

# ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENTS STAYING OUT OF THEIR HOMETOWN FOR STUDY.

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## ABSTRACT

Studying Outside the Town, City, State and even Country is a fast-growing trend and in this many countries are making concerted efforts to attract more international students. It is estimated that nearly 4.5 million tertiary students obtain education outside their country. There are several benefits associated with getting education in a better environment with strong education system and good learning culture. However, Students face various challenges while getting education in such situations. Some of these challenges are addressed in this study which relates to financial hardship, personal safety issues, unfamiliar local healthcare system, difficulty in adapting to different weather and food, social and cultural isolation. This paper attempts to study the factors regarding the same. A quantitative study conducted among the age group of 20-30 was administered among 220 respondents mostly in the Maharashtra region which formed the Primary data and Blogs, websites, white papers was the base of Secondary data. Chi Square was used in the data analysis. The findings revealed that though students face a lot of challenges, they still go out to study as they want a better way of living in the future.

**Keywords:** - *Issues, Challenges, Adaptation, Environment, Perspective, Orientation, Anxiety.*

## INTRODUCTION

Whenever a student leaves his/her home for further education, a new journey is bound to begin. This journey's main twists and turns are centred around self-discovery and self-reliance, which in turn shape up the student's general outlook on the dynamics of life. Students living in university residences everywhere experience frail living conditions, being away from their homes and families, due to the stress of studies and absence of readily available guidance for academic and non-academic problems. Studying Outside of Town, City, State and even Country is a fast-growing trend and in this many countries are making concerted efforts to attract more international students. It is estimated that nearly 4.5 million tertiary students obtain education outside their country. There are several benefits associated with getting education in a better environment with strong education system and good learning culture. However, Students face various challenges while getting education in such situations. Some of these challenges are different teaching styles, low language proficiency, dissimilar academic expectations and assessment as compared to home countries, unfamiliar living conditions (cultural shocks), personal apprehensions, financial hardship, personal safety issues, unfamiliar

local healthcare system, difficulty in adapting to different weather and food, social and cultural isolation, and separation from family and friends.

Yet another important problem affecting student's achievements is the problem of accommodation. Accommodation is the first problem encountered by students leaving their cities and moving to another city to get higher education. A great majority of university youth are left no choice but to leave their families to get education. However, in recent years, due to the increase observed in the number of universities and in the student quotas, yet not parallel to this, student dormitories having fallen short of meeting needs make the problem of accommodation more serious for university students. However, with the exception of several of them who can be counted as lucky, they teach in classes composed of fifty or more students with different competence levels. In addition to these, crowded classrooms, physically insufficient buildings, absence of special classrooms (laboratory, language classrooms, lecture room), and absence of facilities necessary for carrying out social activities (gym, swimming pool, various fields) are listed as factors affecting education as well.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review examined the different aspects of the study.

- **Paula Wilcox, Sandra Winn and Marylynn Fyvie-Gauld (2005)** in their findings on 'It was nothing to do with the university, it was just the people': the role of social support in the first-year experience of higher education" states that the presence or lack of social support networks and supportive interactions is a major factor for students in deciding whether to stay or leave. Integrating into the university is a complex process, and finding a place between old and new social contexts creates tensions for students which are often difficult to resolve; for some students 'over attachment' to social contacts at home can lead to withdrawal from university. Academic staff need to ensure that students have a wide range of opportunities to form alliances with other students and with tutors, but our findings suggest that university estates departments and accommodation services also have a crucial role to play in this respect.
- **Babar T. Shaikh & Jean-Pierre Deschamps (2006)** in their findings on "Life in a University Residence: Issues, Concerns and Responses" states that the majority of students have complaints about the living conditions in the residences. They mention that they are not in sound health. Stress, depression, fatigue, insomnia, and problems with diet are common. Foreign students suffer more due to culture shock, language, and nostalgia. A tendency for suicides has been observed, especially in girls. Financial problems, too much to study, and relationship break-up are important factors. For their health problems, they generally seek advice from a peer and consume medicines without prescription. Many do not use the "students' health service" because of lack of information or difficult access from certain universities or university residences.
- **Gretchen E. Fogle, Terry F. Pettijohn (2012)** states in their research on "Stress and Health Habits in College Students" that, it is very likely that the hassles and uplifts listed in the surveys given to participants were not the only ones they experienced. An opportunity for students to write down other hassles and uplifts not used in the current study could reduce this possibility in future studies. A better understanding of stress could be beneficial to college students in several ways. First, knowledge of which

gender experiences more stress could be helpful in directing specific aid to those who need it most. For example, programs targeted specifically at helping women manage stress may meet their needs better than a general approach. Also, understanding how stress is related to illness and proper self-care health habits has the potential to help students become healthier and thereby better able to handle stress. Evidence of the importance of good self-care habits may encourage students to refrain from engaging in unhealthy habits. Overall, an awareness of what causes stress may empower students to take appropriate preventative measures.

