies reviewed were inconclusive as to whether any difference exist between the adjustment needs of male and female students or not.

Gender and Coping Strategies

In terms of coping strategies and gender, Billings and Moos (1981) and Stone and Neale (1984) reported that male students appeared to use more direct and active coping strategies, while female students adopted more passive coping strategies such as relaxation techniques, religion, social support, and distraction. These results were confirmed by the postulation of the socialization theory, which contends that men and women approach stressors according to their differential upbringing (Sigmon, Stanton, & Snyder, cited in Mudhovozi, 2012). Other studies including Heiman (2004) found that women were more likely than men to use avoidance and emotional coping.

Santacana, Kirchner, Abad, and Amador (2012) also found that with regard to the specificity of coping gender introduced significant differences. This implied that male and female respondents in the study coped with adjustment needs in different ways. Similar findings were reported by Wadsworth (2008) that gender differences exist in the coping strategies used by men and women to deal with stress and adjustment needs. Specifically, Wadsworth indicated that men used more avoidance-focused coping strategies than women did. However, Wang (2009) indicated that men used more problem-focused coping strategies and women used more emotion-focused coping strategies. Thus, women sought more emotional support than men did. In explaining the reason for the differences in coping strategies, Wang (2009) suggested that the gender differences in coping behaviour were likely to be due to differences in gender socialization rather than to be due to inherent differences in coping behaviour of men and women.

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The study of Matheny, Ashby, and Cupp (2005) also found that there were significant gender differences in coping strategies. However, the study of Gentry, Harris, Baker and Leslie (2007) on gender differences in stress and coping in Hawai`i showed that there was no significant difference between genders in overall perceived coping effectiveness. Most of the previous studies on gender and coping strategies have found gender differences in coping strategies making it point of interest as to whether the findings of the current study will support or contradict the previous studies.

Age and Adjustment Needs

For the purpose of this study, the age classification was in two groupings: mature students and young students. All the universities for this study's classification of mature students starts from the age of 25 according to their official websites. Mature students and young students have their own distinctive experiences and backgrounds, including work experience and previous academic pursuits, from which to draw on when entering the university environment. Urquhart and Pooley (2007) discovered that the adjustments for students was first dependent upon the type of student they were, thus being a young or a mature student. They found that the adjustment needs experienced by mature students included giving up full-time employment, supporting a family, and reintegrating into an academic context while young students reported difficulties involving social pressures and battling with other people's expectations.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as reported by the National Health Ministries, (2004), suicide is the eighth leading cause of death among the US population, the third leading cause of

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death for all those aged between 15-24, and the second leading cause of death in college populations. Individuals who are stressed are more likely to have accidents – including those involving motor vehicles, and, to be more careless with seatbelt use. A review of a decade of Australian studies regarding the first year university experience was undertaken in Australia by Krause, Hartley, James, and McInnes (2005). Their findings suggested that the transition period to university differs for school leavers' as opposed to mature age students, in that school leavers experience a more negative transition than their mature age counterparts. Urquhart and Pooley (2007) also argued that there are differences between mature entry and school leavers' experiences in terms of adjustment to university. In support, Munro and Pooley (2009) suggested that mature entry students and school leaver students have different experiences in transitioning to university.

Contrary to these studies, the study of Raju and Rahamtulla (2007) on the adjustment needs of students from urban and rural schools of Visakhapatnam district in India concluded that age does not have a significant influence on adjustment. Their study found no significant differences between the age groups on any of the adjustment factors.

Age and Coping Strategies

In terms of coping and the age of students, Heiman (2004) indicated that there is a significant difference in the coping strategies of old and young students. He argued that younger students employed more emotional strategies and reported having more social support from friends than older students. Similarly, Feinstein and Hammond (2004) suggested that resilience and coping was a function of age, because older adults had the necessary resources

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needed to maintain their course of action as they have had longer years to develop those resources.

However, the study of Santacana et al. (2012) found that in terms of the specificity of coping there was no significant difference in terms of age. Munro and Pooley (2009) also revealed that there was no difference in the resilience or coping of mature entry students and that of senior high school leavers in adapting to the university environment. The studies reviewed imply that there is no general consensus as to whether there was age difference in the coping strategies of young and mature students.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter covered three main areas. They are: the conceptual framework, theoretical framework and review of related empirical studies. What makes the current study unique from the other studies reviewed in this chapter is that, whiles the other studies seemed to uncover the fact that international students go through stressful situations in their period of study at a host country. This study looked into what international students do to focus on their academics in spite of all the difficulties they encounter. For instance, Lee (2015) posited that challenges that international students go through become acute when they are travelling into countries with extremely different cultures. This study therefore looked into how these students make it through despite the challenges.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presented the methodology of the study. It covered areas such as: the philosophical basis for the research, the research approach, the research design, population, sample and sampling procedure as well as the instruments that was used, the data collection procedure and how data was analyzed.

Philosophical Basis of the Study

Choosing a research method is guided by philosophical underpinning regarding how knowledge is acquired. Research method choices and frames for analysis, among others, guide research designs at all stages. Henn, Weinstein, and Foard (2006) opined that research paradigm as a set of assumptions about how an issue of concern to the researcher should be studied. In the acquisition of social scientific knowledge two worldviews have usually dominated: positivist and interpretivism. I decided to use the positivist paradigm of research in this study because it makes generalization more flexible. The interpretivism is subjective and makes generalization very difficult unless all the factors or variables in two or more different settings are the same.

Hitchcock and Hughes (as cited in Wango, 2006) posited that positivism aims at objectivity in inquiry and adopts methods and procedures in the natural or physical sciences, mainly using quantitative data. This scientific approach helps the process of collecting data and testing it using some

analysis, for example, the relationship of one set of facts to another that is likely to produce generalizable conclusions.

Research Approach

The quantitative method was employed for this study. Quantitative research seeks to determine the extent of a problem or the existence of a relationship between aspects of a phenomenon by quantifying variations. Quantitative research often seeks to test to support or disapprove a proposed relationship between two or more aspects of a phenomenon. It is structured because it starts with specific hypotheses or questions derived from theory or previous research and uses objective   instruments (e.g. questionnaires, attitude scales et cetera) to collect data from a selected sample. The results are presented using statistics and inferences made to the population.   (Creswell, 2009).

The research was quantitative in nature because the researcher used numbers, percentages, or statistical information in the assessment of the adjustment needs and coping strategies of the student's situation. This was an issue of quantifying and generalizing the results from the sample to the population of interest. It also checked the incidence of the various views and opinions in the chosen sample. The ultimate concern was the fact that the measurement should be reliable, valid and generalizable. The quantitative method helps researchers, to obtain a more reliable and objectivity, which helps in minimizing subjectivity to the lowest level (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007).

Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive research design specifies the nature of a given phenomenon. It determines and reports the way things are. Descriptive research, thus, involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study Gay (as cited in Amedahe & Asamoah Gyimah, 2012).

Some advantages in using the descriptive research design are to observe, describe, and document aspects of a situation as it naturally occurs. In descriptive research, the events or conditions either already exist or have occurred and the researcher merely selects the relevant variables for an analysis of their relationships (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2009).

Furthermore, the descriptive survey was used because it helped the researcher to find out the existing situation of the adjustment needs of international students, which was a prime concern of this study. It also helped in analyzing, interpretation and reporting the present status of the adjustment needs and coping strategies of international students in the study area (Taylor & Buku, 2006).

The descriptive research was again used because the researcher is aiming at generalizing from the sample to a population so that the inferences could be made about some characteristics, attitudes or behaviour of the population (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). It also assisted in the collection of data, which was used in answering the research questions concerning the needs of international students that need adjustments in the study area (Amedahe, 2002).

The advantages of using a descriptive design for this study includes the fact that: Subjects or participants are observed in a natural and unchanged environment. An example would be an anthropologist who wants to study a tribe without interfering with their normal activities or behaviours. Also, descriptive research may be a pre-cursor to future research because it can be helpful in identifying variables that can be tested. A researcher may be looking at the health outcomes for the children of low-income families living in a particular neighborhood. The findings may point the researcher to specific variables that may be impacting health that warrant further study. Consequently, the data collection allows for gathering in-depth information that may be either quantitative (surveys) or qualitative (observations or case studies) in nature. This allows for a multifaceted approach to data collection and analysis. Descriptive studies also result in rich data that is collected in large amounts and surveys can be used by companies and organizations to study in beliefs, attitudes, behaviors and habits of members of a target audience, company or other organization.

On the other hand, some of the disadvantages in using a descriptive design are:

Participants or subjects may not be truthful or may not behave naturally when they know they are being observed and confidentiality can be an issue. Researcher bias may play a role in many ways. For example, the choice and wording of questions for the questionnaire may be influenced by the bias of the researcher. The researcher may also make subjective choice about which information to record and emphasize in the findings. Likewise, the results are not repeatable and typically, the study cannot be replicated. (Bernard &Bernard 2012).

The researcher of this study negated the first disadvantage (i.e. subjects not been truthful) by explaining to the respondents how the research is going to help them in their quest for academic excellence and a blissful atmosphere on campus so an accurate response will be for their benefit. Moreover, the rapport the researcher built with the respondents seemed to motivate them in giving truthful responses. Confidentiality was not an issue because of the assurance the researcher gave to the respondents on that issue. It could also be seen from the questionnaire that names were not needed and even ages were not stated, just the range of their ages were required for the sake of analysis. Thus, anonymity was evident on the questionnaire. I did everything humanly possible to eliminate researcher bias. The findings and the recommendations that the researcher made can elicit similar study later on to confirm this current study or otherwise.

Study Area

For the purpose of this work, the southern part of Ghana comprised the following six of the 16 Regions of Ghana: Greater Accra, Western, Eastern, Volta, Central and Ashanti Regions. The Greater Accra Region stretches across an area of about 4,540 km² with a coastline, which spans 220 km² from Kokrobite in the west to Ada in the east. The region shares boundaries with the Central Region to the west, Eastern Region to the north and Volta Region to the east. To discover the Western Region is to discover an area of diverse attractions. The region extends between the Central Region to the east and La Cote d'Ivoire on the west and Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Regions on the North. It spreads across an area of about 23,921km². The region has 192 km stretch of tropical beaches on the Atlantic Coast. It is another region rich in heritage

demonstrated by the numerous castles. However, the Eastern Region covers an area of about 19,938km². It is an area of hilly landscape, which is marked solely by graceful highlands. The various portions of the landscape are named after the people who occupy them. The region shares boundaries on the north with Brong Ahafo and Ashanti Regions, on the East with Volta Region, on the west with Central and Greater Accra Regions on the south. It has Koforidua as it capital. The Central Region was a former seat of government of the British colonial administration up until 1877. The region covers an area of about 9,881 km². It is located between the Western Region to the west and Greater Accra Region to the east as well as the Ashanti and Eastern Regions to the north. The Central Region was the first to be exposed to the first Europeans who arrived on the shores of Ghana. The coastline of the region is famous for its ancient forts and castles built by early European traders. Last, but not the least, is the Ashanti Region, known as the Kingdom of gold, history and culture with an area of about 24,390km². The Region lies within the south-central part of Ghana and occupies a central portion of   Ghana. The area is the hub of the ancient Kingdom of Ashanti, and still the heartland for all Ashantis. (www.blastours.com)

The selected universities for the study are the University of Cape Coast, (Central Region) University of Ghana, Accra, (Greater Accra Region) Ashesi University, Berekuso (Eastern Region) and Zenith University, Accra (Greater Accra Region). Both the Universities of Cape Coast and Ghana are public universities while Ashesi and Zenith Universities are private. A brief background of the four universities is given below.

Universities of Cape Coast (UCC) is one of the rare sea front universities in the world, established in October 1962 as a University College. On October 1, 1971, the College attained the status of a full and independent university, with the authority to confer its own degrees, diplomas and certificates by an Act of Parliament - The University of Cape Coast Act, 1971 [Act 390] and subsequently the University of Cape Coast   Law, 1992 [PNDC Law 278] (www.ucc.edu.gh).

