CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Human beings are social creatures. They aspire for status and position in society through education and knowledge acquired in reputed institutions across the world. Native lands have been left far behind just to pursue studies in places where educational institutions imparted advanced knowledge in various areas of study.\(^1\) Of course, education itself kept expanding all the while, becoming more scientific each day. The explored territory for ever got included in the vast ambit of human knowledge, perpetuating a continuous stream of visits to such centres of learning, for every country wanted its people knowledgeable and educated. Jansen, (1970),\(^2\) says that economic growth and technological development stimulates migration, for they attract the better educated, and thus a particular course of study and its instruction at some centre, may enthuse a migration to that centre.

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Of course this practice of travelling abroad to acquire knowledge is very old: indeed that was the most proper way to study foreign civilizations and cultures, and to explain and propagate one's own. In fact people often undertook such travel at personal expense, even in days of yore, and therefore this to-and-fro movement of scholars to places of higher learning is no new phenomenon. The twentieth century has of course accelerated these visits all the more, and the movement of people from country to country, in quest of scientific knowledge has increased tremendously, helping also to achieve considerable proximity with each other. But then, this closeness has not always been preceded by understanding or real human communication, when what a new and fast emerging civilization demands today is a closing of the gap, and greater understanding amongst all the inhabitants of this world.

In an age of science and technology, it is but natural that every country should aspire to attain the latest in technology, if it at all desires to promote and develop


itself. Therefore, the developing countries send their scientists and students to developed countries, so that they too may equip themselves with knowledge the advances in technology and science, and later help their own country come abreast in different areas of study, providing it with experts for its own centres and institutions. Hussain Najmul, (1982)\(^1\), in *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* has reported that Myers', Glasser and Rao have studied foreign student migrations, and provide quite an insight particularly into the variables related to a foreign student's length of stay after graduation.

Thus, often the country itself has its own institutes, including those of engineering, medicine, agriculture, social sciences, and still students go abroad to study at their own expense, without financial support from either their own country, or, the institutions of their study, choosing foreign centres of learning in comparison to their own. Of course, some times, cultural and educational exchange is the cause, but internal disturbances of a social or political

kind could also be contributory factors. However, a relatively large number of overseas students, from countries like Malaysia, Hong Kong and several of the Middle Eastern countries, travel abroad, either because higher education is locally not available, or its quality is poor.¹

But then, countries capable of providing all kinds of education to its citizens, do not generally give as much facility to foreign students that come to it to receive education. However, to the extent that a nation provides sufficient higher educational opportunities at home, young people have less reason to go overseas, as do students of Philippines or contemporary Japan, being for obvious reasons, less inclined to travel overseas.²

To this, there is a counter opinion asserted by William Cummings and Wing Cheungso (1985)³ in their articles, who says that remarkably little work has been done to study


2. Ibid., pp.133-38.

the factors that influence individual and official decisions by a country, or, University, to select students for overseas study. Many investigations constitute what is called dependence literature, for it considers traditional (Alibach, 1982) and/or neo-colonial ties (Arnone, 1980) as the major factor in such decisions. Then there is the brain-drain literature (Oh, 1977; Glaser, 1978) which considers the prospect of post-study job opportunity significantly offering individual decision-making. A recent U.K. study (Williams, 1981) highlights the question of the relative cost of education. Now, while earlier studies have only focused attention on particular issues, the present effort considers the importance of each issue in a comparative perspective, an area which as yet has not received significant notice.

Cultural and educational exchanges between developing countries leave a lasting impression on society. "At what age and in what circumstances is culture most effective? It is not easy to assess in the short run the effects of cultural exchange at any level or age. Still less is it easy to assess these effects in the young people from all over the world."¹ This exchange helps the people of one country to

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know the religion, culture, civilization, history, language and the social structure of another country, an acquaintance that develops understanding, cooperation, support and social justice between them. Fumie Kumagal, (1977)\(^1\) in Indo-Asian Culture, asserted that "A cross-cultural learning process is taken to consist of both technical learning and cultural learning (Breitenbach, 1970:83) for sojourners will bring back to the home country new know-how, skills, and techniques which they have acquired and they will also likely bring some new attitudes and values which they have absorbed as a result of the experience. It is assumed that a period of study abroad brings some change to most sojourners.