- **Ozlem Doygun and Selma Gulec (2012)** in their study on “The problems faced by university students and proposals for solution” states that A great many of the students included in the sample group think that they do not have a healthy nutrition regime. From the findings obtained from the study, it appeared that the students felt a need for getting counseling help. These findings show parallelism with those obtained from the study made by Koser and Mercanlioglu (2010) investigating into problems related to academic counseling services. Providing habituation and orientation services in a planned manner is one of the factors to affect the quality of education given at their universities.
- **Hsiao-ping Wu, Esther Garza, and Norma Guzman (2015)** in their Research Article “International Student’s Challenge and Adjustment to College” they explored international students’ academic, social, and cultural adaption. The findings indicated that international students often face a series of transitional difficulties when they come to study in the US at universities and colleges. On the other hand, these challenges also motivate international students to develop strategies to solve problems. When they become autonomous learners, they develop new learning strategies to deal with difficulties. The adjustment and adaption takes time and effort, and it needs a lot of support from different aspects. The university is usually the first place where resources can be provided; thus the university needs to focus on the challenges faced by international students and provide more adequate support for them.
- **Eunjae Park (2016)** in their findings of “Social and educational challenges of international students caused by accented English in the Australian context: A sociolinguistic analysis of linguistic experience” states that accented English was a trigger of communication issues. The exploratory study provides in-depth understanding of social and educational challenges caused by accented English for L2 tertiary students in Australia. This study explored issues with accented English at two routes: 1) accented English as linguistic difficulties, causing communication issues and 2) accent associated communication experiences with prejudice. Accented English had negative social consequences for students as they experienced prejudice accent associated communicative problems. Accent stereotyping as linguistic discrimination was more pervasive outside of university as all cohorts, with the exception of European students, encountered prejudicial people. A particular native English variety was preferred, indicating linguistic intolerance in terms of other native varieties of English and other non- native varieties of English within Australian society.
- **Jennifer T. Young (2016)** in her findings on “Confucianism and Accents: Understanding the Plight of the Asian International Student in the U.S.” states that It is vital to avoid misperceptions of international students from Confucian cultures as procrastinating, uninterested, intentionally socially segregated and isolated, or lacking

in critical thinking skills. More specifically, international students may feel embarrassed of the challenges they face and believe that the only resolution lies in their individual ability to stay strong and persevere. Thus, the absence of engaging support services is not necessarily an act of noncompliance or resistance, but of differing cultural values. In considering programs and services, it is recommended that the cultural training in the form of ally programs are used to address cultural variance which can serve to prevent unintended alienation, marginalization, or cultivation of further stereotypes or misperceptions of Asian international students. For higher education institutions to meet their goals of providing an educational experience to prepare students to function in an increasingly global context, it is imperative that educators and administrators reflect on their own views and see their students with cultural clarity.