The University of Cape Coast was originally mandated to train highly qualified and skilled teachers for the education sector in response to the need for trained educators and administrators for secondary schools and teacher training institutions (Manuh, Gariba & Budu, 2007). This was in order to meet the manpower needs of the country's accelerated education programme at the time. However, with the expansion of some of its faculties and the diversification of programmes, the University has the capacity to meet the work force needs of other ministries and industries in the country, besides that of the Ministry of Education. The University has also restructured its degree programmes by de-coupling the study of professional education courses from the main degree course. The breakdown of the international students as at June 2018 is presented on the table below.

Table 1: Distribution of international students in the University of Cape Coast by nationality

Country	Frequency
E. Guinea	1
India	1
France	1
Norway	2
UK	2
Burkina Faso	2
Togo	4
Denmark	4
Senegal	5
USA	14
Cote d'Ivoire	24
Nigeria	48
Total	108

Source: Centre for International Education; UCC

The University of Ghana, was founded in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast on the recommendation of the Asquith Commission on Higher Education in the then British Colonies. The mission of the University is to become a world-class research-intensive University over the next decade which will create an enabling environment that makes University of Ghana increasingly relevant to national and global development through cutting-edge research as well as high quality teaching and learning. With a current student population of about37,940 representing a male to female ratio of about 1.4:1, the University of Ghana is the oldest and largest of the eight public universities in Ghana (www.ug.edu.gh). The breakdown of the international students in the university of Ghana as at June 2018 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of nationalities of the international students in the University of Ghana by nationality

Country	Frequency
Tanzania	4
Botswana	6
Lesotho	7
Niger	8
Austria	8
Mozambique	8
Liberia	9
Uganda	8
Rwanda	9
Australia	9
Portugal	9
Ethiopia	9
Rwanda	9
India	9
Malawi	9
Zambia	10
Seychelles Island	10
Switzerland	10
Germany	11
DR. Congo	11
Finland	11
South Africa	11
E. Guinea	12
Cameroun	12
Gambia	12
Mali	13
Spain	13
Kenya	13
New Zealand	14
Namibia	14
Gambia	15
Congo Brazzaville	17
Zimbabwe	18
Canada	19
Swaziland	19
Senegal	20
Norway	21
China	22
Burkina Faso	23
UK	27
USA	34
Cote d'Ivoire	44
Togo	48
Nigeria	204
Total	**829**

Source: International Programmes; UG

Ashesi University, Berekuso in the Eastern Region was founded in 2002 by Patrick Awuah, a Ghanaian who spent over 15 years living and working in the United States. Ashesi has established a reputation as a leader in undergraduate education in Africa, with an educational experience that fosters ethical leadership, an entrepreneurial mindset and the ability to solve complex problems. The University's mission is to educate a new generation of ethical and entrepreneurial leaders in Africa; to cultivate in students, the critical thinking skills, and the concern for others and the courage it will take to transform our continent. The breakdown of the international students as at June 2018 is presented on the table below.

Table 3: Distribution of international students in Ashesi University by nationality

Country	Frequency
Pakistan	2
Tanzania	2
Lesotho	2
Germany	2
Ethiopia	2
Sudan	2
Togo	3
Sierra Leone	4
Cote d'Ivoire	4
Swaziland	4
USA	4
UK	4
Malawi	4
DR. Congo	6
Cameroun	6
Swaziland	8
Uganda	11
Gambia	13
Rwanda	16
Nigeria	32
Kenya	39
Total	171

Source: Office of Diversity and International Programs; Ashesi

Over 20 countries represented, including: Benin, Cameroon, Canada, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zimbabwe

Zenith University College, Labadi, Accra, was established in December 2001 and placed in a unique position in the private tertiary education industry with a philosophy of providing borderless higher education to contribute its quota in tackling the problems that beset our Tertiary Education Institution (TEI) at present. Zenith University College took off as a tertiary institution in November 2005. Today, Zenith University College prides itself to be Ghanaian Most Contemporary Private University with the most up to date teaching and learning resources in the country. The mission of Zenith University College is to provide high quality education of international standard and recognition by creating an environment that stimulates and challenges students to fully explore their intellectual and human potential.

Table 4: Distribution of international students in Zenith University by

Country	Frequency
Chad	1
Sudan	1
South Africa	1
Guinea Conakry	1
Central African Republic	1
Burkina Faso	1
Mali	6
Niger	6
Cote d'Ivoire	7
Congo Brazzaville	8
Nigeria	961
Total	994

Source: www.zenithuniversitycollege.org Population

Zenith University College further aims at equipping students with skills and attitudes that will assist them to apply the knowledge they acquire in meeting challenges posed by the global economy, poverty in developing countries and developmental issues. It is their mission to make their students function in a competitive global market. Zenith University College's vision is to become one of the leading regional universities in Africa for research, knowledge creation and knowledge dissemination. (www.zenithuniversitycollege.org). The breakdown of the international students as at June 2018 is presented on the table above.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), population is an entire group of individuals, events or objects with some observable characteristics. Best and Khan (1993), also referred to population' as a group of individuals or people that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher' (p.13). There are two types of population in research, they are: target population and accessible population. Target population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing conclusions. The accessible population is the subset of target population and the population that researcher's study as their sample and apply their conclusions. (Krause & Corts, 2012). The target population for this study was international students in the public and private universities in southern Ghana. The accessible population was undergraduate international students in the Universities of Cape Coast, University of Ghana, Ashesi University and Zenith University.

The choice of the international students in universities in southern Ghana was motivated by the observation that students who are non-Ghanaians

seem to be going through some adjustments needs which may be different from the stresses which Ghanaian students may be going through that needed to be researched into. They also have varied backgrounds and cultures and adjusting to the Ghanaian way of life may create some stress. For the purpose of this study, their characteristics could therefore be generalized to all international students in other parts of the country. The target population was all the 2,102 international students in these four universities.

Table 5: The total number of International Students in each University as the end of June 2018

Name of university	Number of international students	Male	Female
University of Cape Coast	108	70	38
Ashesi University	171	116	55
University of Ghana	829	590	239
Zenith University	994	669	325
Total	2,102	1445	657

Source: Field Data, (2018)

Ashesi University had 171 regular international students for the 2017/2018 academic year. Zenith University had a total of 994 international students out of a total student population of 1500 students in the 2017/2018 academic year. This indicates that the international students (994) far outnumber the Ghanaian students (506) in this particular university.

The four universities for this study had a total population of 2,102 international students (Table 5). Thus, the total population for the study was 2,102.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Sampling here refers to the choice of few to represent many in terms of population. The quality of any research not only stands or falls by the appropriation of methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sample strategy that is adopted (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The sample was chosen from the study population that is commonly referred to as 'the accessible population' (Burns & Grove, 2003, p.23).

The sample for the study was made up of 322 international students out of a total population of 2,102 from four selected universities. These were: The University of Cape Coast, University of Ghana, Zenith University and Ashesi University. These four universities were chosen because they have quite a substantial number of foreign students there. For the purpose of fair representation, the researcher used the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table to determine the required size of the sample.

According to Krejcie and Morgan a fair representation of a population of 2,102 is 322. Thus, in proportion, 17 students were selected from the 108 international students at the University of Cape Coast, whiles 127 students out of a total number of 829international students at the University of Ghana were also selected. On the other hand, 26 students out of the 171 international students were also selected from Ashesi University and finally 152 international students out of 994 from Zenith University were selected. For every university chosen, the researcher obtained its list of international students and then use stratified   sampling technique in the four universities due to the heterogeneous nature of the population.

According to Gravetter and Forzano (2006), stratified sampling technique is used when the population from which the sample is drawn is heterogeneous. This has a merit of increasing the likelihood of fair representation and virtually ensurese that any key characteristics of individuals in the population are included in the same population in the sample (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Rao (2008) further states that stratified sampling stands out vividly as a better choice because it overcomes the problem of unequal representation.

In addition, stratification gives room for homogeneity of representation of each stratum of the population as compared to the total universe. Estimate made based on each stratum becomes more accurate and realistic. Furthermore, stratified sampling permits for in-depth studies of specific characteristics of particular aspects of a population and at the same time taking a general investigation as a whole (Kumekpor, 2007). Purposive sampling was used in choosing the international students (i.e. both sexes) as the target group for the study. Creswell (2009) opined that in purposive sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand a phenomenon. The researcher used the purposive sampling technique initially in his research. The justification for the use of the purposive sampling was that the study was interested in only international students. This implies that the research was not interested in native students. In addition, postgraduate students, sandwich students and distance international students were also exempted from this current study. From the above, it is evident that purposive sampling was useful in getting only undergraduate regular international students.

Data Collection Instrument

In carrying out the study, a questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. A questionnaire is a research instrument used to obtain self-reported answers about general and personal issues (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009). According to Powell and Connaway (2004), proper construction of the questionnaire is essential to its success and generally, the researcher must consider his or her information needs and the characteristics of the participants. The questionnaire involved adapted forms of the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) developed by Baker and Siryk (1999) and the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) developed by Folkman and Lazarus (1988). This was because Punch (2009) suggested that for a complex and multidimensional variable, it is appropriate to use an existing instrument if one exists. However, the items on these questionnaires were not used without due critique and evaluation. Some items were modified to suit the focus of the research whilst others were used as found in the original text of the authors.

The questionnaire was divided into five main sub-scales. Section A, (items1-7) elicited background information on: country of origin, type of university, sex of respondents, age, religion, marital status and level of the respondents (for example, level 200 or 400). Section B (items 8-21) solicited information on the socio-personal adjustment of the respondents. A four-point, Likert-type scale with ratings of: 'strongly agree',' agree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' were used. Section C (items 22-36) dwelt on the emotional adjustment of the respondents. Section D (items 37-51) considered the academic adjustment of the respondents. Section E (items 52-81) was

designed to solicit information on the coping strategies used by the respondents to manage specific external and/or internal demands.

Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ)

The SACQ is made up of four sub scales that measure four types of university adjustment dimensions (Baker & Siryk, 1999). The *Academic Adjustment* subscale assesses students' ability to cope with the various educational demands and college experiences (e.g., students' motivation, academic performance, and satisfaction towards the academic environment offered in college). The *Social Adjustment* subscale assesses students' ability to cope with the interpersonal-societal demands inherent in college/university experiences (e.g., students' involvement and in social activities and relationships with other persons on campus, and satisfaction with the social aspects of the college environment). *Personal-Emotional Adjustment* indicates students' intra-psychic state or the degree of general psychological distress and somatic symptoms of distress experienced by them. Finally, the *Institutional Attachment* subscale assesses student's degree of commitment to educational-institutional goals and the degree of attachment to the particular university he or she is attending. However, for the adapted version, which was used for the study, the institutional attachment section was not included because it is more to do with drop out intention and rates, which was not part of the focus of this study. Also, the *Social Adjustment* subscale was modified to *Social-Personal Adjustment* subscale whiles the *Personal-Emotional Adjustment* subscale was modified to *Emotional Adjustment* subscale.

SACQ consists of 67 self-rating statements regarding subjects' perception of their adjustment to university. The SACQ yields a full-scale

score as an indicator of the overall adjustment to university and a score for the four subscales indicating the level of each adjustment dimension. The higher the score, the better the self-assessed adjustment to university, and conversely, the lower the score the greater the difficulty being reported. (Baker & Siryk, 1999).

The purpose in developing the SACQ was to create a way to assess needs for early counseling interventions and to provide the research needed for institutional interventions. Research, counseling and institutional interventions have been the most common uses of the SACQ. The SACQ has been found to be a psychometrically sound instrument. For reliability, the alpha coefficients are 0.81 to 0.90 for academic adjustment, 0.83 to 0.91 for personal-social, 0.77 to 0.86 for emotional adjustment, and 0.92 to 0.95 for full scale. Validity has been demonstrated by data indicating that the SACQ is significantly associated with student academic performance and GPA (0.17- 0.53 $p<0.01$), emotional adjustment and contact made with university counselling services (-0.23 to 0.34, $p<0.01$) (Baker & Siryk, 1989; Dahmus & Bernardin, 1992)

Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ)

The Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) was used to assess respondents' efforts in coping with adjustment needs encountered in the university. The Ways of Coping Questionnaire was modified from the original version of WCQ comprising fifty items assessing eight different types of coping scales/strategies used by students when confronted with stressful situations on campus. The coping strategies are: Confrontive Coping (CC), Distancing (D), Self-Controlling (SC), Seeking Social Support (SSS),

Accepting Responsibility (AR), Escape-Avoidance (EA), Planful Problem Solving (PPS), and Positive Reappraisal (PR).