William Cummings and Wing-Cheungso, (1985)\(^2\) have stated that, "in 1950, there were approximately, 50,000 tertiary level students studying in countries other than their own (Brickman, 1975). The majority of these students were Europeans or North Americans studying in Europe or North America. Few Asian students studied in countries other than their own". Now, after the Second World War, the number of

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students studying outside their countries began to increase and at present has touched a peak, and this, more so after 1950. Of course research did observe this rising trend and did also try to find out its causes, yet till date no detailed effort has been made to do so, even after the following observations:

"Over the quarter century from 1960 to 1978 the number of tertiary-level students studying in foreign countries increased from 107,589 to 842,705—nearly eight times. Between 1968 and 1978, the most recent 10 year period for which data is available, the increase was nearly 250 per cent. If a straight line projection is fitted to past numbers, overseas students will number nearly 2.5 million by the year 2000.

Quantitatively, overseas study became important only after World War II. During the early postwar years, the number of overseas students remained constant, and was only a modest proportion of the total number of students in the world's rapidly expanding higher educational institutions. However, in recent years, while the rate of increase of overseas students has been high, the rate of increase of students at world's higher educational institutions has begun to level off. Thus, since the early 1970s, the number of overseas students as a percentage of all students in the
world, has increased somewhat: from 2.0 per cent in 1968 to 2.3 per cent in 1978. Now, though many observers have commented on the rapid postwar rise in the number of overseas students, few have tried to explain it. In fact, no serious attempt has been made to explain the considerable difference in the numbers of students from other countries in a given country, and the number from a given country in other countries.¹ Very few studies have examined the consequences of large international student-flows from the perspective of the home country, the host country, or even the host institution - that is, from a perspective other than that of the students.

Even in the United States, the rapid rise in the number of foreigners studying in the country has not received careful academic attention. According to Cookson, (1981)² it has risen "three fold over the past 15 years, rising by 100,000 in the past three years alone", and yet "the United States has no national policy for foreign students and no government agency has general responsibility for their welfare".

India, though still among the developing countries, also has a fare share of foreigners in its various

educational institutions, and the number has steadily grown since the times of Nehru. In fact, as far as back 1200 A.D., India had begun propagating its culture and philosophy of life, though recently of course, it was only after its Independence in 1947, that it could resurrect its cultural exchanges in a well managed way, through properly orchestrated programmes. The Government of India entered into exchange and reciprocal agreements with other Governments, from whom it received offers of scholarships. It too offered scholarships to nationals of countries for whom facilities for study in India were advantageous, even though it had not been approached by those countries with a like offer, just because these Asian and African countries had less developed facilities of science and technology, and showed special interest in fisheries, forestry and tropical medicine, areas in which India enjoyed a substantial tradition of excellence. This cultural exchange India practised in two ways: it first sent its own students to developed countries to import modern and latest technology to


India, and then invited the developing countries to despatch their students to India to profit by the scientific and technological education available here, and import it to their own countries. These developing countries welcomed this invitation wholeheartedly for actually the truth was that they did need such educational, cultural and moral support. Thus, India has played a significant role in the spread and export of technology and science to the developing countries of Asia and Africa, offering their students, scholarships and various other necessary facilities. "More than ever before India attracts foreign scholars eager to understand and study the innumerable facets of its life and civilisation. Economically India may be a backward country, but its religions, ethnology, literatures, history, wildlife, art and the like fascinate foreign scholars".1

A.K. Singh (1963)2 refers in his book that according to Metrau (1952-56), "though the history of educational travel has a long past, it has assumed global characteristics only during the past half century or so. During this period


thousands of students, particularly from industrially and educationally backward countries of Asia and Africa have sought study in the more advanced western countries. Thus, during 1958-59, the United Kingdom had 47,500 foreign students, out of which 38,000 were Indians”. A fact which shows that quite a few non-westerners (or Asians) prefer to study in Western countries, possibly because of the prestige attached to degrees from their universities, and also because they have a lot to offer in various fields of research and higher education. Now, technology and science currently undergo a phenomenal advance, which is more startling in the West, and has enthused the less-developed countries of the third world to liberalise their educational policies. These countries therefore, are now seeking help from developing countries like India to achieve progress. Of course, they do no doubt, also take assistance from western countries. In fact, they seek cooperation from both the developed and underdeveloped countries, because their avowed aim is to somehow raise their people far above the poverty line, by bettering their economic condition, and achieving self-sufficiency. Quite plainly, those at the helm of affairs in these countries have realised that if any socio-economic and cultural advancement is at all to be achieved, the youth in their country, both male and female, must be adequately
educated, and technically trained, and also, should have received exposure to outer environments.

