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“Improving Quality of Life for People with Non-Communicable Disease (NCDs)”

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All praises to Allah SWT the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful for His blessing and guidance given to us, so we, Research and Community Services of Harapan Bangsa University Purwokerto could conduct an international conference of research findings with the theme “Improving Quality of Life for People with Non-Communicable Disease (NCDs)”.

This conference was aimed to facilitate academics and practitioners, mainly in the health to disseminate the results of their research. Therefore, it is expected that the results of these studies can be useful to help improve the quality of health services, especially those related to non-communicable diseases.

This event was conducted by Harapan Bangsa University on October 8th-9th, 2019, located in Java Heritage Hotel Purwokerto. The committee was the academic community of Harapan Bangsa University. The participants of this conference were the academics and practitioners in the health sector on non-health sector from Indonesia and overseas. Meanwhile, the outcome of this event was proceeding with ISBN on an international scale.

Hopefully, this event was beneficial for the development of Non-communicable Diseases Study Field. It is expected that in the future this kind of event be held decently.

Purwokerto, March 16, 2020

Chairperson

Ns. Azka Fathiyatir Rizqillah, MN

TABLE OF CONTENT

Title Page	i
Copyright Page	ii
Acknowledgement	iv
Table of Content	v
1. IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS ACQUIRED IMMUNO DEFICIENCY SYNDROM: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW	1-4
Lutfi Handayani, Dhesi Ari Astuti, Yekti Satriandari	
2. HANDLING OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PROBLEMS IN TEENAGER ABOUT IN EQUALITY AND GENDER JUSTICE : SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW	5-10
Siswi Utami, Anjarwati, Herlin Fitriani Kurniawati	
3. IDENTIFICATION OF PREGNANT WOMEN WITH GESTASIONAL HYPERTENSION: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW	11-19
Budi Susilawati, Indriani, Sulistyaningsih	
4. HEALTH PROMOTION EARLY DETECTION OF CERVICAL CANCER: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW	20-23
Dwi Andarwati, Indriani, Sulistyaningsih	
5. LITERATURE REVIEW: THE SCREENING OF GESTATIONAL DIABETES MELLITUS IN ADVANCED COUNTRY	24-27
Alvin Yos Djihanga, Dwi Ernawati	
6. MOTHERS' EXPERIENCE IN BARRIERS OF EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW	28-35
Nidya Comdeca Nurvitriana, Indriani, Sulistyaningsih	
7. THE EFFECT OF LEARNING MOTIVATION TOWARD STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT OF FIRST GRADE STUDENTS MIDWIFERY	36-39
Yunri Merida	

8	THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BODY MASS INDEX AND DYSMENORRHEA ON FEMALE STUDENT IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL 4 YOGYAKARTA	40-48
	Rizkiana Putri, Yuni Kusmiyati, Supiyati	
9	THE EFFECT OF HYPNOSIS COMPLIANCE ON POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION IN PUSKESMAS WORKING AREA MLONGGO	49-52
	Anik Siti Juariyah, Resty Prima Kartika	
10	THE EFFECT OF HEALTH EDUCATION BY USING LEAFLET TOWARDS THE INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS	53-56
	Dewi Maidika Ambarwati, Ripniatin Dwi Rahayu, Henik Istikhomah	
11	NUTRITION EFFECTS FOR PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME (PMS) TREATMENT : A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW	57-63
	Tia Nurhanifah, Anjarwati, Herlin Fitriani Kurniawati	
12	EFFECTIVENESS OF BREATHING RELAXATION TECHNIQUE IN THE LEVEL OF MENSTRUAL PAIN ON ADOLESCENTS	64-72
	Arista Apriani, Wijayanti, Ernawati	
13	EFFECT OF NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF ANEMIA IN PREGNANCY	73-81
	Putri Sitronela Dewi, Ismarwati, Sri Ratna Ningsih	
14	PEER INFLUENCE ON SEXSUAL INTENTION IN ADOLESCENTS: SYSTEMATIC REVIEW	82-86
	Astuti Apriani, Anjarwati	
15	THE EFFECT OF FE TABLET CONSUMPTION ON HEMOGLOBIN (HB) INCREASE IN PREGNANT WOMEN: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW	87-91
	Pratiwi Cahya Skania, Rosmita Nuzuliana, Herlin Fitriana	
16	THE FACTORS INFLUENCE IT ANEMIA (DEFICIENCY IRON) OF PREGNANT WOMEN: A REVIEW	92-101
	Hayatul Rahimah, Esitra Herfanda, Fitria Siswi Utami	
17	THE ROLE OF PARTNER IN THE PROCESS OF NORMAL LABOR: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW	102-111

18	CONTINUITY OF CARE (CoC) LEARNING MODEL IN MIDWIFERY STUDENTS: A REVIEW	112-123
	Ismiati, Dewi Rokhanawati, Nidatul Khofiyah	
19	FACTORS OF UNSUCCESSFUL EXCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT OF MOTHER WITH POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION : A REVIEW	124-130
	Eva Nurhayati, Mufdlilah , Dwi Ernawati	
20	THE DIFFERENCE OF ANXIETY IN CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION IN THE THIRD TRIMESTER BETWEEN PRIMIGRAVIDA AND MULTIGRAVIDA	131-138
	Nikmatul Bilqis, Angesti Nugraheni, Mujahidatul Musfiroh	
21	COMPUTER BASED EXAMINATION DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE OBJECTIVE STRUCTURED CLINICAL EXAMINATION (OSCE) USING MODEL-VIEW-CONTROLLER FRAMEWORK	139-144
	Anggit Wirasto	
22	THE EMERGING ROLE OF ICT IN SUPPORTING TELE-STROKE: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW	145-150
	Retno Agus Setiawan, Meliana Damayanti	
23	THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ECLECTIC METHOD AND SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO TEACH ACADEMIC WRITING	151-162
	Benny Krisbiantoro, Tri Pujiani	
24	THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ECLECTIC METHOD TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' INTELLIGENT QUOTIENT IN ACADEMIC WRITING	163-174
	Benny Krisbiantoro, Tri Pujiani	
25	THE EFFECTIVENESS OF E-LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION USING SCALSA TO TEACH ENGLISH FOR NURSING AT HARAPAN BANGSA UNIVERSITY	175-180