Validity

In establishing the validity of the instrument, content and construct validity were considered. Content validity, according to Nitko (1996), is based on a judgment of the degree to which the items, tasks, or questions on a test adequately represent the domain of interest. In other words, content validity looks at whether the instrument covers all the aspects of the property being measured (Gibson, 2014). Construct validity is the degree to which a test measures what it claims, or purports, to be measuring. Constructs are abstractions that are deliberately created by researchers in order to conceptualize the latent variable, which is correlated with scores on a given measure (although it is not directly observable). The questionnaire was content and construct validated by my supervisors to check for flaws and problems in it.

In the view of Nitko (1996), expert judgment is used to provide evidence of content validity. The view of Nitko created the basis for the researcher's supervisors validating the instrument for the study. Furthermore, my supervisors made efforts to ensure that the language and choice of words (i.e. the diction) of the questionnaire were such that they could be understood by all the participants.

The effort and ability to determine credibility depend on the researcher because the quality of the research is related to the trustworthiness and integrity of the study. Validation also depends on the quality of the researcher's work during the investigation. According to Denzin and Lincoln

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(2005), fairness is an important factor, and it is described as the deliberate attempts to prevent marginalization, and act affirmatively with respect to inclusion so that all respondents' voices are heard and their stories treated with fairness and balance.

Reliability

According to Kerlinger (as cited in Gibson, 2014), reliability can also be referred to as dependability, stability, consistency, predictability, and accuracy of an instrument. Reliability is based on the consistency or stability of the scores that one gets from a test or assessment procedure (Nitko, 1996). In establishing the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency method was used. Cronbach's alpha is a name used for tau-equivalent reliability as a (lower bound) estimate of the reliability of a psychometric test. Cronbach's alpha is a function of the number of items in a test, the average covariance between item-pairs, and the variance of the total score.

It was first named alpha by Lee Cronbach in 1951, as he had intended to continue with further coefficients. The measure can be viewed as an extension of the Kuder–Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20), which is an equivalent measure for dichotomous items. Alpha is not robust against missing data.

Table 6: Distribution Scale of Pilot Test Results for Instrument

Scale	N	M	SD	Alpha 1	M	SD	Alpha 2
Section B	14	41.95	3.23	0.74	52.95	3.63	0.71
Section C	15	49.35	4.26	0.72	45.15	4.64	0.72
Section D	15	43.75	4.72	0.70	44.80	4.76	0.72
Section E	30	103.25	6.73	0.77	92.30	7.11	0.76

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Table 6 shows a summary of the scale of pilot test results from the instrument. Comparing the results computed for the first and second pilot test showed consistent of student's response to the issues on the instrument. For instance, Section C and Section E from the instrument recorded, alpha level was (0.72, 0.72 and 0.77, 0.76) for both tests. Through the use of Cronbach Alpha, the instrument yielded an alpha level of 0.89 and 0.89 for test 1 and test 2 respectively. The internal consistency was computed by finding the average of the two (2) tests. The internal consistency for the instrument yielded an alpha level of 0.89, which shows the instrument was reliable.

The table below (table 7) shows a summary of the scale of the (main study) results for the instrument.

Table 7: Distribution Scale of Results of the instrument for the main study

Scale	N	M	SD	Alpha
Section B	14	52.90	5.89	0.74
Section C	15	55.41	4.10	0.78
Section D	15	49.01	4.9	0.75
Section E	30	112.10	7.81	0.81

Table 7 shows a summary of the internal consistency results for the main data of the study From table 7, it can be seen that Section B which is on the Personal- Social adjustment needs, and Section C about the Emotional Adjustment needs, Section D is on the Academic Adjustment needs and finally the Section E is on the Coping Strategies that international students of universities in Southern Ghana adopt to address the needs described in Section B to D.

Section B and C from the instrument recorded alpha level of 0.74 and 0.78 respectively. Whiles Section D and E also recorded an alpha level of 0.75 and 0.81 respectively. Through the Cronbach's alpha, the main instrument for the study yielded an alpha level of 0.77, which shows that the instrument was reliable.

Ethical Considerations

Jackson (2003) outlined some ethical considerations, which should be considered for a study. The Institutional Review Board of the University of Cape Coast gave me ethical clearance to enable me go to the field to gather my data. Consent was sought from respondents before the study was carried out. The respondents were informed about the study so that they know exactly what they will be asked to do. This was done by providing the consent information on the first page of the questionnaire. Participants' autonomy was ensured so the participants were not forced to answer the questionnaire in a way desired by the researcher. There was a good amount of personal space to avoid respondent contamination.

Consideration was given for anonymity and confidentiality on the questionnaire. With anonymity, the questionnaire did not require the names of participants and their exact ages. However, pieces of information like the gender and age range of participants was required because they were needed for the analysis of the research questions and hypotheses. In the case of confidentiality, the privacy of the data collected was ensured. In addition, the information that was provided by the participants was not to be shared with other people but was used solely for the academic work it was be intended for.

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The participants were assured of confidentiality by indicating it on the first page of the questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedures

An introductory letter was taken from the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the Faculty of Educational Foundations, University of Cape Coast. My supervisor also gave me an introductory letter consenting that I have defended my proposal effectively. All these letters and other documents required by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Cape Coast was done before the researcher got the ethical clearance letter.

Ethical clearance letter was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Cape Coast to be able to carry out the study. This letter was given to the various heads of the international affairs departments of the four universities. The researcher-built rapport with all the heads so they gave the researcher a convenient time (meeting days, days of electing their leaders or any other day deem appropriate) which enabled me to get the participants easily to respond to the questionnaires.

Following this, the questionnaire was administered to the sampled participants. The data was collected personally with the help of some research assistants that I trained. The individuals who helped me in the data collection were M.Phil. Students and so with little briefing about the purpose of the study and other details on the questionnaire, they really understood the rules of the engagement and they were capable of assisting in collecting the data. I used one week in collecting the data. To be able to get high rate of returns, enough time was given to enable all the participants to complete the questionnaire.

Data Processing and Analysis

Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages) was used for the analysis of the research questions. Whiles the inferential statistics (the independent samples t-test and the Kruskal-Willis H-test) was used to analyze the hypotheses. Hypothesis one seeks for the gender difference in the adjustment needs of international students in the four universities while hypothesis two seeks for the gender difference in the coping strategies adopted by international students in the four universities. Again, the hypothesis three seeks for the age difference in the adjustment needs of international students in the four universities while the hypothesis four seeks for the age difference in the coping strategies of international students in the four universities. Hypotheses five and six seek for the differences in the adjustment needs and coping strategies of the participants in the public and private universities respectively.

Summary of the chapter

Chapter Three presents the methodology of the study. It covers areas such as: the philosophical basis of the study, the research approach, the research design, study area, population, sample and sampling procedure as well as the instruments that was used, the data collection procedure and how data was analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to find out the adjustment needs of international students in the universities in southern Ghana experience during their period of study in the country and the coping strategies they adopt to cope with these adjustment needs. In doing so, the study discussed the results under the various sections. The first section presented, discussed the results on the adjustment needs of the participants. The next section was on the coping strategies that are usually adopted by the international students in the management of their adjustment needs. Again, the differences in the adjustment needs of males and females, the young and mature, private and public university international students were discussed and the different coping strategies that were adopted by the respective groups were presented as well.

This study again sought to provide answers to this aspect of students' life which appeared to have been ignored by earlier studies. This chapter dealt with the results and discussion on the data collected from the field. The analysis and discussion were based on the research questions that were raised to guide the study. The analysis and interpretation of data were carried out based on the results of the research questions and hypotheses established for the study. The analysis was based on the 100% return rate of data obtained from the 322 international students in the universities in southern Ghana. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (Kruskal-Wallis H test

and Independent samples t-test). The first part of this chapter was designated for the demographic characteristics of the international students which were analyzed using frequencies and percentages. In the second part, the research findings are presented based on the research questions and hypotheses formulated for the study.

Demographic Information of the international students in the universities in southern Ghana

This section recounts to the background information of the international students in the universities in southern Ghana who responded to the questionnaires. Demographic variables for the students included their country of origin, university type (public or private), sex, age, religion and level. The excerpts from the data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages to indicate how the demographic data represented the students in the universities in southern Ghana.

Table 8: Distribution of Participants on the basis of Country of Origin

Country of Origin	Freq.	Per (%)
Nigeria	115	35.7
Cote D'Ivoire	86	26.7
Zambia	29	9.0
Scandinavia	20	6.2
USA	18	0.9
Kenya	17	5.3
Rwanda	16	5.0
Germany	4	1.2
China	4	1.2
France	3	0.9
Canada	3	0.9
Spain	2	0.6
UK	2	0.6
Others	18	5.6
Total	322	100.0

Source: Field data (2018)

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Table 8 presents the distribution of the participants by nationality. It shows that majority of the international students taking undergraduate studies in southern Ghana's public and private universities are Nigerians, 115 (35.7%) out of a total sample of 322, 86 of the participants are from La Cote D'Ivoire. The country with the smallest number(two) was the United Kingdom.

Table 9: Distribution of International students by Type of University

Variables	Freq.	Per. (%)
Public	144	44.7
Private	178	55.3
Total	322	100.0

Source: Field data (2018)

The results from Table 9 shows that students of the universities in southern Ghana who were from private universities were the majority (n=178, 55.3%). The public university students were few in the study (n=144, 44.7%).

Table 10: Distribution of participants by Sex

Variables	Freq.	Per. (%)
Male	240	74.5
Female	82	25.5
Total	322	100.0

Source: Field data (2018)

On the basis of sex, majority of them were males (n=240, 74.5%) while the females were less (n=82, 22.5%).

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Table 11: Distribution of Participants by Age

Variables	Freq.	Per (%)
17-25	282	87.6
26-34	32	9.90
34-41	08	2.50
Total	322	100.0

Source: Field data (2018)

For ages of the students, it was evident that most of them were cluttered around 17-25 years (n=282, 87.6%). Those from 26-34 followed (n=32, 9.9%). Those from 34-41 were the least (n=08, 2.5%).

Table 12: Distribution of Participants by Religion

Characteristics	Freq.	Per (%)
Christian	239	74.2
Traditional	03	0.90
Moslem	44	13.7
Others	36	11.2
Total	322	100.0

Source: Field data (2018)

As illustrated in Table 12, the results show that most of the students were Christians (n=239, 74.2%). The Muslims followed (n=44, 13.7%). Other religions recorded the third highest (n=36, 11.2%). The traditionalist were least represented in the study (n=03, 0.90%).

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Table 13: Distribution of Participants by Marital Status

Characteristics	Freq.	Per (%)
Married	2.0	0.60
Divorced	0.0	0.00
Single	206	64.0
In a relationship	114	35.4
Total	322	100.0

Source: Field data (2018)

To ascertain the marital status of the students, the results show that most of the students were singles (n=206, 64%). Those in relationship recorded the second highest number (n=114, 35.4%). Only two of the international students for the study were married, none was a divorcee.

Table 14: Distribution of Participants by Level

Characteristics	Freq.	Per (%)
Level 100	92	28.6
Level 200	80	24.8
Level 300	68	21.1
Level 400	82	25.5
Total	322	100.0

Source: Field data (2018)

On the level distribution of the students, the results indicate that most of them were in level 100 (n=92, 28.6%). Level 400's followed (n=82, 25.5%). The level 300 students were least in number (n=68, 21.1%).

Scoring Format

This segment explains the scoring format that was used in this study. The four-point Likert scale type dubbed: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree was used in scoring the adjustment needs of the respondents. Likewise, on the four-point Likert scale of the coping strategy, Not Used, Used Somewhat, Used Quite a Bit, used a Great Deal was used in the scoring of the respondents. To understand the mean scores of the results of the four research questions, items/statements on the Likert-type scale that scored a mean of 0.00 to 2.49 was regarded as low and those items/statements that scored a mean from 2.50 to 4.00 was regarded as high. The criterion value of 2.50 was established for the scale. To obtain the criterion value (CV=2.50), the scores were added together and divided by the number scale (4+3+2+1= 10/4=2.50).

Research Question One

What are the academic adjustments needs that international students of universities in southern Ghana have?

