

Identified needs of international students in a Philippine university: Bases for the development of a multicultural guidance manual

Merle C. Torres^{1*}

Structured abstract

Background: The University of Perpetual Help System DALTA (UPHSD), Las Piñas campus needs to identify and address the needs of their many enrolled international students.

Purpose: Provide quality guidance services to UPHSD international students through a comprehensive, customized guidance program.

Participants: A random sample of 398 UPHSD international undergraduate students from Asia, Africa, Australia, and North America answered a questionnaire. Of these, 20 were purposively selected and given a group interview.

Research design: Mixed methods research design

Data collection and analysis: The questionnaire was a researcher-made instrument on the identified needs of UPHSD international students. Its validity was computed through the reliability coefficient and Cronbach's alpha test. The analysis and interpretation of socio-demographic data utilized frequencies, percentages, weighted means, and ranking. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for significant differences in the needs of the various nationalities. The Tukey honestly significant difference method was used in conjunction with ANOVA (post-hoc analysis) to find which of these nationalities were significantly different from each other.

Findings: Personal needs (improvement of personality, maintaining good health, and work after graduation) ranked first. There is a significant difference between the needs of the African and the Asian groups in terms of family, academic support, coping mechanism, and social support needs. Africans and Australians with North Americans significantly differ in their academic support, coping mechanism, and social support needs. A significant difference exists between the family, academic, coping mechanism, and social support needs of the Asian and the Australian with North American groups. Asians, Africans, and Australians with North Americans significantly differ in their needs in terms of family, academic, academic support, coping mechanism, and social support needs. The group interview revealed the following themes: perceived quality education in UPHSD, equality in learning, career development, self-worth development, social support, and discrimination.

Conclusions and recommendations: The results of this study will be used in the development of a custom-made multicultural guidance manual that contains substantial programs that will address the academic needs, career needs, personal and social needs, and responsive services needs of international students. There should be a follow-up study to measure the effectiveness of the guidance curriculum.

Keywords

multicultural guidance manual, guidance services, international students' needs

¹University of Perpetual Help System DALTA, Las Piñas City, Philippines  <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-9564-6873>

*Corresponding author: merle.torres@perpetualdalta.edu.ph

Introduction

Multiculturalism in schools creates a significant change in the Philippine educational setting that greatly affects the teaching and learning environment. This brings challenges to school administrators, teachers, and students both local and foreign. There is a need for the different departments of the academe to be ready with policies and guidelines that appropriately address the needs of

foreign students. The learning environment needs to be ready to deliver quality services to multicultural students.

The admission of international students oftentimes becomes a crucial problem which remains unaddressed because of a lack of an effective school guidance program for both local and international students. This is very vital for international students because they naturally will be encountering personal problems in dealing

with a different cultural environment. This poses collective challenges to guidance counselors, teachers, and school administrators. The guidance counselors must be vigilant enough to determine how well they can help international students cope with cultural problems that they may encounter in the future.

The review of literature in multicultural education as pointed out by Banks (Chin, 2013) gives a strong basis in planning and programming the education of foreign students. Sarino (2012) proved that foreign students like to study in the Philippines to further develop their talents and potentials toward their chosen careers. Gaerlan et al. (2011) and Sicat (2011) concluded in their study that most international students preferred to study in the Philippines due to the proximity of the countries, low cost of tertiary education compared to others, and well-established communities.

Furthermore, Hwang et al. (2014) showed a low rate in the utilization of guidance services by international students in different colleges and universities in the US. However, Hayes et al. (2011) showed that counseling is the service most utilized by international students to address their psychosocial distress caused by their having less family support and a history of previous psychological problems. Similarly, Murray et al. (2016) revealed that counseling services are an effective intervention to manage the problems of international students. Meilman (2016) pointed out the pressures of the guidance staff on providing more counseling and psychiatric services and their limitations as service providers in handling the problems of international students.