Now, earlier, it was observed that students from the developing countries like India too still look westward for higher education, if they can afford it financially. However, the number of such aspirants is very small. In comparison, the number of students from third world countries, who visit other third world nations form higher technical or non-technical education, is far more high. India is, as has been already noted, one such country where these academic visitants are quite considerable and the number is rising day after day. They are quite a few cultural exchange programmes and scholarships to provide fillip to these academic migrants. Of course, H.C. Ganguly, (1975)\(^1\), complains of the absence, in India, of a reliable and complete data that kept count of these exchanges. In fact, there is no central control over it all, and no monitoring whatever is even done of these exits and entrances, what to say of the crying necessities of a data bank about it. Only very recently has the Government of

India sought to maintain some semblance of this very necessary data, and has asked academic institutions in India to file the relevant returns. But then, the filing of such returns being still optional, the available data as yet remains quite incomplete. Ganguly was directed by the various authorities he had approached for these statistics, to the police authorities standing responsible at various points of entry and exist in the country, for only they, so he was told, could supply the complete data.

Now, no empirical data being available, the exact number of the foreign students enrolled in Indian institutions, after Independence, can hardly be gauged. However, from the information received from different educational institutions in India, it can safely be asserted that this enrolment has risen tremendously.

Table 1 gives the total enrolment of foreign students in Indian colleges, universities and specialised research institutions, as noted by Kishore Gandhi, (1985).¹

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Table 1: Total Enrolment of Foreign Students (1958-59 - 1981-82)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958-59</td>
<td>03,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>04,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>08,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>09,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>17,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>12,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>12,280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of course, this table quite clearly establishes the observation, made earlier, about the considerable increase in foreign enrolment in Indian colleges and universities, since the inception of the international educational exchange programmes.

Again, on the basis of unpublished data obtained from the Ministry of Education, for the years 1958-1971, H.C. Ganguly (1975), draws up the following table to give the

total number of foreign students in the universities, technical institutions and various other colleges in India:

Table 2: Yearwise break-up of the Total Number of Students in Indian Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1959-60</td>
<td>3,363</td>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>5,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>3,588</td>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>3,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-62</td>
<td>3,955</td>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>8,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>4,105</td>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>8,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>4,667</td>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>7,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-65</td>
<td>4,750</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table it is clear that between the years 1958-59, and 1970-71, a period of 13 years, the number of foreign students in India has been more than double, from 3510 to 7217.

Now these tables also show that till eleven years after Independence, just three thousand and a half overseas students pursued studied in India, a number, which by 1960, officially became nearly 5,000. Also, according to official figures, in 1973-74, there were 7,793 students from 67
figures, in 1973-74, there were 7,793 students from 67 overseas countries in Indian universities. And, during the last five to six years, the influx has been tremendous. The present estimate is put at almost 25,000, which makes India one of the five major countries – after U.S., U.K., U.S.S.R. and Canada – that provide higher education to foreign students.¹ The figures mentioned above are different from the number Mr. Joal L. Kulshekar states in his article. Ganguly’s table, being table 2 above, also differs from the official figure of 5000, for the same year, because Ganguly puts it at 3588.

This conflict in the information available about the number of foreign students makes the necessity of a centralised data on foreign students in India all the more necessary. Thus, to give one more example, for the year 1976-77, the number of Iranian students in the country was officially put at 800, whereas reliable sources put the number of students enrolled in various institutions in India at 2500. It was only after 1980 that the UGC started to compile the data of foreign students in the country, so that UGC sources can now say that during 1981-82 there were 12,280

¹ Kulshekar, Joe, L., "Foreign Students Need for Proper Guidance and Help", The Hindu, 10 (October 1981): 17.
foreign students enrolled in different educational institutions in India.\textsuperscript{1} This number has reached 25,000 according to the Ministry of Education sources, which also estimates that each year the number now increases by approximately 3000.\textsuperscript{2} This increase in the enrolment indicates two things:

1. That the underdeveloped countries realise the fact that education in India is cheap as compared to the West, and also that there is no racial discrimination; and

2. Education in India, whether technical or non-technical, sufficiently fulfilled their requirements.

Now, the number and composition of foreign students in India is fairly complex, for they come from many countries, and include academic aspirants from Nepal, Malaysia, Thailand as well as those Jordan, Iran and Iraq, as also students from Kenya, Uganda, and Mauritius. This would mean that both Asia and Africa seem quite represented. But then the U.K.,

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U.S.A., and West Germany also have students pursuing studies in this country. Of course, all have their characteristic backgrounds, be they socio-economic, psychological, cultural, linguistic, or political. Quite obviously, the problems that they encounter in India are multiple and do very often leave quite an impression not only on those foreign visitants themselves, but also on their social adjustment and academic performance.