Tri Pujiani, Benny Krisbiantoro

-
- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 26 | THE EFFECTIVENESS OF E-LEARNING USING SCALSA IN TEACHING ENGLISH FOR NURSING TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' CREATIVITY | 181-189 |
|----|---|---------|
-

Tri Pujiani, Benny Krisbiantoro

-
- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 27 | LEGAL PROTECTION OF HEALTH WORKER IN IMPLEMENTATION OF TELEMEDICINE INDONESIA (TEMENIN) FOR ACUTE CORONARY HEART DISEASE: A LITERATURE STUDY | 190-206 |
|----|---|---------|
-

Meliana Damayanti, Retno Agus Setiawan

-
- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 28 | THE SETTLEMENT OF VILLAGE GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES IN FULFILLING COMMUNITY HEALTH BASIC SERVICES | 207-213 |
|----|--|---------|
-

Alan Bayu Aji

-
- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 29 | THE INFLUENCE OF ACCOUNTING INFORMATION SYSTEM AND COMPETENCIES TO EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT RSUD MARGONO SOEKARJO (REGIONAL PUBLIC HOSPITAL) PURWOKERTO | 214-222 |
|----|---|---------|
-

Indra Sukma Subagio, Esti Saraswati

-
- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 30 | THE ANALYSIS OF HEALTH SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ON HEALTHCARE WORKERS AT HARAPAN BANGSA UNIVERSITY | 223-227 |
|----|---|---------|
-

Kartika Dwi Chandra Sari

-
- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 31 | THE EFFECT OF UNDERSTANDING ACCOUNTING INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND MOTIVATION ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN PROF DR MARGONO SOEKARJO PURWOKERTO PUBLIC HOSPITAL | 228-237 |
|----|---|---------|
-

Esti Saraswati, Indra Sukma Subagio

-
- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 32 | ASSESSMENT OF ACID DEGREE (pH) IN THE REFILL DRINKING WATER AND ITS RAW WATER IN PURWOKERTO | 238-241 |
|----|--|---------|
-

Sri Royani, Adita Silvia Fitriana

-
- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 33 | DESCRIBE OF FATIGUE IN BREAST CANCER PATIENTS UNDERGO CHEMOTHERAPY | 242-250 |
|----|---|---------|
-

Made Suandika, Woung Ru-Tang , Mustiah Yulistiani, Ji-Sheng

Fang, Dwi Astuti

-
- 34 **ARAB MUSLIM INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN THE PHILIPPINES** 251-266

Muamar Odeh Shehadeh Aldalaeen

-
- 35 **FACTORS RELATED TO THE PREPARATION FOR AGING AMONG THE PRE-AGING GROUP IN A RURAL AREA OF THAILAND** 267-270

Donnapa Chaisombut, Buaban Yana

ARAB MUSLIM INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN THE PHILIPPINES

Muamar Odeh Shehadeh Aldalaeen
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ABSTRACT

According to Bureau of Immigration statistics, the number of international students in the Philippines is increasing rapidly foreigners studying in the country are only 7700 in 2011 that has potential increased from 26,000 in 2013 to more than 61,000 in 2014 and to 210,000 in 2016. With Korean students in the top place, Indian students stood in the 6th place in the overall student population. This qualitative phenomenological study conducted using Colaizzi method of analysis. Purposive sampling was considered with inclusion criteria that included Arab-Muslims from MENA countries who attended college not less than one semester in universities in Baguio City during the A.Y 2017–2018, articulate in English and Arabic, willing to share his or her lived experiences, and agreeable with the schedule of interview and follow-up dialogues if needed. Differences in culture, religion and the feeling of isolation were some of a few factors hindering Arab-Muslim students with their education. However, their profound faith to Islam made the students resilient to these challenges encountered during their educational journey in a foreign land, such as the Philippines, which is a non-Muslim country. It is recommended that the educational institutions formulate policies and guidelines for facilitating the Arab Muslim students and other foreign students practice acceptable beliefs and practices in a foreign country, it is also recommended that this study be a basis for future research in determining more gaps and problems of Arab Muslim and international students.

Keywords : Students, Arab, Muslim

INTRODUCTION

Among the South East Asian Countries, Philippines has become one of the internationally-recognized countries offering medical and other equally difficult courses that has been attracting foreign students to live and study in the country.

According to Bureau of Immigration statistics, the number of international students in the Philippines is increasing rapidly foreigners studying in the country are only 7700 in 2011 that has potential increased from 26,000 in 2013 to more than 61,000 in 2014 and to 210,000 in 2016. With Korean students in the top place, Indian students stood in the 6th place in the overall student population.