The foreign studies of Ellis-Bosold and Thornton-Orr (2013), Maundeni et al. (2010), Samouei et al. (2013), Sultana and Smith (2011), Tas (2013), and Wa-Mbaleka and Joseph (2013) investigated the needs of college international students in adapting to the culture of the country they are studying in; especially addressing the language barrier that deters their adjustments and academic activities.

Gysbers (Good et al., 1994) believed that the availability of a comprehensive guidance program is important to the development of the students. The needs assessments conducted by Dela Cruz (2013) and Dela Paz and Torres (2014) showed that students believe that higher learning institutions need to improve their guidance services and update their multicultural guidance programs.

While there are studies identifying the needs of international students, there does not yet seem to be one focusing on using these as the bases for creating a multicultural guidance manual embedding programs to address their needs.

Statement of the problem

This study aims to answer these research questions:

1. What are the needs of international students in terms of personal, family, career, social, cultural, academic, academic support, safety, extra-curricular, coping mechanism, and social support needs?
2. Are there significant differences in the needs of the student-respondents when grouped according to their nationalities?
3. What programs should be integrated into the multicultural guidance manual that will address these identified needs?

Theoretical framework

This study is intended to identify the needs of the student-respondents that will be the bases for the development of a multicultural guidance manual embedding programs that will address the identified needs of international students. This study is anchored on the acculturation theory of Berry (Kuo, 2014) on types of adaptation adjustment like behavioral shift, psychopathology, and acculturative stress. The behavioral shift to acculturative stress is the necessary adaptation process by anyone to overcome the stress and discomfort in their adjustment to the new way of life. A healthy adaptation will facilitate comfort, and new learning to adapt to the proper way of life will eventually result in becoming mature and responsible students even far away from their homeland.

The W-curve transition model of Gullahorn (Howell, 2014) determines the types of adjustments: the feeling of excitement to enter the new place, accommodation and warm welcome provided to the individual which gives a feeling of satisfaction and comfort to the new environment, the development of comfort through transitional skills and confidence in adjusting to the new culture, mental isolation when a person has not yet integrated the new values and customs and may have the mind-set of going home to feel close to old friends, values, etc., and the acceptance of integration and the state of being connected to a new educational culture and environment.

All the above-mentioned theories are put together in this study to design a theoretical concept and the variables pertaining to the subject of this study. The respondents' demographic profile in terms of age, gender, nationality, and length of stay in the university serves as a basis for the respondents' background in this study. The researcher assumes that these respondent data are relevant variables that may lead to the different needs in the areas of personal, family, career, social, cultural, academic, academic support, safety, extra-curricular, coping mechanism, and social support needs. The availability of a comprehensive guidance program that addresses all the needs of the student-respondents will create an impact on the adjustment and career development of the students that lead to self-development and a balanced student life.

Table 1. Summary of reliability coefficient and Cronbach's alpha results for the questionnaire

Need areas	Items	Reliability coefficient	Interpretation on reliability	Cronbach's alpha	Interpretation on reliability
Personal needs	11	0.75	High	0.65	Acceptable
Family needs	8	0.90	Very high	0.68	Acceptable
Career needs	6	0.80	High	0.75	High
Social needs	7	0.82	High	0.66	Acceptable
Cultural needs	3	0.70	High	0.38	Low
Academic needs	9	0.63	Moderate	0.63	Acceptable
Academic support needs	5	0.66	Moderate	0.67	Acceptable
Safety needs	6	0.84	High	0.60	Acceptable
Extra-curricular needs	5	0.67	Moderate	0.66	Acceptable
Coping mechanism needs	10	0.82	High	0.73	Acceptable
Social support needs	8	0.91	Very high	0.86	Very high

Materials and methods

Study sample and setting

The respondents in this study were international undergraduate students enrolled at the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA (UPHSD), Las Piñas campus during the 2015–2016 school year.

Of the 1,341 students from Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe, and North America, 398 were randomly selected and answered a survey-questionnaire. From these 398 respondents, 20 were purposively chosen and given an in-depth interview.