However, there is the other side to it too, for though physically and spiritually away from their home environment, they do absorb new experiences and new insights, so that not all is as problematic, difficult and traumatic, as may sometimes be made out to be. Thus, the experiences and attitudes of students from the developed countries would plainly be different from the experiences and attitudes of the students from the underdeveloped parts of the world. What is more, despite the dissimilarities, often the human perspectives may not be far too different, and yet again, notwithstanding the similar human perspectives, socio-cultural and politico-economic, may as often be more divergent and dissimilar. Care, and understanding, therefore should be the two watch-words in any effort that tries to put their true situation in its correct academic perspective.
Added to this is the fact that India has about 180 universities and around 12 institutions deemed as universities apart from more than 4,722 colleges and a large number of professional and technical institutes, which have their own characteristic environment, aspirations, achievements and expectations as well as liabilities.

FOCUS OF THE STUDY

This is a study of the factors which play a decisive role in social adjustment and academic performance. It is believed that if outside students have problems of social adjustment to the new environment to which they are exposed, it also has negative impact on their academic performance. Consequently this study aims to investigate -

1. The effect of changed climatic conditions on foreign students in India, and the way they react to this change,

2. The Indian response to them and their social adjustments,

3. The interaction between Indian class-mates and their foreign counterparts,

4. The foreign students' feeling of discrimination against teachers in India, friends and the local society,

5. The language problem in a foreign student's study,

6. The question of proper library facilities for foreign
students,

7. The Indian academic system if itself a problem for a foreign student,

8. The problem of accommodation in a hostel or outside,

9. The food served to foreign students,

10. Living conditions in India and foreign students,

11. The financial help provided, if thought enough by the foreign beneficiaries, and

12. Whether, foreigners, while students in India, enjoy full freedom?

But then what does the present thesis understand by the term "foreign student"? The expression needs a little elucidation. Thus a foreign student is one who enters into a society, other than his or her own, and belongs to an entirely different culture, or, may be even a different civilization, and therefore, venerates different customs, traditions, and even thought processes, would be considered a "foreign student". Authors and researchers both in Europe and elsewhere, also use the expression "international student" and "overseas student" to mean what the present study says it understands by "foreign student". Thus Claire Selltiz in America, E.G. Barber in England, and J.L. Kulshekar, A.S. Abraham and Madan Mohan in India, in their
respective writings, have used these many expressions with the same meaning. Even Japanese studies have had the same ideas in mind when they use these expressions. The present study also uses all three expressions, i.e., 'foreign student', 'international student' and 'overseas student' and understands them to carry the same meaning.

In this context Amrik Singh, (1986), has made some very pertinent remarks in an article published in University News, entitled "The Overseas Student". Singh prefers not to venture into the controversy, for as he says that English not being his mother tongue, the entire exercise would be presumptuous. What Singh points out is the difference of emphasis in the usage of the two expressions, "foreign students", and "overseas students". For, according to Singh, Britain being an island, legitimately calls the student of another country an "overseas student". However, India is a large country and the connotation therefore changes because anyone in India, who comes from outside is a foreigner. Therefore, Amrik Singh prefers to use the expression "foreign student".

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Theoretical Framework

Foreign students and their adjustment in the host country is the subject of this study, stimulated as earlier enquiries into the question have been, by current developments in behavioural sciences. Various aspects of the subject of foreign students have been studied and many social scientists, the world over, have tried to investigate and even pinpoint the various social factors that play significant roles, and in different ways affect this subject of study. Cross-cultural comparisons on a regional basis have also been attempted, and often enough, only theoretical perspectives have been guiding influences. However, the question of social adjustment, when the host country is India, has as yet to receive adequate focus and attention. Only a few committee reports, and fewer cross-cultural investigations exist, and these too discuss the social dimension of the problem rather scantily.