Anent to this global educational boom in the country, an avalanche of foreign students coming from different nationalities and cultures flood the Philippine educational institutions, especially those having ISO or international status accreditation. One of the most prominent foreign nationalities present in the country is the Arab group of learners. Given their different culture and religion, in fact, being on the opposite side of the cultural and religious spectrum here in the Philippines, they have difficulty practicing their religion in terms of availability of prayer rooms and the time of pray for one day which comes in conflict with their class schedules. Having been raised in Islam faith is a total transition and adjustment for them considering the dominant Christian beliefs being practiced in major cities of the country. Another

adjustment for them is the culture. The Philippines is known for being a permissive society. This runs counter to their strict and conservative way of life and culture which does not allow some of practice. Another equally important consideration is the language barrier. It is settled that English is the second language in the Philippines. Majority of Filipino people speak and understand English. In fact, the English language is widely used compared to the mother tongue. As such, this poses a language barrier with the Arab Muslim students given their non-English classroom instruction in the basic education level. Most of the Arab-Muslim students have to do Basic English tutorial classes in order to cope with their classes here in the Philippines which primarily use English as the medium of instruction. Students from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) nations continue to enroll in record numbers, yet there is minimal literature focused on the experiences of this sub-group of international students in the Philippines

Phenomenology aims to describe and understand the common meaning of shared experiences for a small group of individuals (Moustakas, 1994). This study sought to capture the essence of how Arab Muslim international students describe and attach meaning to their lived experience with the shared phenomenon of attending the University in Baguio city to understanding cultural and religious practices of Arab Muslims students in the Philippines and aims to provide a much clearer perspective in understanding the role of Muslim sociocultural. This methodology is “important 35 to understand these common experiences in order to develop practice, or policies or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon” [1]

It will be interesting and at the same time not complicated to look into the

sociocultural aspect of the Arab-Muslim international students since all Arabs share basic beliefs and values that cross national and social class boundaries. Their social attitudes have remained constant because Arab society is more conservative and demands conformity from its members; the traditional Islamic culture predominates, with Qur’anic Law playing an active role in the day-to-day life among Arab-Muslims (Cvitanic, n.d). Religion is accorded great respect in all Arab countries. Religion mandates societal and cultural practices and plays a central role in the Arab way of life. It greatly influences political, governmental rules, laws and regulations, business customs, and day-to-day life.

Although Islam is the primary religion, each Arab country interprets and implements the Sharia, or the Islamic rule of law differently. Muslims in all Arab countries follow the same prayer times which is scheduled five times a day despite the differences in explication all around the Arab countries. In general, “Arab” is a term that refers to persons whose familial ties originate in one of the Arab nations of the Middle East, Arabian Gulf, or North Africa who use Arabic as their primary language (Abualkhair, 2013). The Arab countries are considered to include Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

International students’ challenges are also sociocultural. Arriving from a different country, international students may face many difficulties in their daily life. Coming to a new country, However, many international students face challenges as they pursue higher education outside of their home countries [2]. They face obstacles, such as different food, unfamiliar living circumstances, financial problems, balancing work, studying schedules, learning styles, or any difficulties

related to language, culture, and personal barriers. A series of transitional difficulties can be from daily life to cultural adaption [3].

These difficulties include, but are not limited to, language difficulties, difficulties adjusting to the academic culture, misunderstanding, and complications in communication with faculty and peers; stress, anxiety, feeling of isolation, social experiences, culture shock, financial hardships, lack of appropriate accommodation, isolation and loneliness, and any adaption in their daily life.

International students cannot escape the cultural shock and change they experience during their studies. Hence, these changes can be attributed to the acculturation process. These changes occur across physical, biological, cultural, social relationship, and psychological (behavior and mental health status)[4] has proposed a transactional model of stress and coping in which he surmises that psychological health and adjustment are influenced by an individual's acculturation experience, the appraisal of acculturative stressors, and the coping skills used. Similarly, the success of a stay in a new culture is often conceived, in the psychological literature, in terms of "adjustment." It can occur in two aspects, namely, psychological and sociocultural adjustment [5]. Psychological adjustments are defined as relating to the mental health and overall well-being of migrant [6], whereas sociocultural adjustment is defined as relating to the behavioral and cognitive factors that are associated with effective performance during cross-cultural transition [4].

In addition, international students often experience higher levels of discrimination and homesickness in comparison to students from the host country [7]. These experiences relate to the challenges and stresses involved during the acculturation process and in adapting to a new culture [8].

Arab-Muslim international students are faced with the challenge of successfully adapting to their new environment in the absence of their family, which is a major element of support in their lives back home [9]. Without a supportive network, the culture shock experienced by Arab international students may be more extreme and leave students feeling helpless and isolated

It is well known that international students experience enormous stress level upon arrival to a new place with different culture making them vulnerable and in need for special kind of support more than the domestic students [10].

According to [11] Philippines is considered to be one of the destinations of students from different countries to pursue their college and graduate education. Number of international students continues to surge annually. In spite of these escalations, dearth of research examining the experience of Arab-Muslim students is found. In his study looked into the lived experience of the Arab-Muslim International students who are in solitude, religious and culturally unique, in a foreign environment, and their adjustments as students. Educational institutions which cater to international students may have inadvertently missed considering the differences in religious and cultural practices that are integral among the international students that they accommodate and are unable to or inadequately provide facilities and mechanisms for the students to freely practice their religion and culture and be able to experience home away from home in their educational institutions. Internationalization is claimed to be the last frontier in humanizing the world of pure economic benefits in a globalized higher education [12], hence evolving core values into the frontline alongside excellence and quality in education that they provide. These core values respect religious and cultural diversity as essential necessity to be addressed by higher

education institutions not only among their locals but international students as well. This qualitative study sought to understand the lived-experiences and perceived needs of Muslim International students from Middle East and North Africa nations enrolled in the universities in Baguio city. This study employed a phenomenological approach to discovery aimed to develop new understandings of their lived experiences and perceived needs through an in-depth and semi-structured interview.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative phenomenological study conducted using Colaizzi method of analysis. Purposive sampling was considered with inclusion criteria that included Arab-Muslims from MENA countries who attended college not less than one semester in universities in Baguio City during the A.Y 2017–2018, articulate in English and Arabic, willing to share his or her lived experiences, and agreeable with the schedule of interview and follow-up dialogues if needed. The process of recruitment of participants in this study continued until data saturation was achieved. The interviews conducted in the universities, Mosques, and the homes of the participants. A set of guide questions was used to gather data needed in the study. Demographic information gathered from the participants was their nationality, age, sex, university in Baguio. The guide questions were a set of open-ended questions.