In answering research question one, which tried to find out the academic adjustment needs that international students experienced, the students were asked to rate their academic adjustment needs using the Likert-type scale. Table 14 presents the results.

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Table 15: Means, Standard Deviations and Ranks of Academic Needs of International students

Academic Adjustment Needs	M	SD	MR
I'm not working as hard as I should at my course work	3.49	.581	1st
I am attending classes regularly	3.47	.802	2nd
I have not been performing well during examinations	3.42	.494	3rd
I'm not doing well enough academically for the amount of work I put in	3.39	.538	4th
I am very satisfied with the professors I have now in my courses	3.37	.719	5th
I am finding academic work at university difficult	3.36	.538	6th
I'm not really smart enough for academic work I am expected to be doing now	3.35	.479	7th
I really haven't had much motivation for studying lately	3.31	.687	8th
I haven't been very efficient in the use of study time lately	3.25	.714	9th
Getting a university degree is very important for me	3.19	1.00	10th
I am enjoying my academic work at university	3.18	.633	11th
Recently I have had trouble concentrating when I try to study	3.17	1.04	12th
I have been keeping up to date with my academic work	2.98	.869	13th
I have been keeping up to date with my academic work	2.98	.869	14th
I am satisfied with the level at which I am performing academically	2.83	1.14	15th
I am satisfied with the number and variety of courses available at university	2.66	1.14	16th
Mean of means/Standard Deviation	3.21	.764	

Source: Field Data, (2018)   (n=322)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, n=Sample Size

The results from Table 15 show that generally, most of the international students in the universities in southern Ghana experience academic adjustment needs since the calculated mean of means was greater than the test value of 2.50 (MM=3.28, SD=0.764). Some of the items that scored higher means include the fact that they are not working as hard as they should at their course work *(M=3.49, SD=.581,).* In addition, most of the students indicated that they attend classes regularly to help in the adjustment of academic needs *(M=3.47, SD=.802,* In another evidence, it was postulated that they have not been performing well during examinations *(M=3.42, SD=.449)*

Research Question Two: What are the personal-social adjustment needs that international students of universities in southern Ghana have?

The researcher also assessed the personal-social adjustment needs. To derive evidence for the personal-social adjustment needs of the students, they were made to rate their personal-social adjustment needs using four- point, Likert type scale. Table 16 presents the results.

Table 16: Means, Standard Deviations and Ranks of personal-social adjustment needs of international students

Personal-social adjustment Needs	M	SD	MR
I feel that I have enough social skills to get along well in the university setting	3.61	.613	1st
I have had informal, personal contacts with university professors	3.60	.614	2nd
I feel that I fit in well as part of the university environment	3.59	.631	3rd
I feel that I fit in well as part of the university environment	3.59	.631	4th
I am very involved with social activities in university	3.49	.510	5th
I haven't been mixing too well with the opposite sex lately	3.49	.501	6th
I have some good friends or acquaintances at the university with whom I can talk about any problems I may have	3.49	.581	7th
I am satisfied with the extracurricular activities available at university	3.48	.506	8th
I am quite satisfied with my social life at university	3.35	.479	9th
I am meeting as many people, and making as many friends as I would like at university	3.28	.451	10th
I have several close social ties at university	3.28	.451	11th
I am having difficulty feeling at ease with other people at university	3.28	.450	12th
Lately I have been giving a lot of thought to transferring to another university	2.83	1.15	13th
Being on my own, taking responsibility for myself, has not been easy	2.43	1.16	14th
I am getting along very well with my roommates(s) at university. (Please omit if you do not have a roommate)	2.43	1.16	15th
Mean of means/Standard Deviation	3.28	0.65	

Source: Field Data, (2018)   (n=322)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, **n=Sample Size**

From Table 16, the results indicate that overall, the majority of the international students in the universities in southern Ghana experience personal-social adjustment needs because the calculated mean was greater than the test value of 2.50 *(MM=3.28, SD=.65)*. Some of the personal-social adjustment needs experienced by international students of the universities in southern Ghana include the fact that they feel that they have enough social skills to get along well in the university setting (M=3.61, SD=.613, =.647). Again, they have had informal, personal contacts with university professors (M=3.60, SD=.614,). Moreover, they feel that they fit in well as part of the university environment (M=3.59, SD=.631).

Research Question Three: What are the emotional adjustment needs that international students of universities in southern Ghana have?

The emotional adjustment needs experienced by international students in the universities in southern Ghana were also ascertained. To gather evidence from the students, they were requested to rate how they experience emotional adjustment needs using four –point, Likert-type scale. Table 16 presents the results.

Table 17: Means, Standard Deviations and Ranks of Emotional Adjustment of International Students

Emotional Adjustment Needs	M	SD	MR
I worry a lot about my university expenses	3.57	.576	1st
I am experiencing a lot of difficulty coping with the stresses imposed upon me in university	3.54	.566	2nd
I feel I am very different from other students at university in ways that I don't like	3.53	.547	3th
I have felt tired much of the time lately	3.49	.581	4rd
I haven't been sleeping very well	3.44	.581	5th
Lonesomeness for home as a source of worry is of difficulty for me now	3.39	.538	6th
I haven't been able to control my emotions very well lately	3.35	.479	7th
My appetite has been good lately	3.31	.694	8th
I have been getting angry too easily lately	3.28	.665	9th
I've put on too much weight recently	3.14	1.06	10th
I have been feeling tensed or nervous lately	3.12	.939	11th
I have been feeling lonely a lot at university lately	2.98	.869	12th
Lately, I have been feeling blue and moody a lot	2.83	1.14	13th
On a balance, I would rather be home than here	2.72	1.05	14th
I have been having a lot of headaches lately	2.67	1.13	15th
Mean of means/Standard Deviation	3.22	.761	

Source: Field Data, (2018),   n=322

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, n=Sample Size

As illustrated in Table 17, the results suggest that inclusively, majority of the international students in the universities in southern Ghana experience emotional adjustment needs. This was evident after the calculated mean for all the items/statements on the emotional adjustment scored a mean greater than the test value of 2.50 *(MM=3.22, SD=.761)*. From the results, as ranked, some of the major emotional adjustment needs experienced by the expatriate students for this study include the fact that, they worry a lot about university expenses *(M=3.57, SD=.576,)*. Most of them expressed that, they experience lot of difficulties coping with the stresses imposed upon them in the university *(M=3.54, SD=.566,)*. Others asserted that they feel they are very different from other students at the university in ways that they do not like *(M=3.53, SD=.547)*. In another evidence, it was found that they felt tired most of the time lately (M=3.49, SD=.581).

Dwelling on some of the emotional adjustment needs, it was evident that some of the items were ranked more than others.

Research Question Four: What coping strategies do international students of universities in Southern Ghana adopt to mitigate the adjustment needs they have?

Bringing out some of the coping strategies international students adopt in the universities in southern Ghana is one of the prime focus of this study. In gathering evidence from the students, they were made to rate the degree of coping strategies using a four-point Likert scale. Table 18 presents the results.

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Table 18: Means, Standard Deviations and Ranks of Coping Strategies adopted by international students

Coping Strategies	M	SD	MR
I tried to analyse the problem in order to understand it better	3.89	.613	1st
I slept more than usual	3.88	.613	2nd
Had fantasies or wishes about how things might turn out	3.76	.595	3rd
I tried to see things from the other person's point of view	3.73	.599	4th
I told myself things that helped me to feel better	3.72	.579	5th
I apologized or did something to make up	3.68	.542	6th
Kept others from knowing how bad things were	3.67	.584	7th
I changed something about myself	3.65	.747	8th
Tried to get the person responsible to change his or her mind	3.65	.581	9th
I came out of the experience better than when I went in	3.64	.583	10th
Found new faith	3.56	.538	11th
Avoided being with people in general	3.54	.494	12th
Accepted it, since nothing could be done	3.53	.805	13th
I prepared myself for the worst	3.52	.745	14th
Turned to work or substitute activity (or a vacation) to take my mind off things	3.51	.538	15th
Talked to someone to find out more about the situation	3.49	.479	16th
Tried to make myself feel better by eating, drinking, smoking, using drugs or medication, etc.	3.39	.479	17th
I prayed	3.34	.464	18th

Table 18: Continued

	M	SD	MR
I jogged or exercised	3.32	.449	19th
I expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem	3.31	.459	20th
I tried not to act too hastily or follow my first hunch	3.23	1.09	21st
Talked to someone about how I was feeling	3.20	.667	22nd
Went on as if nothing had happened	3.10	.939	23rd
Drew on my past experiences; I was in a similar situation before	3.09	.996	24th
I got professional help	2.90	.869	25th
I tried to keep my feelings to myself	2.80	1.14	26th
I made a plan of action and followed it	2.78	1.19	27th
Didn't let it get to me; refused to think too much about it	2.76	1.19	28th
I thought about how a person I admire would handle this situation and used that as a model	2.59	1.17	29th
Just concentrated on what I had to do next – the next step	2.30	1.15	30th
	3.09	0.62	

Source: Field Data, (2018)   (n=322)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, N=Sample Size

As depicted in Table 18, the results suggest that almost all the pre-coded items on the questionnaire could be said to be coping strategies international students adopted to mitigate the adjustment needs they experienced. This was apparent after the calculated mean of means for all the items/statements on coping strategies scored a mean greater than the test value of 2.50 (*MM=3.09, SD=.62*).

Research Hypothesis One:

There is no significant difference between male and female international students of universities in southern Ghana in their adjustment needs.

One of the objectives of the study was to determine the differences in the adjustment needs of male and female international students in the universities in southern Ghana. To achieve this, independent samples t-test was used to test the stated hypothesis. The independent samples t-test was utilized because it appropriately help to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means of two unrelated groups. The dependent variables here was adjustment needs and the independent variable is gender (male and female). The results are presented in Table19.

Table 19: Results of independent t-test Comparing differences in adjustment needs of male and female international students

Variable	N	M	SD	Cal.t-value	Df	p-value
Male	240	45.41	5.72	-1.532	320	.127(ns)
Female	82	46.50	4.99			
Total	322					

Source: Field Data, (2018), Computed using alpha value of =0.05 (p=0.05 level of confidence)

Table 19 shows the independent samples t-test results that compares differences in adjustment needs experienced by male and female international students in the universities in southern Ghana. As illustrated in the table, the descriptive results (means and standard deviation) show that the female *(M=46.50, SD=4.999, n=82)* experience more adjustment needs than their male counterparts, *(M=45.41, SD=5.724, n=240).* Complementing the results with *t-test* and *p*-values, the results show that the mean differences (between male and female international students), there were no statistical significant difference between male and female international students with respect to their experiences of adjustment needs *(t (df=320) =-1.532, p = .127, p>0.05, n=322, 2-tailed).* Hence, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

Research Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference in the coping strategies of international students of universities in Southern Ghana based on gender.

The researcher again sought to examine the difference between the coping strategies of male and female international students. To test the hypothesis associated with this, independent samples t-test was used. Once again, the independent samples t-test was utilized in the analysis based on the assumptions that independent samples t-test determines whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means in two unrelated groups. The dependent variables here was coping strategies and the independent variable is gender (male and female). The results are presented in Table 20.

Table 20: **Results of independent samples t-test Comparing difference between the coping strategies of male and female international students**

Variables	N	M	SD	Cal.t-value	Df	p-value
Male	240	97.7	12.5	-1.06	144.3	.1.64(ns)
Female	82	99.4	12.1			
Total	322					

Source: Field Data, (2018) Computed using alpha value of =0.05 (p=0.05 level of confidence)

Table 20 shows the descriptive results (means and standard deviation), portraying that there were differences in means scores of the independent variables (Male and female). From the descriptive results the female *(M=99.4, SD=12.1, SEM, 1.334, n=82)* were found to possess higher values of coping strategies than male students *(M=97.7, SD=12.5, SEM= 8058, n=240).* However, from the *t-test* and *p*-values, the results show that the mean differences (between male and female students) were not significant, thus it was decided to reject the null hypothesis *(t (df =144.32) =-1.06, p = .1.64, p>0.05, n=322, 2-tailed).*

Research Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference in the adjustment needs of international students of universities in Southern Ghana on the basis of age.

To further achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher tested the hypothesis that no significant difference would exist in the adjustment needs of international students on the basis of age. However, prior to conducting the inferential stastistics, certain statistical assumptions must be established. This

includes normality assumption (Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] and Q-Q Plot), and test for homogeneity of variance. Table 21 presents a test for the assumptions.