- **Tatiana A. Baklashovaa and Andrey V. Kazakov (2016)** in their research on “Challenges of International Students’ Adjustment to a Higher Education Institution” states that students and teachers should be aware of the increasing value of cross-cultural mobility and the special significance of international students’ effective integration in the new environment. For example, schools may invite foreign students to conduct introductory presentations on the peculiarities of schooling abroad. Universities’ authorities, faculty should allow equal educational opportunities for all students. Students also need to develop intercultural competence to successfully interact with foreign students. It is extremely useful to provide training for staff, faculty, who will work with the enrolled foreign students. It is desirable to carry out individual consultations, organize tutors’ activities to supervise and assist international students to successfully complete the course of study, as well as to remove psychological stress. Universities should offer foreign students special orientation courses or a program, introducing them on to their culture in general and the academic culture in particular. These activities may include seminars with guest lecturers, qualified professionals, where foreign students could share their own experience, as well as visit companies and institutions, which can strengthen friendly relations with the local population.
- **Iskra Smiljanic (2017)** in their research “The Role of Attachment, Travel Experiences and English Proficiency in International Students’ Acculturative Stress and Depressive Symptoms” states that higher levels of attachment avoidance were not related to higher levels of acculturative stress despite being related to more depressive symptoms and despite the positive correlation between depressive symptoms and acculturative stress. A possible explanation for this finding could be that participants who scored high on attachment avoidance were less aware, less self-disclosing, or minimized their level of acculturative stress and homesickness, as it would imply they are dependent on others, which may be too threatening and destabilizing for their self-concept. Language is linked with culture and found that students from Asia and Central/Latin America experienced more acculturative stress than students from Europe.
- **Mehrete Girmay (2017)** in their research on “Understanding the adjustment needs of International graduate students at southern Illinois university Carbondale” states that , many of the participants shared how language barriers worked in conjunction with other adjustment stressors, such as new classroom environment to elicit emotions related to loneliness and isolation. For many of the participants, academic stressors were a one of the major adjustment challenges. Even in regards to sleeping patters, several participants spoke about how they faced difficulty getting rest at night due to feelings of loneliness and also the lack of noise in which they were used to. This lack of sleep

affected not only their ability to properly function but also contributed to the development of emotional issues.

- **Malarvili Ramachandiran<sup>1</sup> and Saroja Dhanapal (2018)** in their research on “Academic Stress Among University Students: A Quantitative Study of Generation Y and Z’s Perception” states that the researchers recommended that university/college management teams must take positive steps to reduce students’ stress to ensure that they possess good mental health and are able to perform well in their studies. They can do this by creating a conducive learning environment with suitable teaching and learning methods. In addition, they need to provide adequate counselling in order to decrease psychological and social stress. The researchers also recommend that university/ college management teams should place a lot of emphasis on ensuring courses are designed properly. They should also ensure that student support services are set in place, students are made aware of potential stress that can occur in the period of transition from school to university/college life as well as that adequate training and workshops are conducted to help students handle stress. All these measures will help decrease the stress faced by students as a result of their academic pursuits.
- **Mehrete Girmay and Gopal K. Singh (2019)** in their research on “Social Isolation, Loneliness, and Mental and Emotional Well-being among International Students in the United States” states that the impact that poor acculturation can have on the students’ mental and physical health, and how bridges between the international and non-international communities can be built and more importantly, sustained. Moreover, the results highlight the critical need for more effort to be focused on attending to both the mental and physical health needs of migrant students during their stay at the host university.
- **Jeevan Khanal and Uttam Gaulee (2019)** in their research on “Challenges of International Students from Pre Departure to Post-Study” has categorized the challenges experienced by international students into three stages: pre-departure, post-departure, and post-study. They state that Definitely, academic mobility in higher education opens multiple horizons for many international students to study abroad. As international students discover the multiplicity of prospects and overture of experiences from the preparation level to graduation, they also undergo challenges as they prepare, adapt, and adjust in a new environment. Study abroad is a challenging experience for students of all nationalities and backgrounds and the transition is not easy.
- **Wawera, Anna-Sophia and Mccamley, Alison (2019)** in their study on “Loneliness among international students in the UK” stated that almost 3 in 4 international students (72.13%) had experienced loneliness since coming to the UK, showing a moderate level of loneliness on average (DJGLS mean of 7.30). Overall, international students experienced loneliness of varying degrees and durations at the beginning of their stay, when they were still adjusting to their new environment, or if at a later point, circumstances in their social network changed. Students also reported very similar strategies in terms of coping with loneliness. They would first isolate themselves, staying at home and doing something comforting, followed by talking to close family members and friends back home. Once feeling better, they would try to distract themselves and make plans for meeting people, often purposefully using university activities to expand their social networks.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Students face issues living outside their hometown or states or countries to study, in their stay out challenges like skills, health issues, financial issues, coping with environment, coping with study pressures affect them mentally and physically . Migration problems are the most impactful obstacle in today's society, so how students are getting affected by them is the major area for research.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To understand all the issues faced by students living outside for study purposes.
- To review changes required in the standards of living for students living outside to study
- To empathize with the students who are facing issues like lack of social skills or failing to network.
- To collect information from students regarding the choices and the living conditions in the university residences, Private Hostels, PG's, Rented flats and other places for accommodation.
- To Determine the needs of students regarding any aid and information about "health" and "Hygiene"

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research involved a survey of college students, individuals, friends and family members through online platform of google forms. Source of Data is Primary data which was collected through questionnaire with two hundred and twenty(220) individuals within a age group of 20-30 years. Sampling was Simple random method. A structured questionnaire of 20 multiple choice questions and demographic detail were collected and analysed. The study was administered mostly in Maharashtra region and a few parts other than Maharashtra.