There were 15 Arab-Muslim students who participated. Among the 15 participants, were 6 females and 9 males with average ages of 21.5 Years old. Were 5 from Yamane, 4 Jordanian, 2 Sudanese, 2 Saudi Arabia, 1 Iraqi, 1 Syrian.

Data were collected through one-on-one interviews, focus group discussion, and observation. Tape recording of the interviews was launched after obtaining the participants 'consent as well. The Arab students were

encouraged to describe their lived experience in Baguio City using semi-structured interview guide without leading the discussion by the researcher. Probing questions were done for clarification and confirmation based on the participants' answers. Data collection procedure was continued until the data saturation was reached. Field notes and verbatim transcription were done after each interview in order to achieve the most comprehensive and accurate description of the data was reached. Field notes and verbatim transcription were done after each interview in order to achieve the most comprehensive and accurate description of the data.

The interview protocol open-ended questions such as "why you choose to study in the Philippines?" "What are the most challenges to be Arab Muslim in Philippines?" And "Who do you turn to for support?" Furthermore, the researcher used probes such as "Please tell me more," "Do you practice this tradition here in the Philippines?" or "As Arab Muslim student, what are some challenges of living in the Philippines?" to clarify and obtain a more complete understanding of the participants' responses to each interview question. Informed consent of the participants was obtained prior to the actual interview. The objectives, scope, type of questions, how the result was used, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time were explained to the participants ahead of the interview. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained all throughout the study.

Method of analysis was used to analyze the data collected [13]. To ensure credibility of this study, participants were selected from different universities within Baguio City. This helped to ensure that any hidden influences were distributed uniformly with the study's sample (Shenton 2004). Triangulation technique was utilized also to ensure the credibility of the study through the use of different methods in data collection

procedure including observation, focus groups, and individual interview (Polit and Beck2004; Shenton 2004).Participants were requested as much as possible to provide a feedback about the researcher’s interpretation after the original thematic analysis appear to

confirm it with their response and avoid any interpretive errors or inadequacies. The interviewer was from Arabic country and could speak to the participants using their mother language which was “Arabic”.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Final thematic map

#Emergent Themes	Subthemes
1 Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeling Lonely Limited practice of religion / unavailability of mosque Home sickness
2 Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No place for prayer in the school Conflict of schedule Transportation/traffic Conflict with teachers and administration English as a medium of academic instructions Adapt /socialize
3 Cultural difference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict of religious practices with the environment/ course Halal food Cultural Differences between the Arabic students and non- Arabic students
4 Arabo stereotypes and misconceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stereotypes from teachers Stereotypes from students/ community Wrong Perceptions about Islam
5 Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding encouragement from people Negative Motivation
6 The cry of Arab students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression due to limitations on the practice of religion Language barriers Culture shock

Results of this study are presented in six different themes. These include Isolation, Challenges, Cultural difference, Arabo stereotypes and misconceptions, the cry of Arab students emerged from the analysis. The final thematic map was illustrated in Table 1.

The first emergent theme was the "Isolation" with the Arabic translation "Alozlah". Captures the *lived experience in foreign country "Philippines" as Arabic-Muslim students*

Isolation as defined in Merriam Webster dictionary is "occurring alone or once" This reveals the fear, anxiety and feeling home sickness. It also showed the adversities they have to endure in pursuit of their own aspirations in life.

Feeling Lonely "Alwehdah"

This first contextual category captures the feeling of the participants to be a student in a foreign country, living alone far away from home country, feeling lonely is the first feeling mentioned from most of the participants in this study.

"One of the most problems I have experienced here aside from my fear was feeling lonely, but after a while I was able to know some of good Arab students who helped me to adjust" (P2)"

"it was difficult and hard feeling, being away from home, and I kept thinking where I'll stay and where I'll go Where I'll study... how could I communicate with people especially in a totally foreign country (P12)".

Limited Practice Of Religion / Unavailability Of Mosque

Most of the participants verbalize about the limited practice of religion in Baguio city, unavailability of mosque "Masjid" near the school or their accommodations, also unavailability the prayer room in the university.

"And even for the most basic and important prayer for us, which is the Friday afternoon prayer, most of the time we cannot do it because we are stuck to a fixed schedule, we have each semester

especially between 11-1 am, the time of Friday's prayer(P12)"

"One of most challenges here is we don't have prayer room. So, we are struggling to find some place each time to do our prayers on time. I think for some students who are used to do their prayers on time, they will get a feeling of depression being unable to do their Friday's Salah on time (specially, the prayer performed by Muslim each Friday at afternoon time)" (P2).

Home Sickness

Homesickness is among the most frequently reported concerns of international college students in the United States [14]. Leaving family, friends, and a home culture in pursuit of an academic opportunity abroad, international students frequently find themselves simultaneously grieving for missed persons and places, building new social networks, and adjusting to new cultural and environmental demands [15]–[17]. It is therefore not surprising that upwards of 30% of international college students report frequent feelings of homesickness [18].

"I miss my family and friends mainly, the family gathering and the Arabic food (P2)".

"I'm not used to be away from my family like this long. I miss them so much. Also, I'm not used for this kind of food I'm eating here. I don't trust most of the food offered here in the restaurant. Also, I don't feel secure most of the time (P8)".

Challenges "Alsubat"

This emergent theme represents the challenges faced by the Arabic Muslim students as foreigners. All of the participants verbalized their own stories of their challenges in fulfilling their aspirations to finish their higher education. Most of the participants had problems with the immigration processes. Arab-Muslim international students often encounter challenges when adapting to a new culture, leading to difficulties and stresses during their acculturation process which ultimately influences their student experience. Although international students come from diverse cultural backgrounds and have

differences in language, “being an international student” represents a common minority identity in the United States [19], [20]. Almost everyone had communication problems especially in speaking and understanding the Filipino and English languages. Another challenge they experienced was the unavailability of a nearby mosque to practice them pray, also unavailability of prayer place in the university. The following are some narratives verbalized by the participants.