Table 21: Normality Test Results of the Variables

Ages	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
17-25	.132	282	.000**	.948	282	.000**
26-34	.180	32	.010**	.922	32	.024**
35-41	.302	8	.030**	.813	8	.039**
Total		322				

Source: Field Data, (2018), Computed using alpha value of =0.05 (p=0.05 level of confidence), Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 21 presents results of the normality of the data. The Shapiro-Wilk was reported because it handles data with larger sample size more than 50 (N> 50). The Shapiro-Wilk produced a statistic of (*Shapiro-Wilk Statistic= .948, n=282, p=0.00, p<=.0.05)* for students from 17-25 years old, *(Shapiro-Wilk Statistic = .922, n=32, p=.024, p<.05)* for students from 26-34 and those from 35-41 produced a statistic of *(Shapiro-Wilk Statistic = .81 3, n=8, p=0.39, p<0.05)*. From the Shapiro-Wilk results, all the age levels produced a sig values less than the p-value of 0.05 implying that the data was not normal. Therefore, the application of ANOVA was not statistically sound and as such Kruskal-Wallis H test (alternative test for ANOVA) was deemed appropriate for the analysis. Means plot in figure 1 shows how the data did not meet normality assumption
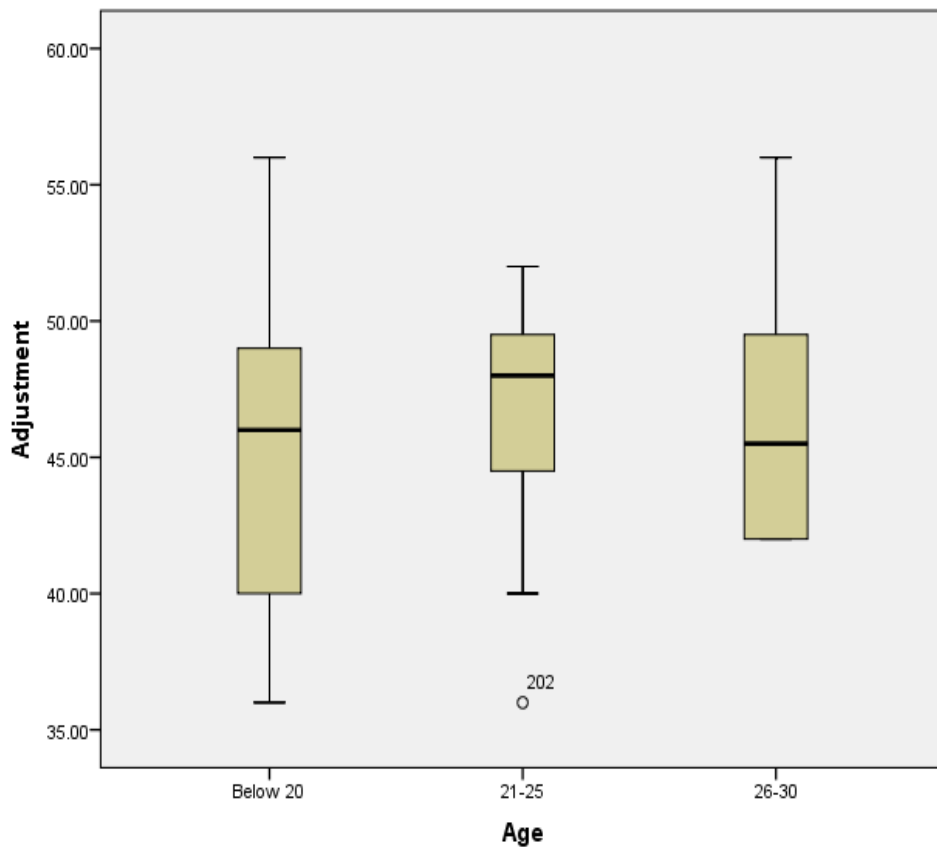
Figure 3: Normality Probability plots

The normality probability plot is a graphical technique for assessing whether or not a data set is approximately normally distributed. The results show that the data were not normally distributed. This means that the best statistical too to be used was the Kruskal-Wallis H test

Table 22: Kruskal-Wallis H test of adjustment needs of international students on the basis of age

AN*Age Range	N	MR	Chi-Square (χ^2)	df	Monte Carlo Sig. value	Asymp. Sig
17-25	282	159.19				
26-34	32	178.77	1.431	2	. 498(ns)	.489
35-41	08	174.00				
Total	322					

Source: Field Data, (2018), Computed using alpha value of 0.05**,   n=322

The Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the adjustment needs of international students on the basis of age, the Kruskal-Wallis H test of χ^2 *(df=2) =1.431, p=.498*, with a mean rank of students age,   attitude towards their adjustment needs of MR=159.19, n=282 for those from 17-25 5, *MR= 178.77, n=32* for those from 26-34 and *MR= 174.00, n=8* for those from 35-41. The null hypothesis was upheld.

Research Hypothesis Four

There is no significant difference between the coping strategies of international students of universities in Southern Ghana based on age

To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher tested the hypothesis that no significant difference will exist in the coping strategies of international students on the basis of age. However, before conducting the inferential stastistics, certain statistical assumptions must be established. This includes normality assumption (Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] Shapiro-Wilk and Q-Q Plot), and test for homogeneity of variance. Table 23 presents a test for the assumptions.

Table 23: Normality Test Results of the Variables

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
Ages	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
17-25	.159	282	.000**	.931	282	.000**
26-34	.148	32	.073**	.952	32	.166**
35-41	.194	8	.200[**]	.954	08	.756**
Total	322					

Source: Field Data (2018), n=322, computed using alpha value of =0.05 (p=0.05 level of confidence)

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Table 23 offers results of the normality of the data using Shapiro-Wilk. The Shapiro-Wilk was reported because it handles data with larger sample size more than 50 *(N> 50)*. The Shapiro-Wilk produced a statistic of (*Shapiro-Wilk Statistic= .931, n=282, p=0.00, p<=.0.05)* for students from 17-25 years old, (*Shapiro-Wilk Statistic = .952, n=32, p=.166, p<.05*) for students from 26-34 and those from 35-41 produced a statistic of *(Shapiro-Wilk Statistic = .954, n=08, p=756, p>=0.05)*. From the Shapiro-Wilk results, one of the ages produced a sig values less than the p-value of 0.05 implying that the data was not normal. Consequently, the application of ANOVA was not statistically prudent and as such Kruskal-Wallis H test (alternative test for ANOVA) was deemed appropriate for the analysis. Figure 2 also complement how the data was not normal.
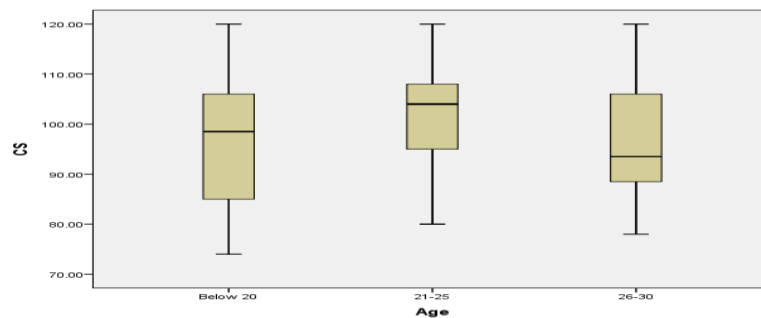

Figure 4: Normality Probability plots

Figure 4 presents the normality probability plot for the variables. The figure gives a graphical representation of the mean scores of the variables. The figure shows that technically the data set was not normal.

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Table 24: Kruskal-Wallis H test of Coping Strategies of international students on the basis of age

Age Range	N	MR	Chi-Square (χ^2)	Df	Monte Carlo Sig. value	Asymp. Sig
17-25	282	158.89				
26-34	32	187.61	2.902	2	. 234(ns)	.234
35-41	08	149.13				
Total	322					

Source: Field Data, (2018), computed using alpha value of 0.05**,

As illustrated in Table 24, the Kruskal-Wallis H test disclosed that there was no statistically significant difference in the coping strategies of international students on the basis of age, the Kruskal-Wallis H test of *χ^2 (df=2) =2.902, p=.234*,* with a mean rank of students age attitude towards their coping strategies of *(MR=158.89, n=282)* for those from 17-25, *(MR= 187.61, n=32)* for those from 26-34 and *(MR= 149.13, n=8)* for those from 35-41.

Research Hypothesis Five:

There is no significant difference in the adjustments needs of international students of public and private universities in Southern Ghana.

The researcher further determined the difference between the adjustments needs of international students in the public and private universities. To determine differences, independent samples t-test was deemed appropriate for the analysis. The independent samples t-test was utilized in the analysis based on the assumptions that independent samples t-test determines whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means in two unrelated groups. The dependent variables here was adjustment needs and the

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independent variable is university type (private and public). The results are presented in Table 25.

Table 25: Results of independent samples t-test Comparing differences between the adjustments needs of international students in the public and private universities in southern Ghana

Variables	N	M	SD	Cal.t-value	Df	p-value
Public	144	46.1	5.50	-.339	297.97	.737(ns)
Private	178	45.3	5.64			
Total	322					

Source: Field Data, (2018), Computed using alpha value of =0.05 (p=0.05 level of confidence)

Table 25 indicates the independent samples t-test results that compares the differences in the adjustment needs experienced by international students in the public and private universities in southern Ghana. As demonstrated in the table, the descriptive results (M/SD for both private and public university students) shows that the Public university students *(M=46.09, SD=5.57, n=144)* experience a little more adjustment needs than the private university students *(M=45.36, SD=5.60, n=178)*. When assessing the results from the perspective of *t-test* and *p*-values, it is evident that the mean differences (between the private and the public university students) there were no statistical significant difference between the independent variables (private and public universities) with respect to how they experience adjustment needs. The independent-samples t-test is reported as *(t (df=308.151) =1.184, p =.237, p>0.05, n=322, 2-tailed)* indicating that there were no statistically significant difference as such the null hypothesis was upheld.

Research Hypothesis Six:

There is no significant difference in the coping strategies of international students of public and private universities in Southern Ghana.

The researcher finally examined the differences in the coping strategies of international students in the public and private universities. To test differences, independent samples t-test was deemed appropriate for the analysis. The independent samples t-test was utilized in the analysis based on the assumptions that independent-samples t-test determines whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means in two unrelated groups. The dependent variables here were coping strategies and the independent variable was university type (private and public). The results are presented in Table 26.

Table 26: Results of independent t-test Comparing differences in the coping strategies of international students in the public and private universities in Ghana

Variable	N	M	SD	SEM	Cal.t-value	Df	p-value
Public	144	97.9	12.81	1.06	-.339	297.97	.737(ns)
Private	178	98.4	12.06	.904			
Total	322						

Source: Field Data, (2018), Computed using alpha value of =0.05 (p=0.05 level of confidence)

Table 26 indicates the independent samples t-test result that compares the differences in the coping strategies used by the international students in the public and private universities in southern Ghana. From a critical look at the table, it can be observed that a little difference existed in the descriptive results

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between private *(M=98.4, SD=12.06, n=178)* and public university international students *(M=97.9, SD=12.81, n=144)* indicating that the private university international students adopted more different coping strategies than the public university international students. Again, when evaluating the results from the calculated *t-test* and *p*-values, it is evident that the mean differences (between the private and public university) were not significant.   The independent-samples t-test is reported as *(t (df=297.975) =-.339, p =.737, p>0.05, n=322, 2-tailed)* indicating that there was no statistically significant difference as such the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Discussion

Academic Adjustment needs Experienced by International Students of the universities in southern Ghana

The results from the present study indicated that most of the international students in the universities in southern Ghana experience academic adjustment needs. Theoretically, the results can be grounded on the Social Identity Theory, which focuses more on group behavior and inter-group relations. In addressing issues related to group relations, the theory has concentrated on the causes and consequences of identifying with a social group or category. Social Identity Theory has also strongly incorporated self-esteem as a motivator for outcomes in a group. Although, it has not always been empirically evident that self-esteem is important, it has been shown that group membership is often a source of self-esteem.