Of the 398 respondents, more than half (52.3%) belonged to the 19–21 age range; a third (33.9%) belonged to the 16–18 age range; 10.6% belonged to the 22–24 age range and 3.3% were above 25 years old. Two-thirds (65.8%) of the respondents were male while a third (34.2%) were female. A majority (79.1%) of the respondents were Asians: 302 Indians, 2 Jordanians, 5 Koreans, 1 Malaysian, 1 Nepalese, 2 Saudi Arabians, and 2 Syrians. Only 18.8% of the respondents were African, coming from varied ethnicities: 8 Eritrean, 1 Liberian, 57 Nigerian, 8 Sudanese, and 1 Chadian. Six or 1.5% of the respondents were Australians from Papua New Guinea, while only 1.0% or 4 were North Americans from the United States of America. More than half of the respondents (52.3%) or 208 have been in the university for one year. More than a quarter of them (28.4%) or 113 have stayed in the university for six to eleven months. About a tenth (12.3%) of them or 49 have stayed in the university for one year, while 4.8% of them or 19 have been in the university for three years. About 2.3% or 9 of them have been in the university for two years.

The respondents were mostly Asians, followed by Africans, Australians, and North Americans. Most have studied at the university for a year and some for three years. This implied that the respondents preferred to study in the Philippines to finish their chosen careers.

Data collection

A validated and reliable self-constructed questionnaire on identified needs was floated to the respondents of this study. Retrieval of the distributed questionnaires was done within 2 to 3 days. When the accomplished questionnaires were returned, an individual and a focus group interview were conducted with 20 respondents for the validation of their answers for analysis interpretation.

Measurement instrument

The researcher used a self-constructed questionnaire on the identified needs of the international students at UPHSD. It has three parts. Part I has items about the respondent's demographic profile such as age, gender, nationality, and length of stay in the university. Part II has items that cover the identified needs of the respondent in the areas of personal, family, career, social, cultural, academic, academic support, safety, extra-curricular, coping mechanism, and social support needs. Part III has questions pertaining to the needs of the respondent in relation to guidance services provided to them.

The questionnaire underwent several phases of item analysis and validation to procure its reliability and validity. The instrument was evaluated and validated by experts in guidance and counseling as well as by the Academic Dean. The item analysis and table of specifications were used to determine if the items were consistent and reliable to be used as instrument materials. The test-retest reliability was measured by pilot testing the questionnaire with a one-week gap. About 30 respondents participated in both the test and the retest of the questionnaire. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the items. Pearson's correlation coefficient results measured *very high reliability* on family and social support needs, *high reliability* in personal, career, social, cultural, and safety needs, and *moderate reliability* on academic, academic support, and extra-curricular needs. Also, Cronbach's alpha test

of reliability was applied, and the results showed *very high reliability* on social support needs, *high reliability* on career needs, *acceptable* on personal, family, social, academic, academic support, safety, extra-curricular, and coping mechanism needs, and *low reliability* on cultural needs.

Table 1 presents the summary of the reliability coefficient and Cronbach's alpha results.

Ethics statement

Permission to conduct this study was sought by the researcher from the Office of the School Director. The approved permission was submitted to the Director of the Guidance Center, to the Director of the Office of International Affairs, and to the Deans of Colleges where the student-respondents were enrolled. The School Director had no recommendation to the researcher to submit the paper for board review by the institutional research and development. No written consent to the respondents was issued since voluntary participation was made.

Statistical analysis

The study employed the following statistical treatments in the analysis and interpretation of data: frequency and percentage distribution (to describe the socio-demographic variables of the respondents), weighted mean (to determine the average responses of the different options provided in the various parts of the survey questionnaire used), ranking (to rank the needs of the respondents), one-factor *F* test or one-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) (to test the significant difference among three or more means obtained from independent samples) and the Tukey honestly significant difference (HSD) method which was used in conjunction with the ANOVA (post-hoc analysis) to determine which groups are significantly different from each other. The latter compares all possible pairs of means and is based on a student-range distribution (*q*). An online calculator was used to determine the HSD values.

Results and discussions

Identified needs of the student-respondents

The needs were identified using a 7-point level of agreement Likert scale. Table 2 shows a summary of the needs of the student-respondents.

