

Utilizing the findings of international adaptation research in the counseling of Malaysian students in Japan

Abstract

Adaptation supports the performance and functioning of international students. Failure to adapt to the changes in the new environment would tax on the psychological wellbeing, exhaust the students and strain their academic performance. Counseling is one of the sources for students to seek assistance. Orientation and intervention programs are suitable dispensation means for information on coping mechanism and healthy adaptation. Generalization and stereotyping in dealing with adaptation problems would reduce the accomplishment of the intervention programs and the counselling (Slodzinski 1994). Evidence also shows that the effectiveness of counseling can be affected by a client's level or degree of acculturation into the dominant society (Cuellar, Harris & Jasso 1980.) The programs and counseling should be addressed with consideration to different cultural sensitivity and needs. The significance of this paper is to point out the importance of understanding the intercultural adaptation issues in the counseling of Malaysian students in Japan by putting forward the conflicting findings from various socio-cultural adaptation studies. The main objective of this paper is to highlight the dire need for counselors to inculcate the findings of specific study on international adaptation into their counseling services. The paper is aimed to extend the understanding on intercultural adaptation among Malaysian students abroad, exclusively in Japan by highlighting the conflicting findings in the western and the Japan research scenario in terms of time factor, cultural distance factor and host language proficiency factor. Generalization and stereotyping of western cases in dealing with adaptation problems among Malaysian students in Japan would reduce the accomplishment of the intervention programs and the counseling.