“no one can live here easily, as am a Muslim I’m associated and connected strongly with my religion. Actually, I have problem finding a mosque to do my prayer, because the place where I rent is far away from the available mosques here in Baguio City (P3)”.

No Place For Prayer In The School

The presence of a place for prayer/worship is indispensable in Islam religion. Worshipping together may be the single most important thing Muslims do. It plays an important role in the spiritual life, not just among Muslims but other religions/denominations as well.

According to Don Whitney, “There’s an element of worship that cannot be experienced in private worship or by watching worship. There are some graces and blessings that God gives only in the ‘meeting together’ with other believers” (*Spiritual Disciplines*, 92). Surely, many more could be given, but here are five such “graces and blessings” that we experience uniquely in the context of corporate worship.

“One of most of our challenges here is that we don’t have prayer room. So, we are struggling to find some place each time to do our prayer on time like (laboratory, classes) I hope the university can consider providing us with privet room to do our prayers and religoion practice here in the university” (P2).

“I wonder why the university don’t have a special place to practice our prayer here even we are so many in UC(University of Coldilara) as Arab Muslim

students even not Arab there is many Muslim students” (P7).

Conflict of schedule

For Muslims, the five daily prayer times (called *salat*) are among the most important obligations of the Islamic faith. Prayer is one of Islam's Five Pillars, the guiding tenets that all observant Muslims must observe. Muslims demonstrate their faithfulness by actively honoring the Five Pillars of Islam in their everyday lives. Daily prayer is the most visible means of doing so [21]. Hence, missing prayers is considered a serious lapse of faith for devout Muslims. The conflict of schedule between the time of classes and the time for prayer everyday is a struggle among Muslim students.

“And even for the most basic and important prayer for us, which is the Friday afternoon prayer, most of the time we cannot do it because we are stuck to a fixed schedule, we have each semester especially between 11-1 am, the time of Friday’s prayer (P8)”.

Transportation/Traffic

The number of motor vehicles using the roads continues to increase, but the road network has hardly increased. Also, the roads in Baguio City are too narrow due to limited space. Hence, even if the local government will widen all the roads in the city, there is just no enough space for such project to materialize. Some government policies, or lack thereof, also contribute to the traffic problem. For example, it is only now that the government is raising taxes on cars (starting January 2018 an additional excise tax on the price of vehicles was imposed) which will slow down car sales by some degree. The increase in the price of gasoline under the Tax reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) law is also one of the remedies that the government hoped would solve the traffic problem in the Philippines.

Moreover, the number of taxi units and public jeepneys in Baguio City are not enough to meet the demands of the riding public. At the jeepney waiting area, the sight of people falling in long lines is an everyday struggle. It

is also difficult to get taxicabs to the point that you have to allocate at least thirty (30) minutes of your time just for a taxi ride.

“Generally, I find difficulty with transportation, difficult to find taxi or jeepney, it’s so traffic, also they don’t follow the rolls, in the market when they know you are a foreigner, they will make high price, they double the price, also other problems we notice that some teachers will be failed you in some subjects to let you pay more and more (P8)”

Language Barriers “English As A Medium Of Academic Instructions”

Most of the people in the world do not speak English or, even if they use, it is their second or third language. If the teacher and learner do not use same language and words, there is no meaning to the communication, which makes the communication and the learning process ineffective and prevents message from being conveyed. In the Philippines, the medium of instruction in the academe is English. Professors and students alike are expected to use the language in the classroom. Unfortunately, some foreign students enter Philippine universities with little or no previous relevant language experience in the use of the formal English language.

Moreover, some professors speak Filipino (“Tagalog”) language inside the classroom to the prejudice of the foreign students who do not understand anything at all. The choice of language or medium of instruction, at that, may become the greatest block to the realization of the learner’s full potential.

“Aside from that some staff but not all of them, speak in Tagalog in which we’ll never be able to understand the class lessons”.

“The main challenge for me was the English language and how to communicate with the people here.

Especially in my first semester, sometimes I was attending the whole class time without understanding anything. Even most of the faculty were saying they our responsibility here to guide you not to teach you (P3)”.

Conflict With Professors And Administration

It is true that independent learning is effective at some point for the student can choose his or her own pace, materials, methods, everything is up to the student, less stressed out about failing in front of other people. However, this may not be applicable to all types of learners. Independent learning may be ineffective since the learner not being an expert, cannot make the best judgment which resources are good and useful and also it entails a lot on internal motivation to keep on learning, and some just do not have that kind and level of motivation.

In the same vein, the university administration is not sensitive to the spiritual needs of the Muslim students. There are no areas for prayer in the campus and the class schedule is designed for non-Muslim students, among others.

“For example, we have one professor who told us ... when you were in the school. You were having teachers because they taught you. In the university, you have instructors because they instruct you. But I’m professor, I’m not required to teach or instruct you... just I can give you the main topic title and it is your responsibility to search and study alone. Finally, you’re required to attend and pass the course examinations. At the end of the semester, I failed this course. And decided to change the professor so I can pass this course P6”.

“Our administrators in university are not paying attention for our religion party or to respect our pray time P12”.

Adapt /Socialize

Adaptation equals survival. All people change something about the way they live in order to adapt to their environment or situation. There is always the fear of the unknown, we do not know what to expect from the new city or country and we have no idea whether the new environment will be to your liking or not. Studying in another country can be very exciting but it can also be challenging as we adapt to new ways of doing things (Andy Gardner.2017). Living in a new culture means a lot of changes in our life such as absence from family and friends, meeting new friends and developing networks, learning new social customs and behaviors, experiencing a different climate and different foods, and adjusting to speaking and writing in English full-time if English is not one’s first language.