Their personal needs ranked first with an overall weighted mean of 4.95 interpreted as *agree*. The top personal needs were improvement of personality, maintaining good health, and work after graduation. These findings are validated by Sicat (2011), who found that Timorese, Nepalese, and Indians could hardly intermingle with other students because of their odors. Regardless of their nationality, the respondents expressed their need to maintain good health as revealed in the documentary

Table 2. Summary of the student-respondents' needs

Need areas	Weighted mean	Verbal description	Rank
Personal needs	4.95	Agree	1st
Academic needs	4.90	Agree	2nd
Academic support needs	4.88	Agree	3rd
Safety needs	4.86	Agree	4th
Family needs	4.85	Agree	5th
Extra-curricular needs	4.82	Agree	6th
Career needs	4.75	Agree	7th
Social needs	4.73	Agree	8th
Coping mechanism needs	4.71	Agree	9th
Social support needs	4.68	Agree	10th
Cultural needs	4.66	Agree	11th

analysis from the University Clinic. This implies immediate attention to address this need to improve themselves and develop further.

The second in rank is academic needs (*WM* = 4.90, *agree*): rules and regulations in the college and the entire university, overcoming fear in taking tests, and engaging in group work with classmates.

This was followed by academic support needs (*WM* = 4.88, *agree*), some of which were: the ability to give feedback to teachers about the difficulty in understanding the lessons, the effectiveness of teachers in delivering the lessons, and assistance from professors. This implies that these international students are aware of their academic standing, especially their difficulties with academic tasks and responsibilities. They felt that they had the need to enhance their student skills and competencies to perform well in their academics. This result is validated by Ellis-Bosold and Thornton-Orr (2013), Maundeni et al. (2010), Samouei et al. (2013), Sultana and Smith (2011), Tas (2013), and Wa-Mbaleka and Joseph (2013), who found that college international students have difficulty in adapting to the culture of the country they are studying in; especially in addressing the language barrier and in adjusting to performing their academic activities.

Safety needs ranked fourth. The top safety needs were safety in the dorm/boarding house, safety with the neighbor, and knowing how to contact emergency services for help. Family needs ranked fifth, extra-curricular needs ranked sixth, and career needs ranked seventh. These results are similar to those of Dela Paz and Torres (2014) who found high needs in career development for UPHSD local and international students. Social needs ranked eighth, coping mechanism needs ranked ninth, and social support needs ranked 10th. Ranked 11th is cultural needs (*WM* = 4.66, *agree*): the opportunity to showcase their own culture and traditions, participate in Filipino celebration of customs and traditions, and enjoy a variety of Filipino foods.

Table 3. *F*-values for significant differences in the needs of the various nationalities

Needs	Computed <i>F</i> -value	<i>df</i>	α	Critical <i>F</i> -value	Decision on H_0	Interpretation
Personal	2.787	2, 395	.05	3.019	Not rejected	Not significant
Family	8.125	2, 395	.05	3.019	Rejected	Significant
Career	0.436	2, 395	.05	3.019	Not rejected	Not significant
Social	1.574	2, 395	.05	3.019	Not rejected	Not significant
Cultural	1.646	2, 395	.05	3.019	Not rejected	Not significant
Academic	5.997	2, 395	.05	3.019	Rejected	Significant
Academic support	4.923	2, 395	.05	3.019	Rejected	Significant
Safety	2.797	2, 395	.05	3.019	Not rejected	Not significant
Extra-curricular	0.194	2, 395	.05	3.019	Not rejected	Not significant
Coping mechanism	5.251	2, 395	.05	3.019	Rejected	Significant
Social support	3.314	2, 395	.05	3.019	Rejected	Significant

Differences in the needs of the student-respondents when grouped according to their nationalities

The null hypothesis is that there are no significant differences in the needs of the student-respondents when grouped according to their nationalities. Table 3 presents the *F*-values for significant differences in the needs of the various nationalities.