The present effort seeks to study the academic-level problems of the foreign students, also the question of their social adjustment, with special emphasis upon the factors that operate significantly when the host country is India. A proper understanding of these factors will, it is hoped, help provide the necessary directions in which assistance is to be given to the foreign students to make their adjustment to the new environment in India, smooth and easy.
Thus, the present study seeks to find out empirically, what the problems of social adjustment of a foreign student are, and also list and enumerate the factors that influence his or her academic performance, the last being the more significant part of the current exercise.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

As has already been noted earlier, the most important part of this study is the question of the "academic performance" of foreign students in India, for most students are primarily concerned with their academic adjustment, and therefore other problems become only secondary, however valuable the latter might be, as an experience, that would help them in later life. This experience is often difficult and harsh, for what is frequently suffered in India, is emotional and social deprivation, though academic achievement is always thought to have been adequate compensation for the discomfiture gone through. Naturally, the anxiety is always about an academic success, and what forever frightens the foreign student is always the thought of academic failure. In this regard a study by Afzal Kureshi and others (1980)^1,

with particular reference to Aligarh is very relevant. The study finds the fear of academic failure a more frequent and instant theme among non-Indians, than among their Indian counterparts. For, the non-Indian student, placed a higher premium on extraordinary academic achievement. In fact, the non-Indians were found to express strong negative emotional effect in the event of a perceived failure, real or imaginary. Now, with the Indian students, academic failure was not found to be a serious consideration, probably because the cost of failure in their case was not thought as heavy.

But then, this has not bettered in any way the academic performance of most foreign students, for, that has never been high. Of course, foreign students attribute their uninspiring performance to certain difficulties they have experienced, as foreigners in India. Now these factors could be categorised as both the academic and non-academic, and shall be appropriately discussed in detail in the coming chapters.

Now, according to Kishore Gandhi, (1985)\(^1\), "academic adjustment" of foreign students would mean their capability

to respond to a body of knowledge and assimilate it in a coherent manner. It is then their capacity to assimilate, and their receptivity to the new styles of teaching and learning, which ultimately determines and shapes their adjustment to the new academic milieu.

Quite plainly then, the academic performance of foreign students will profoundly be affected by many factors. Therefore, as has already been said, an understanding of their problems and their possible solutions, can be of great help to officials concerned with making the student mission in the host country not only successful, but truly satisfactory in every way. The present thesis aims to study these problems, and offer on the basis of the study, some practical suggestions that could be their fair solutions.

THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

The term 'adjustment' has several meanings. In a dynamic sense, the term refers to the process of making functional change in a relationship, for, changing situations may call for a corresponding all-round change.

Then, it also refers to the more or less table and results of such change. In fact, when some unit or system, i.e., mechanical, biological or social, is not functioning successfully in terms of an accepted criterion, the term
'maladjustment' is very meaningfully applied. Again, the term 'adjustment' may also refer to the state of accommodation, which is achieved in different areas, where conflict may exist in society. In the expression 'social adjustment', when used in the context of foreign students, the emphasis is on their social relations, or say, the university or college campus, or, in the society of the host country, when these students seek private accommodation. James Draver (1977)\(^1\), defines 'social adjustment' as a condition of fitting into a community, social milieu, and satisfying its conditions and requirements. Broadly speaking, 'social adjustment' is a state of relationship with a society, where there is an over-all feeling of happiness and satisfaction with their social life and environment. Selltiz (1963)\(^2\), considers 'adjustment' an amorphous term, where meaning varies with the views of the person using it. Thus, according to him, though different investigators have used the term in somewhat different ways, most definitions


include several aspects, e.g., difficulties during the stay, or, dissatisfaction with the various ramifications of their foreign experience, or, at the more general level of it being an emotional experience, like feeling lonely, or homesick, or being in high or low spirits.

Kishore Gandhi (1985)\textsuperscript{1}, also considers 'adjustment' an amorphous term. Operationally, the pattern of adjustment involves the behavioural process by which human beings and other animals maintain an equilibrium with their environment. It is a dynamic process by which the individual seeks to achieve and maintain correspondence with his environment. An individual brings a set of abilities, and also a set of hierarchically arranged internal needs to the situation. The situation, or the environment, requires, in turn, a certain ability-pattern in the individual, for satisfactory functioning, and offers in return, a set of reinforcing patterns for his needs.

Adjustment is an outcome of the correspondence between the individual and his environment, and involves the individual's fulfilling the requirements of the environment.

\textsuperscript{1} Gandhi, K., op.cit., (1985): 75.
in which he is placed, and the environment fulfilling the needs of individual. The first part of this correspondence determines the degree of satisfaction, the individual himself derives, from this interaction.

These definitions apart, what is required is a serious understanding of the true nature of the concept of social adjustment, for, it is ultimately social adjustment which helps, or, mars the academic performance of foreign students in their host country. Students come to India from several parts of the world to pursue higher education. They come from different cultures and have different social and political backgrounds. Often they have different thought processes also. The present thesis endeavours to study and analyse the academic performance of foreign students in relation to the social adjustment in India.