“I become somehow independent and got used to be far from my family and my friends, Most of the time, we are moving as a group and living in same apartment. We have the same mood. Living together and tour the city with my roommate and other friends “P5.

“For me, I become more independent, and solve all my problems alone without asking help from family or friends. Most of the time involves me with the study so I’ll not think of the negative thinking and stress being far from my family”. “I’m trying to adjust here, because I feel better when I’m alone. I can manage being away from my family by keep thinking of things around me.” P7.

Cultural Difference

This emergent theme represents an expression of the Arabic Muslim international students in Philippines. Culture defined as the integrated arrangement of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations; the

characteristic features of everyday existence (as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time (Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary, n.d.). It is a set of attitudes, values, concepts, beliefs, and practices that are shared by members of the group (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

Conflict Of Religious Practices With The Environment/Course

Noted that within higher education, Muslim students ‘encountered challenges from administrators and professors in regard to observing religious practices such as dietary accommodation, space for prayers, acknowledgment of Islamic practices, academic calendar, class schedules, and holidays[22].

“For me, I personally experienced this, when I took the PE course, the teacher said if you will not do (dancing with our girl classmates and I should join them for group activity)... you have to drop the course, you will not pass the subject... and this happened we dropped that course during that semester. And this make me get late, because I have to repeat this course in the following semester. If you will refuse the teacher’s request, you’ll not be able to pass the course “P6.

Halal Food

According to the latest count by the Philippine Statistics Authority, there are about 5 million Muslims in the Philippines, with Islam being the country’s second-largest religion. However, finding halal food is a problem in areas of the country with a small Muslim community like Baguio City. It would be nice to have more halal-certified establishments, because not everyone has time to cook especially students like us.

With the passing of Republic Act 10817, enacted in 2016, the scarcity of Halal foods for Muslims residing and traveling in the Philippines is addressed. The law promotes the development of the halal export industry and has paved the way for some advancement in halal food production. In

December 2016, the Philippines officially became a full member of the International Halal Accreditation Forum, a network of countries that enforce universal halal standards. It is hoped that the government will boost the industry by increasing halal exports and encouraging more meat suppliers and restaurants to get certified.

“The food was a big challenge for me, since I’m used for different kinds of food. Most of the times I go to eat in the fast food restaurants. I needed long time to adjust of the food problems. Since we are based on small room which has no big kitchen, it is difficult for us to cook indoor. That’s why most of the time we eat outside (P7)”.

Cultural Differences Between The Arabic Students And Non- Arabic Students

People throughout the world identify themselves by their cultural background. It is known that there are diverse cultures around the world. Each culture has its own peculiar unique characteristics. With this cultural diversity, often times, discrimination happens. Discrimination affects how people perceive others and themselves that can affect how they interact with other people.

The cultural differences between Arab and non-Arab students cause integration issues on the part of the foreign Arab students studying in the Philippines. It leads to a situation where culturally diverse people will avoid each other. This can hinder the effective sharing of knowledge, experience, skills, resulting in decreased learning and growth.

Arabo Stereotypes And Misconceptions

This major category Arabo stereotypes and misconceptions. Stereotyping is the judgment which is usually biased generalizing opinion on a particular ethnic, religious, or social group (El-Farra 1996). Newspaper and media greatly influence how people perceive the Muslim- Arabs. Shaheen (1984) has formulated the four basic myths pertaining to

stereotypes of Arabs: “they are all astoundingly wealthy, they are barbarians and uncultured, they are sex maniacs with a penchant for white slavery, and they revel in acts of terrorism.” These stereotypes that existed since ages still exist despite globalization and modernization. The powerful influence of media could not be disregarded especially during this time when a lot of terrorism and disruptions all over the world are associated with the Muslims. The Arab students have experienced by themselves these stereotyping and misconceptions like any other Arab-Muslims in different parts of the world. In this particular city, the Arab students have encountered locals who previously worked in the Middle East and unfortunately had been treated badly or had unpleasant experiences courtesy of the Arabs; now the Arab students have to bear the brunt of the hostile locals even among their teachers. The following are some statements from participants depicting stereotyping:

“some previous Arabic student’s batch left a bad impression about all the Arabic students. Most of the faculty and students think that we are here because of the girls, alcohol and other bad things. Even we have 2 faculties who worked in KSA before, unfortunately, they have one way of thinking about all students who are coming from the KSA, they think that we are all the same, coming here for the same reasons” (P2).

“Furthermore, those faculty members have been treated badly in KSA according to them, and I can feel that they are trying to do the same for us. I have one faculty member, who really hates all the Arab and African students, and I heard that some students said that he is letting the Arab and African students not passing his courses. Even they reported him to the dean, but no action has been taken at all)” (P2).

Stereotypes From Teachers

The impact of stereotyping and misconceptions about Arab-Muslims extended up to the classroom and university premises, which brought to another contextual category called Stereotypes from students. According to [11] The Arab-Muslims felt like some locals were taking their chances to get even with the Arab-Muslims closest to their reach from their past nasty experiences in the Middle East. Some Arab-Muslim students suffered from spiteful teachers during their classes and left them with no choice other than dropping or failing their courses in order to avoid the humiliation. The opportunity to socialize and build wider circle of acquaintances among non-Arabs and non-Muslims had been hindered by the bullying they experience inside the classrooms. If the classrooms may not be safe sometimes for them, the world outside the university may be crueler and more unsafe. The social circle among the Arab-Muslims becomes almost exclusive among themselves.

“I know some faculty members who do not like us at all because they had bad experience with some Arabic students in the past”.