The personal, career, social, cultural, safety, and extra-curricular needs of the student-respondents do not significantly differ when grouped according to their nationalities ('Asian,' 'African,' 'Australian and North American'). This is probably because these needs are the basic needs of human beings as pointed out in Maslow's theory. These physiological and social needs of the student-respondents have to be attended to and fulfilled for their survival and satisfaction in their lives as students.

These findings are validated by Sicut (2011) who found that Timorese, Nepalese, and Indians could hardly intermingle with other students because of their odor. Tas (2013) found that language is the most pressing barrier to the adjustment process. Moreover, he found that financial difficulties, a feeling of loss when they move into a new culture, stress of learning new skills, and other cultural impacts like stereotypes about international students' culture, low self-esteem, culture shock, and the new educational system are also barriers to the adjustment process. Likewise, Samouei et al. (2013) found that difficult situations experienced by international students in a foreign country could intensify their other problems and may have harmful effects on their potential function. They suggested that consulting centers should employ experts familiar with international students' problems and capable of communicating well with international students.

The family, academic, academic support, coping mechanism, and social support needs of the student-respondents significantly differ when grouped according to their nationalities. This may be because of the differences in their cultural background and personal

lifestyle. The Asian and the African respondents show dependency on their families in terms of financial support, academic, academic support, coping mechanism, and social support needs. They rely heavily on their parents for these concerns. However, Australians and North Americans are independent-minded, whereby they are self-sufficient to manage their difficulties.

These findings are validated by Sultana and Smith (2011) who found that the availability of scholarships was the highest recruiter of Eastern Kentucky University's (EKU) international students. ECU was comparatively better than the students' home universities. Dissatisfaction was found with on-campus housing, transfer of credits, academic advising discrimination, and racism. The results of the findings of Maundeni et al. (2010), on the adjustment needs, were ameliorated by available opportunities such as the presence of supportive people, availability of services, and academic facilities. In addition, challenges such as language issues, lack of social support networks, financial problems, and role strain made it difficult for students to adapt. On the other hand, the results of the study conducted by Wa-Mbaleka and Joseph (2013) revealed that the participants were more comfortable making friends with people of similar faith or persons from their geographic region.

In order to determine which group means ('Asian,' 'African,' 'Australian and North American') significantly differ from each other for the family, academic, academic support, coping mechanism, and social support needs, the Tukey HSD method of post-hoc test was used. Table 4 presents the results, where a significant difference between the needs of the groups occurs when the mean difference is greater than the HSD value.

There is a significant difference between the needs of the African and the Asian groups in terms of family, academic, academic support, coping mechanism, and social support needs. This is probably due to the differences in the geographical locations of the respondents. Their cultures and values differ in terms of these needs.

Table 4. Tukey HSD method of post-hoc test used to identify where the nationalities are significantly different

Needs	Nationality	Weighted mean	Mean difference	HSD value	Interpretation
Family	African	3.8886	0.5735	0.1614	Significant between African & Asian
	Asian	4.4621	0.0448		Not significant between African & Aus/NAm
	Aus/NAm	3.8438	0.6183		Significant between Asian & Aus/NAm
Academic	African	4.2207	0.4536	0.1513	Significant between African & Asian
	Asian	4.6743	0.1096		Not significant between African & Aus/NAm
	Aus/NAm	4.1111	0.5632		Significant between Asian & Aus/NAm
Academic support	African	3.9247	0.5191	0.1806	Significant between African & Asian
	Asian	4.4438	0.6253		Significant between African & Aus/NAm
	Aus/NAm	4.5500	0.1062		Not significant between Asian & Aus/NAm
Coping mechanism	African	3.7021	0.4563	0.1654	Significant between African & Asian
	Asian	4.1584	0.1771		Significant between African & Aus/NAm
	Aus/NAm	3.5250	0.6334		Significant between Asian & Aus/NAm
Social support	African	3.7383	0.2190	0.1811	Significant between African & Asian
	Asian	3.9574	0.8564		Significant between African & Aus/NAm
	Aus/NAm	2.8819	1.0754		Significant between Asian & Aus/NAm

The way of life in terms of these needs are different between Asians and Africans. These findings are validated by Bai (2016) who found that international students from the Middle East had a significantly higher level of acculturative stress than students from other areas.

