



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI
SHORT ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Programme of Study : Ph.D.
Thesis Title : Within Nation Acculturation of Northeast Indian Diaspora: Role of Social Identity, Body Image and Cultural Intelligence
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Thesis Submitted to the Department/ Center : Humanities & Social Sciences
Date of completion of Thesis Viva-Voce Exam : 30th November
Key words for description of Thesis Work : Northeast India, cultural intelligence, acculturation, race

SHORT ABSTRACT

Background: Northeast India is known for its socio-cultural distinctiveness from the rest of the country. Economic marginalization of the region initiated widespread migration of this region's population to other parts of the country in pursuit of educational and job opportunities. In spite of the reported discrimination in other parts of India, the challenges of the northeast Indian diaspora did not receive adequate empirical focus.

Objective: Mixed research approach was used to delineate the within nation acculturation of the physiognomic minority group belonging to the northeastern part of India. The quantitative study (Study 1) proposed a theoretical model aimed to identify predictors of adaptation and evaluate the role of cultural intelligence (CQ) in the acculturation process. The qualitative study (Study 2) aimed to explore the experiences, challenges and life adjustment of the sample.

Method: Study 1 comprised of a cross sectional survey study ($N = 246$, 58.5% female, mean age = 26.7 years) concerning first generation north-east Indian diaspora in Indian cities

outside the north-eastern region. Study 2 included interpretative phenomenological analysis of semi-structured interviews of first generation migrants from northeast India ($N = 10$, 7 females, mean age = 24.4 years) settled in Delhi.

Results: Path analysis in Study 1 indicated that assimilation acculturation strategy, body image, national identity and CQ enhanced psychological adaptation, while, marginalization acculturation strategy reduced it. Sociocultural adaptation was predicted by integration acculturation strategy and CQ, while, marginalization and separation acculturation strategies reduced it. Indicating its adaptive moderating role, CQ amplified the effects of positive predictors on adaptation and diminished the effects of negative predictors on adaptation. Study 2 generated two major thematic maps related to (a) acculturation experiences (sub-themes: acculturation challenges, rediscovery of the self); (b) adaptation to acculturation context (sub-themes: problem focused coping, emotion focused coping).

Conclusion: Quantitative findings reflected the flexible facilitative role of CQ in promoting adaptation of minority groups in prejudiced acculturation context. Qualitative study findings extended support to some of the quantitative results and identified other influential variables in the acculturation process and adaptation of the sample. Practical implications are discussed in promoting harmonious intergroup relations.