## HYPOTHESES

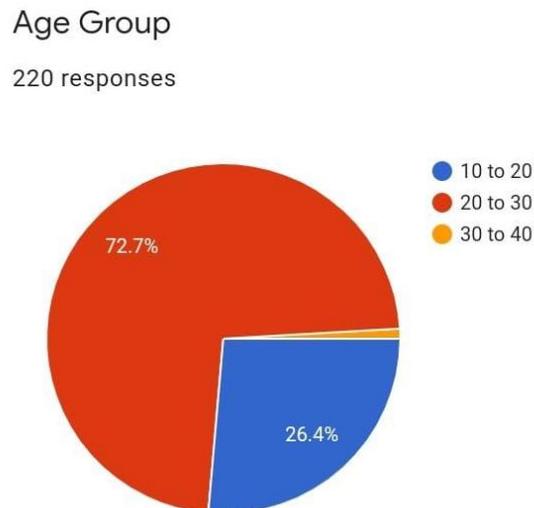
**H<sub>0</sub>** Students Living out of their hometown to study don't face food, health and financial related problems

**H<sub>a</sub>** Students Living out of their hometown to study face a lot of food, health and financial related problems

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

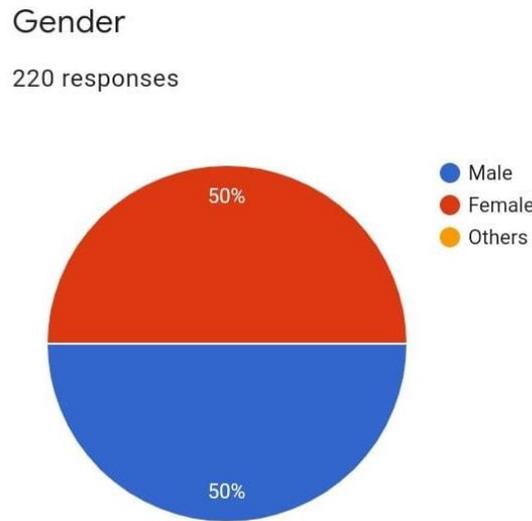
Data was collected by the questionnaire method from the google forms and coding was done in excel sheet, there were 220 respondents equally distributed among male and female. The collected responses were analyzed by various charts like pie charts, bar charts. Descriptive statistics is used to explore the collected data to summarize and describe that data.

### ❖ Age wise distribution of the respondents



**Interpretation:** In this survey, 72.7% of the respondents fall under the age group of 20 to 30, 26.4% of the respondents fall under the age group of 10 to 20 years and rest i.e. 0.9% falls under the age group of 30 to 40 years.

❖ Gender wise distribution of the respondents

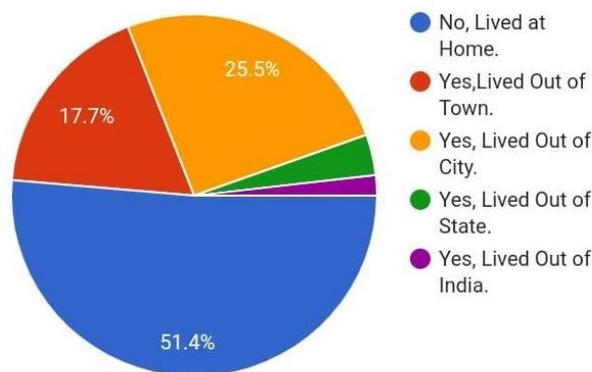


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 respondents exactly 50% are male and 50% are female.

❖ Distribution of respondents according to the migration levels.