Africans and Australians with North Americans significantly differ in their academic support, coping mechanism, and social support needs. This is probably due to the differences in the personality development of the Africans, Australians, and North Americans as nurtured by their cultures. These findings are validated by Ellis-Bosold and Thornton-Orr (2013), Maundeni et al. (2010), Samouei et al. (2013), Sultana and Smith (2011), Tas (2013), and Wa-Mbaleka and Joseph (2013) who found out the needs of college international students are the following: adapting to the culture of the country they are studying, and addressing the language barrier that deters their adjustments and academic needs.

A significant difference exists between the family, academic, coping mechanism, and social support needs of the Asian and the Australian with North American groups. The Asian and the Australian with North American respondents differ in the way they manifest their needs probably because of their differences in their adjustment pertaining to their needs in family, academic, coping mechanism, and social support needs. This can be based on the acculturation theory of John Berry (Kuo, 2014). The adaptation adjustment of the respondents which are the behavioral shift, psychopathology, and acculturative stress may result in differences in the adjustment of the respondents. Similarly, the W-curve transition model of Gullahorn (Howell, 2014) stages of adjustments from honeymoon, culture shock, initial adjust-

ment, mental isolation, acceptance integration, and connectedness are the respondents' adjustment process in a new educational culture and environment. The outcome of the adjustment of the respondents may influence their needs and activities.

Themes revealed in the interviews

The qualitative data gathered from the analysis of the narrative interview of the individual and group of respondents revealed six significant themes that expressed the needs of the student-respondents.

The first theme was *perceived quality education in UPHSD*. The majority of the respondents said that in UPHSD there is quality education. A North American respondent said that "some of my memories at UPHSD involved the professors that I had, that really were passionate about their course subject and genuinely cared about the welfare of their students." (Donald, North American). "It is an International University and a Medical University. Recognized by Malaysia Medical Council. Credibility is important for me." (Nes, Malaysian).

The second theme was *equality in learning*. All respondents believed that education in UPHSD exercises equality in learning opportunities provided by their teachers. A Nigerian said that they are "always happy when my lecturer asks me to explain something. I am always happy in group work. My Dean's welcoming heart is so great and also most of the lecturers." An Indian respondent said "The thing that impressed me about this University is that it is culturally viable. The university celebrates all the festivals of different religions."

The third theme focuses on *career development* which the respondents believed would be competent

in their profession. The teacher's use of modern technology in the instruction shows that the learning opportunities provided by the teachers assure the respondents of their career development. Ayer, an Indian student, said "Loyalty is a two-way street; if I am expecting it from you, then you are getting it from me. In India, I would have had to wait another year to get admission to med school. However, Perpetual provided me with this wonderful opportunity when I needed it the most. I shall never forget that I would in turn like to reciprocate by working really hard and gaining a stellar reputation for UPHSD among major schools throughout the world by cracking my course. I am a proud Perpetualite!"

The fourth theme was *self-worth development*. The foreign students believed that their education would cause them to develop their personalities in the areas of communication skills, self-care, socialization, and learning different values of the local students. Their studies will help them improve their personality that fits into their course. A Nigerian national stated, "These are the things that impress most are (1) the activities of the student week, (2) the pilgrimages we participated in, (3) the visit to Sol Y Viento, and (4) some good instructors that were devoted to our learning abilities."

The fifth theme focuses on *social support* whereby the respondents believed that the support of their friends and teachers enabled them to survive their challenges being in a foreign land. They find encouragement to overcome the difficulties in their studies to enable them to survive in their career journey. A national from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia said "The people here are hospitable. They are super nice and accommodating. I got to meet other Filipino friends and spent time with them. They are not rude and very friendly. I once got lost with what the professor was teaching but the Filipino student helped me understand. As far as bad experiences, I haven't had yet." A Chadian student-respondent said "The staff and the faculty are kind and helpful. There are a lot of foreigners from different countries who attested to this."