Empirically, the results are in line with the assertions of Wright and Schertem (2013), Montgomery and McDowell (2009) who have reported that as students become more satisfied and involved with the campus and academic

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community, they are more likely to remain enrolled. Thus, it makes international students 'fall in love' with the university environment and helps to encourage them to speak well of the university to relations, who are in a dilemma as to which African country to opt for further studies. Orientation (specifically for foreign students) and international students' seminars were found to be the most effective and efficient students' success programmes to assist new college students to acclimatize to their new environment (Kelly, 2010).

In another similar study, the result confirms the work of Cooke, Beewick, Barkham, Bradley, and Audin (2006). They did the study in the United Kingdom, and came out with several factors that create many needs for international students with academic pressure being a major basis for increased levels of anxiety in international students. Moreover, Ahmad, Fauziah, Azemi, Shaari and Zailani (2002) did a similar study in Malaysia and found that the adjustment needs confronted by international students included difficulties in academic work such as: registration of courses, comprehension of textbooks, and very early morning lecture (Thus, waking up very early in the morning was a big challenge to the participants of the research because they were not used to that in their home country).

Personal-social adjustment needs experienced by international students of the universities in southern Ghana

Gluing the results to the Social and Behavioural Adaptation Model, it can be asserted that international students of the southern Ghana universities can benefit from interaction with other students socially, psychologically and academically. Some empirically validated examples include, a greater amount

of interaction with other students has been associated with fewer academic needs (Breuning, 2007), fewer social difficulties (Cemalcilar & Kennedy, 2008), improved communication competency, and better general adaptation to life overseas (Pope & Wedding, 2008). It can be observed that the interactions international students have with other students, lecturers and counsellors have an influence on their general adjustment to the university environment. This helps to truncate students' attrition and drop-out and goes a long way to make campus life lively to expatriate students.

In the study of Ahmad et al. (2002) in Malaysia, apart from academic difficulties, participants were also found experiencing several health and financial needs. The health needs were attributed to feeling tired very often due to insomnia because of anxiety or inadequate sleeping patterns. The financial difficulties were however attributed to inability of some students in receiving funds from significant others. Some of the financial needs reported by the participants were traced to lateness in receiving funds from guardians and sponsors, however, in some cases the funds received were insufficient to cater for the expenses incurred during the course of their studies.

This results further support the assertions of Constantine, et al, (2005) who revealed that when international students have limited English proficiency and lack experience and familiarity with American interactive behaviors, some students find it difficult to make friends and establish a social network with Americans. This lack of social support can cause such students to experience loneliness which not check can degenerate into depression and suicidal thoughts. Thus, this makes their confidence level to be lowered and lowers their self- esteem. Often these students withdraw into the expatriate

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community, and this action appears to hinder adaptation and does not encourage the mixing bowl aspect of university education.

The results are in connection with the findings of Ford and Brenya (2011) in the University of Cape Coast who showed a clear picture of Nigerian international students' experiences as they interact with their academic and social communities in the university. The cardinal issue was that they lacked the necessary psychological preparation and mindset for studying abroad. Oberg (1960) opined in this regard, that training in socio-cultural, and problem-solving skills is crucial for international students because in the new cultural and educational environment, these students encounter a great deal of cultural shock that if not properly addressed, would stampede their academic success. In the view of Dyson and Rank (2006), social adjustment is seen in the difficulty students have in their immediate environment, participating in social activities and their satisfaction with various social aspects of the university experience.

Emotional adjustment needs experienced by international students of the universities in southern Ghana

Grounding the results to previous studies, it is evident that the results agree with other works. For example, the results lend ample evidence to the study of Decapua and Wintergerst (2004) who stated that some students might have difficulty learning because their minds are cluttered with distracting thoughts and memories. Wong et al. (2006) conducted a web-based survey of depression, anxiety and stress in first year tertiary education students in Hong Kong. Their results indicated that 27.5% of the sample of 7915 students had a moderate severity level of depression, anxiety and stress. Similarly, Kranz

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(2008) in his study evaluated stress levels experienced by students in a pharmacy curriculum. Data was collected using an individual interview that consisted of both a demographic and stress questionnaire. The results indicated that students rated stress to be average or above average, with a mean score of 3.8 out of a maximum score of 5.

The results further support the work of Lee and Chang (2007) who posited that the ability to deal with and/or manage emotional adjustment issues in terms of interactions with people from other cultural backgrounds is essential to fruitful adjustment. Some of the emotional adjustment needs identified by these two researchers are homesickness, physiological effects like headaches and stomachaches. Being anxious and stressful are natural reactions to interacting intensively with members of other cultures or living in another culture. It can therefore be deduced from these studies that international students go through many emotional adjustment needs.

Coping strategies that international students in southern Ghana universities adopt to address their adjustment needs

On the issue of coping strategies that international students adopt to address their adjustment needs, the results support the work of Dyson and Renk (2006). In their study, it was reported that the regular use of escape-avoidance coping among International students was related to higher levels of depression. Tao et al. (2000) also observed that among the coping mechanisms, peer support and peer networks were critical in a person's adjustment to university life. Furthermore, Kranz (2008) in a study found that 70.5% of the participants reported using some form of active approach such as

exercising, playing basketball or swimming to manage their stressful situations or adjustment needs.

In a similar study, Seyedfatemi, Tafreshi, and Hagani (2007) found that among the coping strategies of international students, majority of the respondents indicated they adopted active problem-solving strategies. Similarly, the study of Sreeramareddy et al. (2007) in Nepal revealed that the most used coping strategies among respondents were active coping strategies such as planning rather than avoidance strategies. In a similar vein, Al-Dubai, Al-Naggar, Alshagga and Rampal (2011) found that the students used active coping strategies such as planning more than avoidant strategies. The studies point to the fact that most students usually adopt positive and active coping strategies.

Gender of international students with respect to their adjustment needs

Enochs and Roland cited in Mudhovozi (2012) reported that there is support for the argument that male students adapt to the new university environment better than their female counterparts. Again, Price, McLeod, Gleich, and Hand (2006) in their study at a Canadian university and found that 19% of female students and 13% of male students in their study meet the DSM IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder) (APA, 2000) criteria for a major anxiety disorder, while 14% of female students and 7% of male students meet the DSM IV criteria for a major depressive disorder. In a similar vein, the findings of Sulieman and Al-menezzel (1999) revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in the adjustment needs of male and female students. This, was however, not the case in my finding as the results showed that there was no statistically significant difference between

male and female international students with respect to their experiences of adjustments needs. Conversely, the results also showed that females are likely to experience more adjustment needs than their male counterparts.

In support of all these findings, Raju and Rahamtullah (2007) stated that males are significantly better adjusted than females on the emotional adjustment area while Roy, Ekka, and Ara (2010) observed that female students were better adjusted than male students. This implies that the findings on which gender is better adjusted than the other is inconclusive. In the same way, Abdullah (2009) found significant sex difference in the level of adjustment problem.

Similarly, the study of Hsiao-ping (2015) revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in the adjustment needs of male and female students. This confirmed the findings of Neuman (2012) who found no significant gender differences in overall adjustment. Kaur (2012) also identified no gender differences in adjustment needs among College students. This was further supported by the findings of Nyamayaro and Saravanan (2013) that there were no significant differences in the overall adjustment between male and female students. To give further credence to the view of Nyamayaro and Saravanan (2013), Mahmondi (2010) found that gender had no differential influence over adjustment scores in home, health, emotional and social area

Gender of international students in southern Ghana's universities with respect to coping strategies

The results could be nested into the General Needs Satisfaction Theory. According to Deci and Ryan (1991), needs have been defined by Deci

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and Ryan as the nutrients essential to the psychological growth, integrity and health of any living individual. There are several needs identified such as: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The need for autonomy deals with ownership and authenticity of an individual's activities.

Lending the results to empirical review, Santacana, Kirchner, Abad, and Amador (2012) found that with regard to the specificity of coping gender introduced significant differences. This implied that male and female respondents in the study coped with adjustment needs in different ways. Similar findings were reported by Wadsworth (2008) that gender differences exist in the coping strategies used by men and women to deal with stress and adjustment needs. Specifically, Wadsworth indicated that men use more avoidance-focused coping strategies than women. However, Wang (2009) indicated that men used more problem-focused coping strategies and women used more emotion-focused coping strategies. Thus, women sought more emotional support than men. In explaining the reason for the differences in coping strategies, Wang (2009) suggested that the gender differences in coping behaviour were likely to be due to differences in gender socialization rather than to be due to inherent differences in coping behaviour of men and women.

The study of Matheny, Ashby, and Cupp (2005) also found that there were significant gender differences in coping strategies. However, the study of Gentry, Harris, Baker and Leslie (2007) on gender differences in stress and coping in Hawaii showed that there was no significant difference between genders in overall perceived coping effectiveness. Most of the previous studies on gender and coping strategies have found gender differences in coping

strategies making it a point of interest as to whether the findings of the current study will support or contradict the previous studies. Thus, concisely, this current study confirmed the previous studies reviewed in the literature that coping strategies of the three different adjustment needs in terms of gender were not the same.

Age difference with respect to adjustment needs of international students in southern Ghana's universities.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as reported by the National Health Ministries, (2004), suicide is the eighth leading cause of deaths among the United States of America's population, the third leading cause of death for all those aged between 15-24, and the second leading cause of death in college and university populations. Individuals who are stressed are more likely to have accidents – including those involving motor vehicles, and, to be more careless with seatbelt use (National Health Ministries, 2004). Krause, Hartley, James, and McInnes (2005) undertook a review of a decade of Australian studies regarding the first-year university experience in Australia. Their findings suggested that the transition period to university differs for school leavers' as opposed to mature age students, in that, school leavers experience a more negative transition than their mature age counterparts. Urquhart and Pooley (2007) also argued that there are differences between mature entry and school leavers' experiences in terms of adjustment to university. In support, Munro and Pooley (2009) suggested that mature entry students and school leaver students have different experiences in transitioning to the university. This discussion buttressed the findings of this current study since participants who were matured (in terms of age) were able

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to adjust better to all the adjustment needs as compared to the younger students.

Age difference in relation to coping strategies of international students in the Public and private universities in southern Ghana

Heiman (2004) indicated that there is a significant difference in the coping strategies of old and young students. He argued that younger students employed more emotional strategies and reported having more social support from friends than older students. Similarly, Feinstein and Hammond (2004) suggested that resilience and coping was a function of age, because older adults had the necessary resources needed to maintain their course of action as they have had longer years to develop those resources.

However, the study of Santacana et al. (2012) found that in terms of the specificity of coping there was no significant difference in terms of age. Munro and Pooley (2009) also revealed that there was no difference in the resilience or coping of mature entry students and that of senior high school leavers in adapting to the university environment. The studies reviewed imply that there is no general consensus as to whether there was age difference in the coping strategies of young and mature students. However, this current study revealed that there was slight significant difference between the coping strategies of young and mature students. According to my findings, young students cope better than mature students do. This may be attributed to the fact that young students, because of their youthful exuberance socialize better than mature students may.

Summary of the Chapter

Chapter Four presents and discusses the results of the study. The demographic data were analyzed descriptively. Frequencies and percentages were specifically used to present the demographic characteristics of participants. The descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the research questions and hypotheses respectively.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings, the conclusions drawn as well as recommendations made in the study. The chapter also presented the contributions of the study to knowledge, the counselling implications and implication for policy makers' suggestions for further research is part of this chapter.