1. Did you ever leave your house for Study purposes?

220 responses

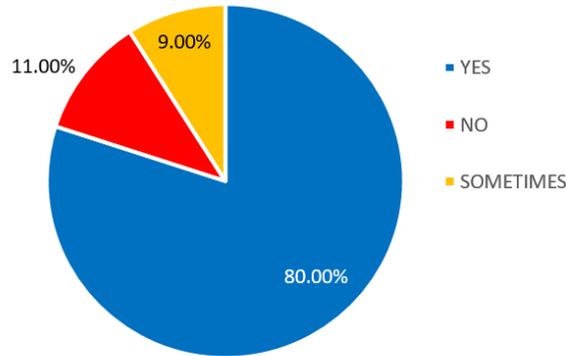


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 respondents according to current situation 51.4% of the respondents did not leave house for study purposes, 17.7% of the respondents lived out of their towns for study purposes, 25.5% of the respondents lived out of their cities and 3.6% of the respondents lived out of their states for study purposes and 1.8% of the respondents lived abroad.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to Food and Health issues faced by them.**

2. Do you think students living out to study face issues related to food and health?

220 Responses

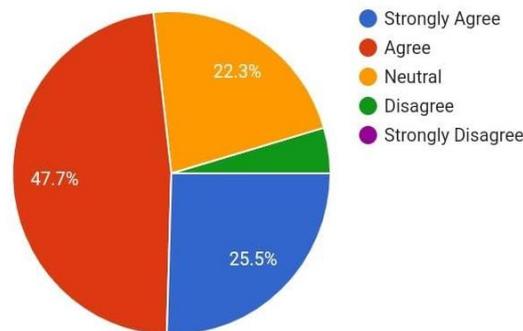


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 respondents, 80% of the respondents thinks students face food and health issues, 11% of the respondents says no, they don't face food and health related issues while the rest that is 9% feels sometimes students face food and health related issues.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to accommodation issues faced by them.**

3. Do you think students face accommodation issues ?

220 responses

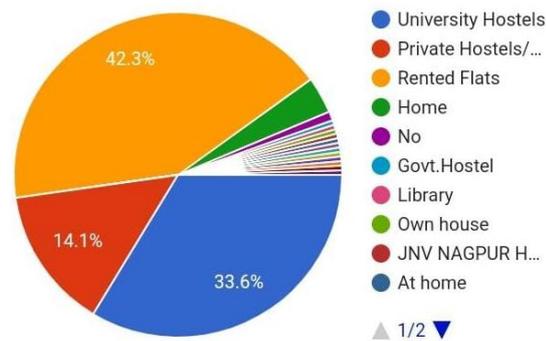


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 respondents, 47.7% of the respondents agreed that students face accommodation issues while staying out to study while 25.5% respondents strongly agree to this whereas 22.3 % are neutral about this and 4.5% Disagree to accommodation issues.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to preferences of accommodation choices.**

4. Where do you prefer to live outside home for study purposes ?

220 responses

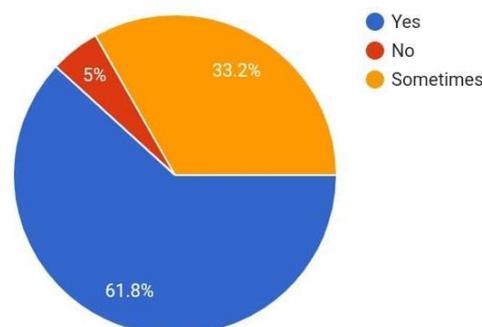


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 respondents, 42.3% respondents prefer to stay in rented flats where as 33.6% of the respondents prefer to stay at university hostels whereas 14.1% of the respondents prefer to live at private hostels and PG's whereas given an option as other respondents gave various preferences such as government hostels or relative's place for staying.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to Financial issues faced by them.**

5. Do you think students face financial problems ?

220 responses

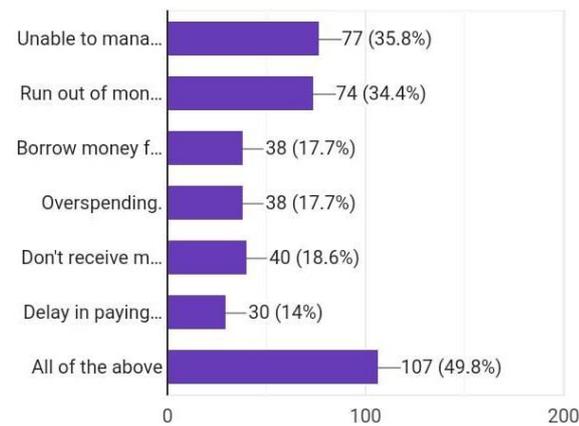


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 respondents, 61.8% of the respondents thinks students face financial problems, 33.2 % respondents say sometimes students face financial problems where as 5% of the respondents says students don't face any financial problems.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to various financial issues faced by them.**