The sixth theme is *discrimination* which the foreign students find that they are being discriminated against and rejected because of their smell and color. The respondents felt hurt and rejected. An Indian respondent said, "Discrimination towards Indians by covering their nose and making faces." A Papuan New Guinean stated, "I strongly disagree with the way students react to me or another foreign student by hiding their nose away when they see us passing or about to pass; it really hurts me sometimes."

Overall, both quantitative and qualitative results revealed the similarities and differences in the needs of Asians, Africans, Australians, and North Americans. The development of a multicultural guidance manual can address the needs of the respondents and yield their

holistic development.

Development of a multicultural guidance manual

The University Guidance Center of UPHSD will design a comprehensive multicultural guidance manual for multicultural students to address the identified needs of international students as categorized according to academic needs, career needs, personal and social needs, and responsive services needs. The manual contains the following guidance curriculum:

Academic Needs is a curriculum that addresses the needs pertaining to school policies and study life. *Assimilation Activities* were designed to give awareness of the school policies from admissions to their academic requirements. *Institutional Orientation* is one of the activities to help them adapt to the new learning environment. Another program was *Breaking the Language Barrier* to help international students improve their competency in the English language both in oral and in communication skills. The *Study Habit* program aims to develop the skills and strategies of international students.

A career development program can address the needs of international students through the following: (a) *Career Portfolio* is a program to develop the career path of international students; the multicultural guidance counselor may use the academic records of international students for conducting career counseling; and (b) *Cell System* is a program to assist international students in enhancing their social skills; this can be facilitated through the creation of organizations for international students to maximize their potential through engaging in social interaction.

The personal and social needs of international students can be addressed through the following programs: (a) *Enculturation* is a program designed to assist international students to become flexible and adaptive in their new learning environment, (b) *Cultural Awareness* helps international students become sensitive to the cultural diversities around the university, (c) *Cultural Soiree* is a program that aims to gather all international students to showcase their traditional identity, (d) *The Sempai Kohai System* is set to create a system of providing assistance to new international students who will enter the university, (e) *Cultural Trips* are designed to acquaint the student with the prominent places in the university and historical places in the country, and (f) *Cultural Encounter* aims to give balanced exposure between academic and non-academic activities for international students.

The responsive services needs of international students are addressed through the following: (a) *Suicide Prevention* aims to give vital information on how to prevent and manage the ideation of committing suicide in the future, and (b) *Bullying/Cyberbullying* provides significant information to international students on how to protect themselves from bullying problems.

The programs in the multicultural guidance manual will be implemented by the multicultural guidance counselor through seminars, symposiums, counseling, group dynamics, and information services. The evaluation will be done at the end of the school year to determine the effectiveness of the programs.

Conclusions and recommendations

The quantitative and qualitative data obtained in this study will be used in the development of a custom-made multicultural guidance manual that contains substantial programs will address the needs of international students. There should be a follow-up study to measure the effectiveness of the guidance curriculum.

The following recommendations to UPHSD are also made: (a) provide competent guidance counselors the number of which is proportional to the population of the international students using an ASCA ratio of 1:250 to attend to the needs of the international students with knowledge, skills, and competencies aligned to the practice of multicultural counseling; (b) develop relevant developmental programs for the retention policies for wellness and admissions requirements of health and psychological fitness to ensure the wellbeing of the international students every school year; and (c) conduct a comprehensive orientation for the students service providers like teachers, administrators, non-teaching personnel, and students services employees to establish rapport with the international students.

Acknowledgments

The author was granted a full employee school discount by UPHSD during her studies in the Graduate School.

This paper is based on a dissertation of Torres (2018) who was granted assistance by the Private Education Assistance Committee (PEAC) in 2017–2018 under its Research for School Improvement Towards Excellence (RSITE) Program.