Overview of the Study

The study was to find the adjustment needs and coping strategies among international students in the public and private universities in southern Ghana. To achieve this purpose, data were collected from international students in four different universities in the southern part of Ghana, pursuing their under graduate courses. The main instrument used for the study was the questionnaire on a four- point, Liker type scale a statistically significant difference between the means in two unrelated groups scale type. The instrument used was an adapted form of the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) developed by Baker and Siryk and the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) by Folkman and Lazarus (1988). To determine the validity and reliability of the instrument, pre-testing was conducted. The researcher sought to involve an accessible population of three-hundred and twenty-two (322) respondents made up of 240 males and 82 females from four different universities in the southern part of Ghana. Analysis of the data revealed that all the 322 respondents went through some sort of adjustment needs. This chapter presents a summary of the findings of the study as well as

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the conclusions, recommendations, contributions to knowledge and directions for further research. Thus, the chapter also focuses on the implications of the findings of the study for policy formulation and practices and further research. The recommendations are made based on the key findings and major conclusions arising from the study.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the adjustment needs international students in universities in southern Ghana experience during their stay of study in the country and the coping strategies they adopt to cope with the adjustment needs. This study sought to provide answers to this aspect of students' life that appeared to have been ignored by earlier studies. Specifically, the study sought to look into the academic adjustment needs of international students in universities in southern Ghana, explore the personal-social adjustment needs of international students in the universities in southern Ghana, examine the emotional adjustment needs of international students in universities in southern Ghana, come out with the coping strategies that international students adopt to mitigate the adjustment needs they experience, examine the differences in adjustment needs of male and female international students, find out the difference in coping strategies of male and female international students, the difference in adjustment needs of young and mature international students, and finally, measure the difference in the coping strategies of young and mature international students

The quantitative method was employed for this study. A sample size of three hundred and twenty-two (322) international students which was made up of two hundred and forty (240) males (74.5%) and eighty-two (82) females

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(25.5%) out of a total population of two thousand, one hundred and two (2,102) from four selected universities was chosen using multistage sampling procedure. Adapted forms of the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) developed by Baker and Siryk (1999) and the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) developed by Folkman and Lazarus (1988) were used in the collection of data.

Major Findings

The findings revealed that the common academic adjustment needs of the respondents in their stay on the university campus included respondents: finding academic work difficult, not been able to perform well during examinations, not been smart enough for academic work as they expected, having trouble in concentration when studying and not doing well enough academically for the amount of work they put in. It was also discovered that some of the participants gave some positive responses as far as academic adjustments needs are concern. Some of these responses include the following: keeping up to date with academic work, getting a university degree is very important for them, enjoying academic work at the university, satisfied with the professors/lecturers lecturing them, been satisfied with the number and variety of courses available at the university and attending classes regularly.

The findings again showed that the common personal-social adjustment needs of the respondents in their stay on the university campus included: not getting involved in social activities, not fitting well in the university environment, not mixing too well with the opposite sex, not been satisfied with the extracurricular activities available at the university and not having several close social ties at the university. However, getting along with

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roommates, having informal personal contacts with university lecturers, having enough social skills to get along well in the university setting, been quite satisfied with social life at the university, were found to be some of the positive aspects of personal-social life of the international students in the universities in southern Ghana.

Some of the identified emotional adjustment needs include: the lonesomeness for home (homesickness), getting angry too easily lately, not able to control their emotions in recent times, worrying a lot about their university expenses, again, the international students confirmed that they experience a lot of difficulties coping with the stresses imposed upon them in the university, they feel they are very different from other students in the university in ways that they don't like, they felt tired much of the time lately and having been feeling tensed or nervous. Other participants also responded that: they have been feeling depressed and moody most of the time, having headaches as a result of emotional issues and putting on too much weight recently.

In research question three, it was evident that, majority of the international students in the universities in southern Ghana experience emotional adjustment needs. As it is evident in some of their responses in the paragraph above.

The results from research question four suggest that almost all the pre-coded items on the questionnaire could be said to be coping strategies international students adopt to manage the adjustment needs they experienced. some of these coping strategies include: they tried to analyze the problem in order to understand it better, slept more than usual, had fantasies or wishes

about how things might turn out to be, they tried to see things from the other person's point of view, they apologized or did something to make up. Other responses include: just concentrating on what to do next, went on as if nothing has happened (they just ignore), tried to keep their feelings to themselves, got professional help, found new faith , they refused to think too much about it (they did not allow it get to them), change something about themselves and others prepared themselves for the worst (so that they are not over taken by events).

From hypothesis one, it was observed that the mean differences (between male and female international students) was that there was no significant difference between male and female students with respect to how they experience adjustment needs *(t (df=320) =-1.532, p = .127, p>0.05, n=322, 2-tailed).*

From hypothesis two, the results show that the mean differences (between male and female international students) were not significant *(t (df=144.32) =-1.06, p = .1.64, p>0.05, n=322, 2-tailed).*

Again, from hypothesis three, the results showed that there was no significant difference in the adjustment needs of international students on the basis of age, the Kruskal-Wallis H test of χ^2 *(df=2) =1.431, p=.498.*

In hypothesis four, the Kruskal-Wallis H test disclosed that there was no significant difference in the coping strategies of international students on the basis of age, the Kruskal-Wallis H test of χ^2 *(df=2) =2.902, p=.234*.*

From hypothesis five, it was evident that there was no significant difference between the independent variables (private and public university international students) with respect to how they experience adjustment needs.

The independent-samples t-test is reported as *(t (df=308.151) =1.184, p =.237, p>0.05, n=322, 2-tailed).*

From the last hypothesis, (i.e. hypothesis six), it was revealed that the mean differences (between the private and public university international students) were not significant. The independent samples t-test is reported as *(t (df=297.975) =-.339, p =.737, p>0.05, n=322, 2-tailed)* indicating that there were no statistically significant as such the null hypothesis was not rejected

Conclusions

The purpose for carrying out the study was met and so it could be concluded that international students in the universities in southern Ghana encountered several adjustment problems academically, social-personally and emotionally. In response to these adjustment needs, international students adopted several strategies mostly active forms of coping. Based on the research, the following conclusions were drawn:

Firstly, the common academic adjustment needs of international students in their stay on the university campus include not being comfortable with the academic pressure (attending lectures, quizzes and assignments) and finding academic work very difficult. From this, it can be concluded that international students in the universities in southern Ghana have problems with the academic pressure and academic work during their stay of study in the university.

In addition, the common personal-social adjustment needs of international students in their stay of study in the universities in southern Ghana include: not getting involved in social activities, not fitting well in the university environment and not really enjoying life. It can therefore be

concluded that international students in the universities in southern Ghana have issues with social activities and their overall flow of interaction within and outside the university campus.

Also, the common emotional adjustment needs of international students in their stay on the university campus include: experiencing a considerable change in weight, having a lot of difficulty coping with stress, having a lot of anxiety and being unable to sleep well. The conclusion is that emotionally, international students in the universities in southern Ghana have issues handling stress, anxiety, sleep and have issues with their weight (either gaining too much weight or losing weight) in their stay of study in the university.

The most used category of coping strategies by international students in their stay on the university campus was Planful Problem Solving. It can therefore be concluded that international students in the universities in southern Ghana adopt more positive plan-oriented strategies in addressing the adjustment needs that they experience within their stay in the university.

Subsequently, there was no significant difference in the adjustment needs experienced by male and female international students in the universities in southern Ghana in their stay on the university campus. This means that the adjustment needs of male and female international students in the universities in southern Ghana are not different. It can be concluded that adjustment needs of international students in the universities in southern Ghana is not dependent on gender.

There was no difference in the coping strategies of male and female international students in the universities in southern Ghana. In other words,

male and female international students coped with adjustment needs in similar ways during their time of study in the universities in southern Ghana. It can therefore be concluded that, international students coping strategies are not dependent on their genders. It was also observed that the adjustment needs experienced by young and mature international students in the universities in southern Ghana were similar.

Finally, the coping strategies used by young and mature international students in the universities in southern Ghana during their stay on campus were not different. Thus, both young and mature students responded to adjustment needs in similar ways. Therefore, the coping strategies of international students in the universities in southern Ghana are not based on their ages.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

1. For international students to be comfortable in their stay of study, the timetable must not be' loaded' for all students since international and native students go for the same lectures. This will reduce the burden of the academic pressure they experience so as to enhance their commitment to academic work. In addition, the content and the guide lines of the orientation rendered to international students must be modify considering the fact that, they are coming from an entirely different culture. The researcher will recommend that, the orientation organized specifically for foreign students after the general orientation

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for all fresh students must be very comprehensive and if possible expatriate lecturers (if any) must be involved as resource persons.

2. International students in the Universities of southern Ghana find academic work difficult by not been able to perform well during examinations, they are not doing well enough academically for the amount of work they put their efforts in. These students are therefore encouraged to attend the orientation programme organize by the university. This will help them (international students) understand their way around campus thereby reducing the amount of academic pressure they go through especially in their first few weeks. The residential authorities are in the best position to encourage the international students to attend the orientation programme since they are the first authority figures in the University that international students are exposed to.

3. The researcher will recommend that, through the appropriate centres (example counselling centre) seminars/workshops must be organised intermittently for international students to equip them with the necessary skills to be able to handle the problems they are likely to encounter in their stay on the university campus.

4. A conscious effort by guidance coordinators to equip fresh international students on a topic like "self-concept" during orientation programmes will be commendable. This exposure to psychological concepts will help the students to develop good self-esteem, which will also be reflected in their attitude to life in general, and their ability to

manage issues of life thereby enhancing their planful problem solving skills.

5. International students (nationwide) must be taught how to cope with their adjustment needs. Emphasis should be laid on relaxation techniques, exercise, rest, good diet, water therapy and social support as effective ways of dealing with their adjustment needs. The researcher suggests to the university authorities to organize training courses in Guidance and Counselling to all lectures to equip them with the requisite skills needed to help their students, especially international students who need counselling.

6. There must be a conscious effort on the part of the managers of the universities to equip their Counselling Centers/Units with the financial where - withal to enable them carry out research among their international students. This will unearth the problems militating against the performance of international students so that remedial measures can be put into effect by the authorities of the various universities.

7. The researcher recommends to the universities' authorities to consider the issue of providing each department and hall with a professional counsellor, who has an in-depth knowledge in multi-cultural counselling, to operate on a full-time basis. This will afford them, (counsellors) ample time to devote themselves fully to the task of providing the needed services to their clients in particularly and the University community in general.

Implications for Counselling

The results of the study have some implications for counselling. They include the following:

1. Counsellors would be aware of some counselling needs of foreign students and so assist the counsellors in providing counselling to such students who may decide to come to them for counselling purposes. This means that, counsellors in the universities must be abreast with multicultural counselling which is an emerging force in contemporary counselling.

2. Counsellors engaging international students in both one-on-one and group counselling will help the international students adjust better on campus. They will be able to express their issues for them to be assisted and guided to be able to handle their adjustment issues and challenges better.

3. There should be intermittent outreach programmes organized by the counselling centers/units of the universities in southern Ghana so as to help raise awareness about counselling. This will make students especially international students seek counselling whenever they are faced with adjustment problems.

4. Counsellors' use of all the approaches of counselling such as crisis counselling, remedial counselling, preventive counselling and developmental counselling can assist international students deal with adjustment problems regardless of the level at which the issue is encountered.

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5. Provision of counselling in academic, personal-social and emotional areas can assist international students adequately cope with the adjustment problems experienced in their academic, personal-social and emotional lives.

6. Counsellors should assist international students who come to them as clients by telling them to avoid self-blame for externally caused challenges or issues of life by giving alternative reasons that enhances empowerment. Thus, psychotherapists must suggest important opportunities together with the needed resources in addition to therapy that are geared towards helping international students to gain relevant skills and solve problems that crop up in counselling.

Implications for policy makers

The results of this study have some importance and implications for policy makers:

1. A good idea of the challenges of international students is of paramount interest to policy makers, because the country benefits from the foreign currency these students inject into the economy. The results will therefore enhance policy formulation and implementation for a better integration of international students into their host societies. In view of this, policy makers must do everything humanly possible, to ease the pressure that is exclusive to international students, thus making policies that will be international-students-friendly.

2. Some of these international students are potential leaders (presidents, ministers, vice-chancellors etc.) of their various countries, thus, policy makers should be mindful of this fact and give such students the best

of treatment so that in future when they (international students) are leading their countries, the rapport between these countries and Ghana will be unique. This can foster bilateral trade and positive international relation.

3. The government of Ghana should make immigration regulations less cumbersome so that international students who have financial challenges can be allowed to find some jobs to supplement their university education.

4. Another important issue is on the renewing of passports and going for visas. The government of Ghana through the ministry of foreign affairs can link up with the consulates officers of the various countries whose citizens are furthering their education in universities in Ghana to make acquiring of new passports to replace old ones and renewing of international students visas very simple so that it will not interfere with their studies. All these, if done well, can make international students have some attachment for Ghana and they may be coming back with their families in future as tourists or even as foreign investors which will be of great benefit to Ghana.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study has contributed immensely to knowledge. Some of the contributions are outlined below:

1. Policy makers will derive many benefits if they read my study. For example, making policies that will make international students comfortable during their period of study in Ghana. This will in the long run make them (international students) come back to Ghana after

school to make business links or even establish a company here in Ghana or bring more tourists to Ghana which will help the nation earn foreign currency. The recommendation the researcher made on the above can really help policy makers.