6. If yes, What are the financial issues faced by students ?

215 responses

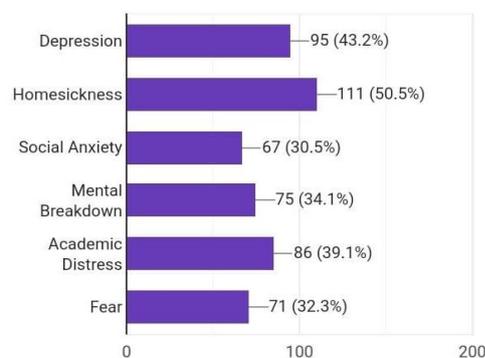


**Interpretation:** In this survey, as it was an optional question, out of 215 respondents 35.8% of the respondents says students are unable to manage their expenses, 34.4% says students run out of money before month end, 17.7% says students need to borrow money from friends, 18.6% says they don't receive money on time, 14% says they face issues in paying their rents on time where as 49.8% says they face all the above-mentioned issues.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to various Mental health issues faced by them.**

7. What are the issues faced by students who are living out to study ?

220 responses



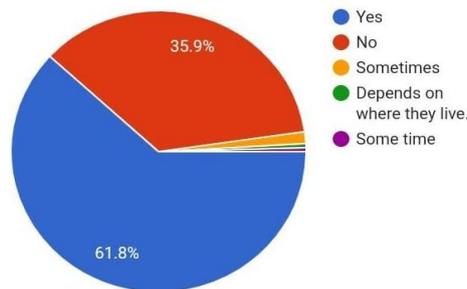
**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 responses, 50.5% respondents say students face Homesickness, 43.2% says students face Depression, 39.1% says students deal with

Academic stress, 34.1% says students break down mentally at some point, 32.3% says students tend to be afraid of the situations and 30.5% says students face social anxiety.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to Study Environment issues faced by them.**

8. Do you think students don't receive the required study environment ?

220 responses

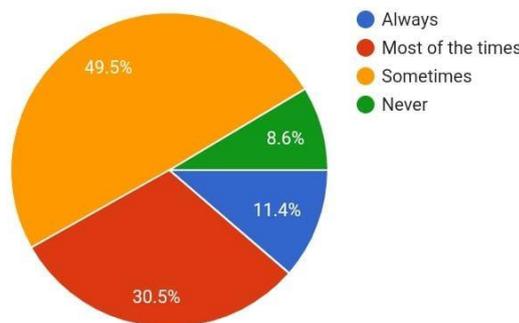


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 responses, 61.8% of the respondents feel that students don't receive required study environment, 35.9% says No, they do receive required study environment whereas 1.8% says they sometimes receive the required environment sometimes not where as 0.5% feels it really depends on where we stay.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to Study Environment issues faced by them.**

9. Do students face language barrier at new place ?

220 responses

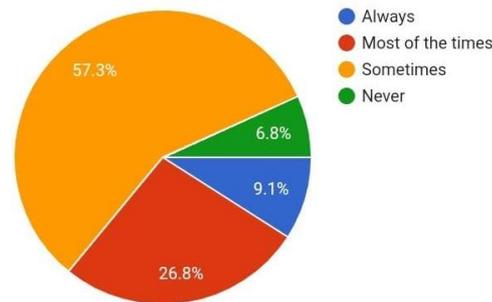


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 responses, 49.5% of the respondents say sometimes students face language barriers, 30.5% of the respondents say most of the times students face language barriers, 11.4% says students always face language barriers whereas 8.6% of the respondents say students never face language barriers while living out for study purposes.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to accessibility of medical facilities issues faced by them.**

10. Does Students face issues related accessibility of medical facilities ?

220 responses

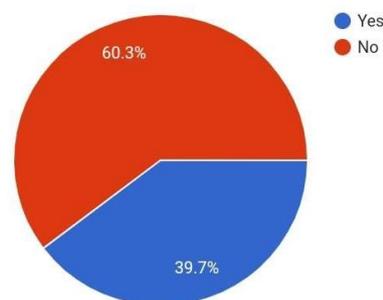


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 responses, 57.3% of the respondents say students sometimes face issues of accessibility of medical facilities, 26.8% says most of the times students face issues related to accessibility of medical facilities, 9.1% of the respondents says students always face this issue whereas 6.8% of the respondents say students never face this issue.