References

- Bai, J. (2016). Perceived support as a predictor of acculturative stress among international students in the United States. *Journal of International Students*, 6(1), 93–106. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v6i1.483>
- Chin, C. (2013). Key dimensions of a multicultural art education curriculum. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 14(14), 1–28. <http://www.ijea.org/v14n14/>
- Dela Cruz, J. D. (2013). *Needs assessment of first year college students, first semester of school year 2013–2014* [Unpublished]. Imus Institute of Science and Technology, Imus City, Cavite, Philippines.
- Dela Paz, L. D., & Torres, M. C. (2014). *Needs assessment inventory of allied health students for first semester of S.Y. 2014–2015 in University of Perpetual Help System DALTA, Las Piñas City* [Unpublished]. University of Perpetual Help System DALTA, Las Piñas City, Philippines.
- Ellis-Bosold, C., & Thornton-Orr, D. (2013). A needs assessment: A study of perceived need for student health services by Chinese international students. *College Student Journal*, 47(1), 155–168.
- Gaerlan, L. A., Quibael, P. A. A., & Santiago, M. K. J. S. (2011). *Migrating problems and coping strategies of international students* [Undergraduate thesis, De La Salle University, Dasmariñas, Philippines].
- Good, G. E., Fischer, A. R., Johnston, J. A., Jr., & Heppner, P. P. (1994). Norman C. Gysbers: A proponent of comprehensive school guidance programs. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 73(2), 115–120. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1994.tb01722.x>
- Hayes, J. A., Youn, S. J., Castonguay, L. G., Locke, B. D., McAleavey, A. A., & Nordberg, S. (2011). Rates and predictors of counseling center use among college students of color. *Journal of College Counseling*, 14(2), 105–116. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1882.2011.tb00266.x>
- Howell, C. (2014). *The W-Curve by Gullahorn and Gullahorn*. <https://prezi.com/yjnxlebrqhjq/the-w-curve-by-gullahorn-and-gullahorn/>
- Hwang, B. J., Bennett, R., & Beauchemin, J. (2014). International students' utilization of counseling services. *College Student Journal*, 48(3), 347–354.
- Kuo, B. C. H. (2014). Coping, acculturation, and psychological adaptation among migrants: A theoretical and empirical review and synthesis of the literature. *Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine*, 2(1), 16–33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21642850.2013.843459>
- Maundeni, T., Malinga, T., Kgwatalala, D., & Kasule, I. (2010). Cultural adjustment of international students at an African university. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 20(1), 79–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14330237.2010.10820345>
- Meilman, P. W. (2016). Pressures we face in running counseling centers on college and university campuses. *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy*, 30(1), 7–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/87568225.2016.1105641>
- Murray, A. L., McKenzie, K., Murray, K. R., & Richelieu, M. (2016). An analysis of the effectiveness of university counselling services. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 44(1), 130–139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2015.1043621>
- Samouei, R., Zamani, A. R., Loghmani, A., Nasiri, H., & Tavakoli, M. (2013). International students of Is-

- fahan University of Medical Sciences: A survey about their needs and difficulties. *Materia Socio-Medica*, 25(2), 118–120. <https://doi.org/10.5455/msm.2013.25.118-120>
- Sarino, V. L. (2012). A critical appraisal of multicultural awareness in higher education institutions in the philippines: Towards a framework for equity pedagogy. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal*, 1(2), 951–960. <https://doi.org/10.20533/licej.2040.2589.2012.0125>
- Sicat, R. (2011). Foreign students' cultural adjustment and strategies. *International Proceedings of Economics Development and Research*, 5(2).
- Sultana, Q., & Smith, R. (2011, November 2–4). *Evaluation of international students' perceptions of Eastern Kentucky University* [Conference presentation]. 40th Annual Conference of Mid-South Educational Research Association, Oxford, MS.
- Tas, M. (2013). International students: Challenges of adjustment to university life in the U.S. *International Journal of Education*, 5(3), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ije.v5i3.3481>
- Torres, M. C. (2018). *Identified needs of international students at UPHS-DALTA: Basis for a multicultural guidance manual* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Perpetual Help System DALTA].
- Wa-Mbaleka, S., & Joseph, N. A. (2013). International students' isolation in the Philippines: Causes, effects and coping strategies. *LCCB Development Education Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 2(1), 1–32.