2. Mangers of the various universities in Ghana would find my study useful as the study exposes some of the challenges of international students in the universities in Ghana.

3. Counsellors in the universities in Ghana will gain insightful knowledge into the challenges of international students when they read the findings of this current study. For example, the call from the researcher for counsellors to have in-depth knowledge in multi-cultural counselling is very cardinal so that their understanding of cultural relativism will make them dynamic counsellors.

4. The conceptual framework for this study is another contribution to knowledge since it will guide others to understand challenges and coping strategies of international students. The results of the study would also add to existing literature in the area of university life challenges. Thus, this study would enrich available literature on international students. Present and prospective researchers would have reference material for research works similar to this study. The findings of this study can serve as related empirical literature to research.

Suggestions for Further Research

For further studies, I will suggest that a mixed model method would be done either to confirm or disconfirm my findings. Another researcher can also

do a comparative study on the adjustment needs of host country and international students. Most of the previous studies were concerned with the adjustment needs of international students from one particular country, (e.g. Nigerians) while the current study was concerned with the adjustment needs of international students in general (i.e. from different countries and continents), therefore, a comparative study of international students from one West African country and one European country would help validate the findings of the previous studies as well as those of this current study.

In addition, it is suggested that further studies should consider a specific type of adjustment need that is most prevalent to international students only. This would help to determine whether academic, personal-social or emotional adjustment need is the most prevalent form of adjustment challenges among expatriate students. Lastly, prospective and current researchers can also look at the most common coping strategy used by foreign students to address their academic, emotional and social-personal needs.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter covers the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations. Implications of the study for counselling and also for policy makers are also indicated in this chapter. Lastly, suggestions for further research were provided.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHERN GHANA

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire seeks your opinion on the topic**:** *Adjustment needs and coping strategies among international students in universities in southern Ghana.* The purpose of the study is to investigate the needs that international students must adjust to and find out the coping strategies they are adopting and to suggest some coping strategies to the respondents. Please your response to the items on this questionnaire will b2e treated confidential. The study forms part of my academic work in school. In order for my study to be successful, your participation will be highly appreciated. Please do NOT discuss your answers with anyone else. Tick (√) or supply an appropriate response where applicable.

SECTION A: Background Information

1. **Country of Origin:** (e.g. Niger)………………………………….

2. **Type of University:** Public ☐ Private ☐

3. **Sex:** Male ☐ Female ☐

4. **Age:** 17-25 ☐ 34-41 ☐ 26-33 ☐ 42- above ☐

5. **Religion:** Christian ☐ Traditional ☐ Moslem ☐

   Others:…................................

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Marital Status: Married ☐ Divorce ☐ Single ☐

In a relationship ☐

6. **Level:** Level 100 ☐ Level 200 ☐ Level 300 ☐ level 400 ☐

SECTION B: Personal – social Adjustment

The section focuses on the socialisation and acclimatization aspects of the university life of international students in universities in southern Ghana. That is, how the respondent is adjusting in terms of his/her interpersonal activities, the formation and maintenance of relationships, dissociative experiences etc.

For the following items, please read carefully and select the response which best expresses your opinion about each statement by **ticking (√)** the appropriate box. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree to the statements in this section using the guide below:

1. *Strongly agree = SA*

2. *Agree = A*

3. *Disagree = S*

4. *Strongly disagree = SD*

No.	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
7.	I feel that I fit in well as part of the university environment.				
8.	I am meeting as many people, and making as many friends as I would like at university				
9.	I am very involved with social activities in university.				

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10.	Being on my own, taking responsibility for myself, has not been easy				
11.	I have had informal, personal contacts with university professors.				
12.	I have several close social ties at university.				
13.	I am satisfied with the extracurricular activities available at university				
14.	I am getting along very well with my roommates(s) at university. (Please omit if you do not have a roommate.)				
15.	I feel that I have enough social skills to get along well in the university setting.				
16.	I am having difficulty feeling at ease with other people at university.				
17.	I haven't been mixing too well with the opposite sex lately.				
18.	Lately I have been giving a lot of thought to transferring to another university.				
19.	I have some good friends or acquaintances at university with whom I can talk about any problems I may have.				
20.	I am quite satisfied with my social life at university.				

SECTION C: Emotional Adjustment

The section is about the sentimental issues of respondents thus, it seeks the feelings of the respondents in varying moods such as: sadness, depression, euphoria, emptiness, anxiety disorder, phobias, panic disorder etc.

For the following items, please read carefully and select the response which best expresses your opinion about each statement by **ticking** (√) the appropriate box. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree to the statements in Sections using the guide below:

1. *Strongly agree = SA*

2. *Agree = A*

3. *Disagree = D*

4. *Strongly disagree = SD*

No.	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
21.	I have been feeling tensed or nervous lately.				
22.	Lately, I have been feeling blue and moody a lot.				
23.	I have felt tired much of the time lately.				
24.	I haven't been able to control my emotions very well lately.				
25.	Lonesomeness for home as a source is of difficulty for me now.				
26.	My appetite has been good lately.				
27.	I have been having a lot of headaches lately.				
28.	I've put on too much weight recently				

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29.	I have been getting angry too easily lately.				
30.	I haven't been sleeping very well.				
31.	I worry a lot about my university expenses.				
32.	I have been feeling lonely a lot at university lately				
33.	I feel I am very different from other students at university in ways that I don't.t like.				
34.	On a balance, I would rather be home than here.				
35.	I am experiencing a lot of difficulty coping with the stresses imposed upon me in university.				

SECTION D: Academic Adjustment

The section looks at how the respondent is faring in his/ her academic

activities such as quizzes, assignments, lectures, examinations etc.

For the following items, please read carefully and select the response which

best expresses your opinion about each statement by **ticking (√)** the

appropriate box. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree to the

statements in Sections using the guide below:

1. *Strongly agree*

2. *Agree*

3. *Disagree*

4. *Strongly disagree*

No.	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
36.	I have been keeping up to date with my academic work.				
37.	I am finding academic work at university difficult.				
38.	I have not been performing well during examinations.				
39.	I am satisfied with the level at which I am performing academically.				
40.	I'm not working as hard as I should at my course work.				
41.	I'm not really smart enough for academic work I am expected to be doing now.				

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42.	Getting a university degree is very important for me.				
43.	I haven't been very efficient in the use of study time lately.				
44.	I really haven't had much motivation for studying lately				
45.	I am satisfied with the number and variety of courses available at university.				
46.	Recently I have had trouble concentrating when I try to study.				
47.	I'm not doing well enough academically for the amount of work I put in.				
48.	I am attending classes regularly.				
49.	I am enjoying my academic work at university.				
50.	I am very satisfied with the professors I have now in my courses.				

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SECTION E: Coping strategy

Coping strategy involves the respondent's constantly changing of cognitive and behavioural effort to manage a specific external and / or internal demands (situations) that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person. Managing demands (situations) may include an attempt to master the environment, or to minimize, avoid, tolerate or accept stressful conditions.

For the following items, please read carefully and select the response which best expresses your opinion about each statement by **ticking (√)** the appropriate box using the guide below:

1. *Not Used*

2. *Used Somewhat*

3. *Used Quite a Bit*

4. *Used a Great Deal*

No.	Statements	Not Used	Used Somewhat	Used Quite a Bit	Used a Great Deal
51.	Just concentrated on what I had to do next – the next step.				
52.	I tried to analyze the problem in order to understand it better.				

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53.	Turned to work or substitute activity (or a vacation) to take my mind off things.				
54.	Tried to get the person responsible to change his or her mind.				
55.	Talked to someone to find out more about the situation.				
56.	Went on as if nothing had happened.				
57.	I tried to keep my feelings to myself.				
58.	Slept more than usual.				
59.	I expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem.				
60.	I told myself things that helped me to feel better.				
61.	I got professional help.				
62.	I apologized or did something to make up.				
63.	I made a plan of action and followed it.				

64.	I came out of the experience better than when I went in.				
65.	Tried to make myself feel better by eating, drinking, smoking, using drugs or medication, etc.				
66.	I tried not to act too hastily or follow my first hunch.				
67.	Found new faith.				
68.	Avoided being with people in general.				
69.	Didn't let it get to me; refused to think too much about it.				
70.	Kept others from knowing how bad things were.				
71.	Talked to someone about how I was feeling.				
72.	Drew on my past experiences; I was in a similar situation before.				
73.	Accepted it, since nothing could be done.				

74.	I changed something about myself.				
75.	Had fantasies or wishes about how things might turn out.				
76.	I prayed.				
77.	I prepared myself for the worst.				
78.	I thought about how a person I admire would handle this situation and used that as a model.				
79.	I tried to see things from the other person's point of view.				
80.	I jogged or exercised.				

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APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Department of Guidance and Counselling
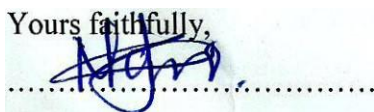
University of Cape Coast

5th November, 2018.

The Head

Department of Guidance and Counselling

University of Cape Coast.

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION FOR AN INTRODUCTORY LETTER

I would be very grateful if you could assist me to get an introductory letter to the

Institutional Review Board (IRB) for ethical clearance. This is in accordance with the guidelines of the IRB, University of Cape Coast concerning proposed research works that involve human participants. I am a doctoral student of the above Department with registration number ED/GRC/15/00012.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

....

Eugene Kwarteng - Nantwi

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APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Department of Guidance and Counselling

University of Cape Coast

Cape Coast

November 5, 2018.

The Head

Institutional Review Board

University of Cape Coast

Cape Coast

Dear Sir/Madam,

<u>INTRODUCTORY LETTER -EUGENE KWARTENG-NANTWI</u>

The student named above is a Ph.D. student at the Department of Guidance and Counselling under my supervision. He has defended his Ph.D. thesis proposal successfully on the topic:
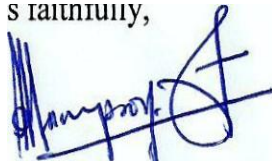
Adjustment needs and coping strategies of international students of Universities in Southern Ghana. He is ready to go to the field for data collection, and I write to consent to his application for ethical clearance.

I count on your cooperation.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Prof. Eric Nyarko -Sampson.

(Principal Supervisor)

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APPENDIX D

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE   AND COUNSELLING

Telephone: 0332091854UNIVERSITY   POSTOFFICE Email:
dgc@ucc.eedu.ghCAPE COAST,   GHANA

Our Ref :

5 / 11 / 18

The Chairman
Institutional Review Board
U.C.C
Cape Coast

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

We introduce to you, Eugene Kwarteng-Nantwi a student from the Department of Guidance and Counselling, University of Cape Coast. He is pursuing PhD in Guidance and Counselling.

and Counselling, University of Cape Coast. He is pursuing PhD in Guidance and Counselling.

As part of his requirement, he is expected to work on a thesis titled:

ADJUSTMENT NEEDS AND COPING STRATEGIES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHERN GHANA

He has successfully defended his proposal and is seeking for ethical clearance to collect data for the study.

We would be most grateful if you could provide him the necessary assistance for the ethical clearance for his study.

Thank you.

ank you.

Rev. Fr. Dr. Anthony K. Nkyi
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

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APPENDIX E

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

TEL: 0558093143 / 0508878309/ 0244207814   C/O Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy
E-MAIL: irb@ucc.edu.gh
OUR REF: UCC/IRB/A/2016/291
YOUR REF:
OMB NO: 0990-0279
IORG #: IORG0009096   21ST DECEMBER, 2018

Mr Eugene Kwarteng-Nantwi
Department of Guidance and Counselling
University of Cape Coast

Dear Mr Kwarteng-Nantwi,

ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID: (UCCIRB/CES/2018/17)

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted **Provisional Approval** for the implementation of your research protocol titled **Adjustments needs and coping strategies of international students of Universities in Southern Ghana**. This approval requires that you submit periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

Please note that any modification of the project must be submitted to the UCCIRB for review and approval before its implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,

Samuel Asiedu Owusu, PhD
UCCIRB Administrator

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