“This affected us negatively even during the classes, some of the faculty members don’t bother to talk in simple English way for us considering us careless being Arabic students ... while we are here to learn” P6

Stereotypes From Students And Community

Students being subject of a stereotype feel that their school performance and contribution are not valued for they are seen as someone who just want to take something from the system. This practice widens the segregation between international and domestic students. Research shows that the ways international students are generalized makes them feel disconnected and places them in a position of vulnerability and marginalization within the classroom and community. This social and structural

framework in the academe and community precludes the creation of a meaningful and inclusive intellectual and intercultural environment for foreign students. Institutions and the international education sector should do something to disrupt these stereotypes and move towards a more supportive and inclusive environment that recognizes international students’ challenges and appreciates their contributions [23].

Wrong Perceptions About Islam/Religious Bias

Several studies have found a higher degree of prejudice and discrimination against Muslim compared to other minorities, immigrant groups, and religious groups. Islam has been perceived to pose serious threat to the west (Everett et al. 2015).

“I know some faculty members who do not like us at all because they had bad experience with some Arabic students in the past.

This affected us negatively even during the classes, some of the faculty members don’t bother to talk in simple English way for us considering us careless being Arabic students ... while we are here to learn (P8)”

According to [11] This experience of the Arab-Muslims in the Philippines is not merely a simple story of stereotyping but is perceived to be a malignant disease that cannot be treated by self-regulation alone by these Arab-Muslim students, but it extends to become political and economic issues when realities are not separated from the stereotypes. It requires an extensive advocacy from western media on changing the way they depict the Arab-Muslims in terms of their news casting, role playing, and other types of reports and shows involving the character, religion, and culture of the Arabs and Muslims. Changing the stereotypes also requires the other individuals that fair judgment should not only be accorded to them but must also be responsible in how they perceive others fairly. This reality makes

the dream of the Arab-Muslims to dispel the stereotypes an almost impossible mission. Effects of stereotyping attached Muslim identities among Muslim students include anxiety, poor academic performance, social isolation, and feeling of disconnection from the university (Possamai et al. 2016).

Motivation

This emergent theme represents the Motivation to study and learning in a foreign country. Over the years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of students studying abroad from 0.8 million in 1975 to an estimated figure of 4.5 million in 2012 (OECD, 2015). These international students are prone to face adjustment issues that are unfamiliar to local students, primarily in the area of language proficiency and culture adaptation (Andrade, 2006) and this may impact their motivation and learning in the classroom (Robertson, Line, Jones, & Thomas, 2000; Tompson & Tompson, 1996).

Psychological factors contribute to motivation and learning for international students. Self-determinant theory postulates that supports for autonomy, competence and relatedness contribute to the overall psychological growth of an individual (Deci & Ryan, 2002). It is reasonable to assume that the same psychological supports would impact the motivation and learning of foreign students. Moreover, if international students have to face challenges and problems that are unfamiliar to the local students, these psychological supports might have a greater impact on them than on their local counterparts [24].

Finding Encouragement From People

Encouragement is one of the most common ways through which individuals express support for one another (e.g., Beets, Cardinal, & Alderman, 2010; Hwang et al., 2011; Jose & Bellamy, 2012). Alfred Adler (1956) considered encouragement a core feature of human development and of any

psychotherapeutic treatment. Adler believed that human beings are intrinsically oriented toward social interest a desire to belong and contribute to others and society. When people lose social interest, they need encouragement, especially with regard to engaging others (Main & Boughner, 2011). Racial minority individuals who are often discriminated might rely more on positive social messages from others to build their self-confidence (Sue & Constantine, 2003). People who receive encouragement tend to rise above the occasion and even become triumphant in the end. The words of encouragement coming from other people is indeed very powerful and can spell a difference in one's life especially during the stage of adjustment and uncertainty [25].

“I become independent and got used to be away from my country, my friends, my family For me, most of the time, we are moving as a group and living in one house. We have the same mood. Moving together and roaming around together(P12)”

“I had hard time in the first month in Manila and other cities. Knowing no one at all. Then I was able to meet someone in manila through the assist of my friends who advises me to go to Baguio where I can find a good place and affordable living costs (P2)”.

Negative Motivation

Some of Arabic -Muslim students came to enjoying and roam around, those people give bad impressions about all of Arabic students in the community as generally and in the university as well.

“One more problem, sadly, some students come to hear not to study but only for roaming around and enjoy their life depending on the fact that they can do whatever they like since they are away from their families and parents,, and because it is easy for them to move to another university within Phil... unfortunately, this will

affect the rest of the other Arabic students because the behavior of one student will leave a very bad impression about the whole Arabic students,,,, which is not a true impression ... I hope they can consider an objective and individual way of dealing with the students based on their performance and behaviors away from their ethnicity and nationality P6”.

The Cry Of Arab Students

The last emergent theme drawn from the lived experiences of the participants is the cry of Arab students. According to Nadine A. Joseph-Collins. (2013) students travel from all over the world to study in the Philippines, and that number is significantly increasing. This may be due to affordability, high quality education, and its early progress toward the integration of cultural diversity. They are from different races, religions, linguistic and cultural backgrounds, gender, ideology, and socio-economic status, but most, if not all, have to adapt to their new life in the new country. In the process, many of them may feel isolated. That feeling can go on for a long time without the knowledge of the schools, relatives, or friends and can negatively affect their quality of life during the time they spent studying in the Philippines.

Depression Due To Limitations On The Practice Of Religion

The challenges faced by foreign students specifically depression due to limited practice of religion can have an impact on the quality of their learning process and their well-being as a whole. The environment must not be only conducive for learning but should also be able to provide a healthy spiritual life to the foreign students living in the Philippines.

“One of most challenges here is we don’t have prayer room. So, we are struggling to find some place each time to do our prayers on time. I think for some students who are used to do their prayers on time, they will get a feeling of depression being unable to do their Friday’s Salah on time

(specially, the prayer performed by Muslim each Friday at afternoon time) (P11)”.