❖ **Distribution of female respondents according to safety issues faced by them.**

11. Do Female Students feel safe while living out to Study ?

194 responses

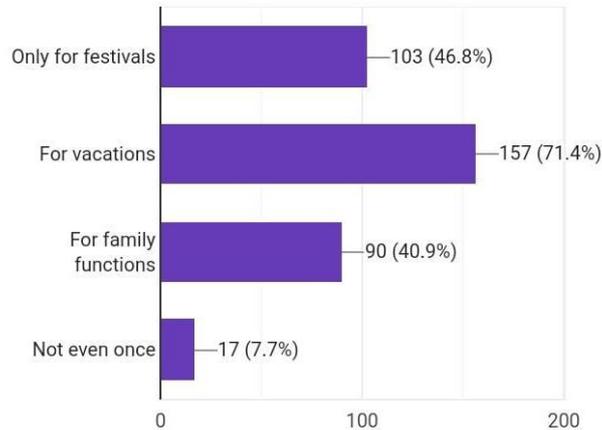


**Interpretation:** In this survey, as this was an optional question, out of 194 responses, 60.3% of the respondents say female students don't face security issues whereas 39.7% of the respondents says female students so face security issues while staying out for study purposes.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to liberty of visiting home they have.**

12. When students are able to visit home in an academic year ?

220 responses

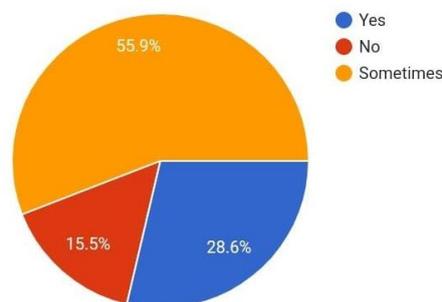


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 responses, 71.4% respondents say students get to visit their homes only for vacations, 46.8% says students get to visit their homes only for festivals, 40.9% says students visit their homes for family functions where as 7.7% says students don't get to visit their homes in an academic year.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to travelling issues faced by them.**

13. Do students face issues while travelling to Home ?

220 responses

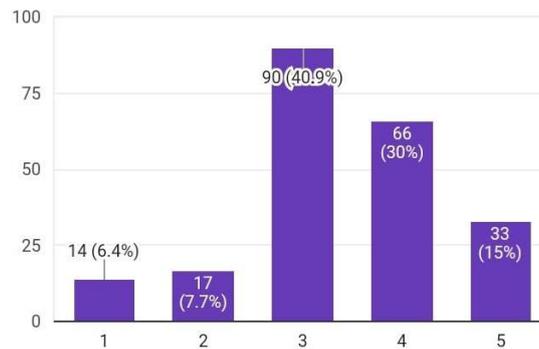


**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 responses, 55.9% of the respondents says students sometimes face travelling issues while staying out for study purposes, whereas 28.6% of the respondents says students face travelling issues while 15.5% of the respondents says students don't face travelling issues.

❖ **Distribution of respondents according to happiness quotient of staying out to study.**

15. On the Scale of 1 to 5, How happy you are about staying out for study purposes ?

220 responses



**Interpretation:** In this survey, out of 220 responses 40.9% of the respondents rated their happiness quotient as 3 on the scale of 1 to 5 whereas 30% rated as 4, 15% rated 5, 7.7% rated 2 whereas 6.4% of the respondents rated 1 as how happy they are about staying out for study purposes.

**Calculations of Chi Square:**

➤ Observed Data (O) as per Google form Survey:

Observed	Food & Health Issues	Financial Issues	Total
Yes	80	61.8	141.8
No	11	33.2	44.2
Sometimes	9	5	14
Total	100	100	200

➤ Expected Data (E) as per Google form Survey:

Expected	Food & Health Issues	Financial Issues
Yes	70.9	70.9
No	22.1	22.1
Sometimes	7	7

- Chi-Square as per formula:

$(O-E)^2/E$	Food & Health Issues	Financial Issues
Yes	1.167983075	1.167983
No	5.575113122	5.575113
Sometimes	0.571428571	0.571429

- Summation of  $(O-E)^2/E = 14.62905$   
 ➤ Value of p is calculated using the Statistical CHISQ.DIST. RT function  
 ➤ CHISQ.DIST. RT(x,deg\_freedom)  
 ➤ X Required: The value at which you want to evaluate the distribution.  
 ➤ Deg of freedom Required:  $(r-1*c-1)$  where r is the number of rows and c is the number of columns.

Summation of Chi-Square	14.62905
Degree of Freedom $(r-1*c-1)$	2
Value of p	0.000665798

Chi-square test was conducted to assess the significance level at 0.05%. Pearson Chi Square Significance value is 0.000665798 ( $p < .05$ ) therefore we will reject Null Hypothesis. So, we can conclude that Students Living out for study face a lot of food and financial relate problems.

## LIMITATIONS

### 1) Accuracy of Data:

As per our survey, maximum respondents were the people who never leave their homes for study purposes so we cannot know the actual situations faced by them as our data gets limited. Also, in an online survey respondent are not under observation and it is human tendency to behave carelessly when there is no observation. So respondents may have responded carelessly. Hence, such kind of situation affect the accuracy of research.

### 2) Time Constraint:

For efficient & quality research more time is required for the survey. But the survey was conducted within 10 days. Hence, there is a chance that survey couldn't get more data for research. Therefore, short period given for survey affect the research adversely.

**3) Short sample size:**

In quantitative research sample on which survey is conducted should be bigger & wide. But conduction of survey has done online within one week period. Hence, sample size is not much bigger. So, it may be a weak point of research study.

**4) Unwillingness to respond:**

This survey is conducted through Google Forms on an online platform. People are not very comfortable in responding to online surveys. They generally tend to ignore such surveys. Hence, obtaining more number of responses becomes very difficult.

**5) Environmental Conditions:**

In this covid-19 pandemic & lockdowns, face to face interaction for survey is become difficult. Survey is more informative in case of direct conversation instead of online. Direct interaction with respondent avoids any kind of error in survey. But our survey is completed by online mode and therefore there is a possibility of error in survey.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- According to the student survey, while living out for study, students must have a healthy diet and regular diet as food must be the priority and then the rest of the things become a lot easy.
- Most of the student face financial issue, to deal with this, students can opt for Part time job facility, also there should be a facility like “earn and learn” where they can receive stipends.
- Also, students should make use of various mobile applications for keeping track of their expenses such as Splitwise and Expense tracker so that they don’t overspend.
- For keeping track of mental health of students, frequent counselling sessions of students should be arranged, identifying their problems & providing various facilities like transportation, accommodation, mess & health care which will have a positive impact on their mental health.
- Students should make sure about the safety of the location before deciding to relocate and should prepare a Checklist of all the required things.
- Students should Practise good habits such as exercising daily, do yoga and meditation for good health and immunity.
- Good telecommunication network facility is very important so students should make sure they get network range to their mobile phones and internet connection is good. Wi-Fi facilities should also be available as now a day’s education needs these facilities.
- For every student, especially female students, safety concerns should not be there. They should feel safe where they are living such as the buildings should have security guards.
- Hygiene and cleanliness should be maintained so that students don’t fall sick and can concentrate on studies efficiently.
- In the current scenario of Covid people should be more empathetic towards students staying away from their hometown and provide them with all kinds of mental, emotional support that is required.

## CONCLUSION

The study concludes that besides core issues like food, accommodation, adjustment, homesickness, cultural differences, language barriers, expenses, health issues coping up with the academics, study find it difficult to adjust to place, people, environment and culture of the new city. Due to the restricted pocket money they tend to skip meals, go for fast food which is low on nutritive value. The study concludes that though the above factors play on their health and mental conditions, Students still learn to adapt to their new surroundings in spite of all the the hurdles to live life independently and educate themselves in a better environment with strong education system and good learning culture. The study also brings out another parameter of the happiness quotient of being out of their comfort zone to study.

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