“It is difficult to perform our prayer (Salah) in the university because there is no specific place designed or prepared for that purpose. That’s why as Muslim students we need to look for a place like (laboratory or empty class to do our prayer) (P2)”

Language Barriers

Another primary adjustment and academic challenge among Arab international students is their limited proficiency in the English language, as well as U.S. institutions’ instructional practices that differ greatly from what Arab international students are used to in their native countries (Mahrous & Ahmed, 2010). Kuo (2011) indicated that Arab students are often not accustomed to the teaching styles in the US, as well as professors’ and educators’ basic expectations such as note-taking methods. Similarly, Mostafa (2006) found that Arab international students had difficulty adjusting to their Canadian host culture due to the fact that they had not yet improved their English-language proficiency, which led these students to restrict their communication mainly to their fellow Arabs at universities, mosques, and Arab community centers in Canada. The study further revealed that even those students who had previously taken preparatory English language courses before arriving in their host country were still very limited in their English-language proficiency.

Abu kahtala (2013) found that Arab international students encountered many difficulties regarding the English language; they also had difficulty adjusting to their host country’s education system, which differed from that of their home countries. Arab international students claimed that in the educational system that they were used to, they pursued a major that aligned with their grades. For example, if they were weak in science or math subjects, they could not pursue a major that involved a curriculum with a high concentration of that subject.

“Aside from that some staff but not all of them, speak in Tagalog in which we’ll never be able to understand the class lessons P6 “.

Culture Shock

This category represents the last contextual category formed in this emergent theme represents the feelings and perceptions of the participants as foreign individuals with little or no background of the culture, traditions, and norms of the Philippines. Macionis and Gerber (2010) defined “culture shock” as “an experience a person may have when one moves to a cultural environment which is different from one’s own; it is also the personal disorientation a person may feel when experiencing an unfamiliar way of life due to immigration or a visit to a new country, a move between social environments, or simply transition to another type of life.” most of the participants agreed that they have experienced culture shock from day one and even up to present. Middle Eastern’s culture completely differs from the Filipino’s way of life in so many aspects. Both male and female Arab-Muslim students have their own different experiences that are appalling. Although they were astounded, some of them took it positive like the fact that they are now less restricted and dependent especially among the ladies who now do not have to depend on the men for their activities and decisions.

Culture shock can cause a combination of feelings to arise such as anxiety, uncertainty, confusion, and isolation [26]. An individual who experiences these emotions can then develop a host of related symptoms such as the following: homesickness, loneliness, depression, more sleep than normal, compulsive eating, loss of appetite, lack of energy, disengagement from social activities, as well as stereotyping and feelings of hostility toward host nationals [26] (Komiya & Eells, 2001).

Many Arab international students encounter immense cultural differences immediately upon arriving in the US. Shattuck

(1964) conveyed that the majority of the time, international students’ overall ability to adapt is challenged by differing values, inherent behavior rules, and different means of communication. Shattuck further emphasized that major cultural differences often prove difficult throughout the international students’ sojourn in the US. Rising and Copp (1992) reported that numerous studies regarding international students from different geographic regions found that students from non-Western and less-developed countries had a much harder time adjusting to their new academic work, new relationships with those from the host society, and to the American culture as a whole. Mehdi Zadeh and Scott (2005) concluded that the closer a student’s culture is to that of their host community, the easier the interactions and adjustment are for that international student.

“I was feeling shocked at the beginning, everything different for me, building structure, foods, also I feel shock when I saw the freedom of the girls to wear their clothes in the university or in the community (P7)”.

CONCLUSION

Differences in culture, religion and the feeling of isolation were some of a few factors hindering Arab-Muslim students with their education. However, their profound faith to Islam made the students resilient to these challenges encountered during their educational journey in a foreign land, such as the Philippines, which is a non-Muslim country. The Philippines, in particular, continues to be a destination for International students for the reason that it is a country known to offer quality education of high standards and practices the English language as one of their medium of speech.

Furthermore, stated in the results were specific challenges Arab-Muslim students face during their stay in the Philippines for the purpose of taking up their education in the aforementioned country such as feeling lonely, inability to practice fully Muslim culture and apply the kind of living the students grew up to, the challenge of homesickness, some

known “Arabo” stereotypes and misconceptions, the struggle to adapt and socialize with the new environment, school conflicts encompassing scheduling problems, student-instructor relationship, and the like; and other possible barriers present for foreign students.

In conclusion, education is known to be the greatest equalizer among the conditions of men, the balancing-wheel of the social machinery taking that quality education is of high importance costing not only financial in nature but also personal sacrifices from the student, their families, and the community. Also, the experiences of Arab-Muslim students grew to have been imposing a strong message to the Universities accepting International students to not just be tolerant but must be sensitive to their needs and certain extents in terms of the curricular requirements that can be swerved without compromising good quality education and at the same time improving the manner of learning not only for foreign students but the entire student body.

It is recommended that the educational institutions formulate policies and guidelines for facilitating the Arab Muslim students and other foreign students practice acceptable beliefs and practices in a foreign country, it is also recommended that this study be a basis for future research in determining more gaps and problems of Arab Muslim and international students. Since this research focused into assembling and analyzing the varied experiences of Arab Muslim international students generating a view of the big picture, providing insight into how the individual components of society relate to one another on this issue, it is further recommended that policies and guidelines be formulated considering culture so as to raise public awareness and bolster discussion on the topic of providing a conducive learning and enabling environment for all students to achieve their full potential. Arab-Muslim students have to learn to convert their diversities into opportunities, try to embrace all their learning for both on and off campus, must have an open-mind with regards to all

possible aspects they might deal with in their day-to-day interactions, and above all the ability to remain grounded by their faith, moral and good values.

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