COUNSELLING SERVICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN BRITAIN: PERCEPTIONS OF MALAYSIAN STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Malaysian students in British universities are from varied socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds. Many of them arrived with insufficient information about life in Britain and would **ecounter difficulties** during their study. The purpose of this study is to indentify problems faced by Malaysian students, the seeking help that they when they are having problems; to identify their reasons for seeking counselling services, and preferences of Malaysian students in seeking counselling services. A questionnaire was designed by the **reseacher**. It is made up three major parts: (a) the personal background; (b) a survey about their problems and needs, and (c) a survey of attitudes of students toward counselling. The major finding of this study are: there were six problem areas faced by Malaysian students: financial problems, study problems, personal problems, adaptation problems. homesick, and deppression problems. The majority of Malaysian students who had problems consulted either their own friends or their tutors. Counsellors' characteristics like gender, age, religion, culture, and race were not significant for them. The results indicated that the core conditions of empathy, genuiness, congruence and acceptance proposed by the client-centered therapy are considered by students as the most important qualities of the counsellor. The main reasons considered to going counselling is the 'counsellor' himself rather than other 'people'. Meanwhile the main reasons Malaysian students considered for not going to counselling are that they prefer to solve the problem themselves, and prefer friends who can help and understand them bettter. A framework model for multi-cultural counselling is suggested as guide for student counsellors in their work with overseas students, and suggestions are made as to how institutions of higher education can impoved the services, especially counsellors' skills and knowledge.

DEDICATION

For:
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1   Overview

Having been a student **counsellor** for nine years, I am interested to find out about the problems faced by Malaysian students abroad. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide an alternative outlook for counselling services especially for **cross-**cultural   counselling   in   Malaysia.

Presently, all institutions of higher learning in Malaysia have special units providing counselling services.   The general objectives of these services are to: help students whose background varies in their personal growth; assist students, so that they may function effectively and achieve success in academic situation; and create programmes and services, which may solve personal problems, and career problems faced by students (Uzir Abdul **Malek &** Azmi Shaari, 1990).

Students in any population are vitally important members of society. They represent the educational investment being made in the structure of any community's future and they will eventually form and provide, as the adults of tomorrow, the managers, administrators, professional people, technocrats, businessmen or leaders of society. During their comparative youth, or apprenticeship of learning, they reflect contemporary and developing attitudes and innovations. They can anticipate changes in social structure that often they themselves will bring about, for they experience many of the characteristic of a lifestyle that they will inevitably set about altering. As Zwingmann (1983, p.1) puts it: 'What they find as unpleasant they will in later years endeavour to change, what they **find** inequitable they will strive to ameliorate, and whatever they experience in their youth will always temper their adult attitude'.

The university years are for most students a period during which they take significant strides in assuming responsibility for their own decisions and for controlling and regarding their lives.   The university **recognises** this by attempting to give students

the kind of freedom that will allow this maturation to take place.   **This goal requires** pacing so that the student will not be faced with a sudden overwhelming demand for **self-responsibility.**

1.2   Importance and Needs for the Study

There are an estimated number of 12,000 Malaysian students studying **in British** universities.   It has been said that they are having difficulties in adaptation and adjustment in their studies. Research on them, however, has been negligible. In addition to that, most studies have dealt with overseas students as a whole and not focused especially on Malaysian students (Krishnasamy, 1994). The quality of these students' contemporary lives is thus an important area for close examination. Studies have shown that young Malaysian students who are suddenly transplanted and exposed to a totally alien cultural environment with different customs, norms, and values would find themselves totally lost, experiencing 'culture shock' (Krishnasamy, 1994). In addition, it is felt that many students have indulged in unhealthy activities such as smoking, drinking, drug abuse etc. Research conducted by Krishnasamy (1994) showed that the primary problems experienced by Malaysian students are study problems, academic problems, racial discrimination, food problems, accommodation, etc. His study did not mention their attitudes toward counselling. For this reason, the researcher has come carried out this research, looking into the problems experienced by Malaysian students in an attempt to understand their situation and trace those problems back to their source, and also to know their attitudes toward counselling.   Indeed, the **difficulties** found will also be discussed in relation to counselling needs.

The researcher is also very interested to find out the applicability of counselling theories in relation to Malaysian students; to examine the implications for counselling services in higher education in Malaysia; to investigate the attitudes of students toward counselling with the hope of providing information or insight for the services to make further improvement and to **publicise** the service to promote acceptance and utilisation of

it. It hoped that this dissertation may stimulate counselling practitioners to take the initiative to make further development in the counselling services especially in my country, so that not only the students themselves but society as a whole can benefit from it.

Together with a veritable explosion of knowledge in the last few decades has come a change in the function of the university, from operating as an institution for higher learning to one for professional training. In the course of the development, the acquisition of factual knowledge is becoming even more important. Lindgren (1979) added that the total learning processes which allows the integration of facts into large contexts are becoming less frequent. In addition, the emotional aspects of studying are not generally taken into consideration, nor is the **socialisation** aspect of university training. Therefore, students often develop the feeling that they are not pursuing any productive activity. The often poor prospects of being able to employ the acquired knowledge in a profession after graduation also tend to reduce students motivation.

Unfavourable study conditions often give rise to personal crises. The result can be relationship difficulties, partner problems and similar disturbances. The state of extended adolescence forces the students into conflicts. Beside these specific characteristics of students' life and work, which do not occur to this extent in other social groups, there are additional circumstances that make it essential to have students counselling services. Moreover, the recognition of students' concerns and difficulties is vital to help students to cope more effectively with the pressure put on them as budding intellectuals.

It is hoped that this study will identify problems experienced by international students, especially Malaysian students. Questionnaires were sent out to all Malaysian students at Keele University. A pilot study was conducted to establish the need for such a study especially pertaining to Malaysian students at Keele University. Some

hypotheses have been developed pertaining to several aspects of their problems and counselling needs.

This Introduction is followed by *Chapter Two* which provides an overview of the problems faced by foreign students and discusses the issues in counselling foreign students. *Chapter Three* deals with published literature on overseas students pertaining to several aspects, such as problems faced by foreign students, characteristics of counsellors, and students' attitudes toward counselling. *Chapter Four* deals with research methodology. The purpose of the study, research instrumentation, pilot study, and sampling are discussed. *Chapter Five* presents the results of the research which displays the problems faced by Malaysian students, counsellors characteristics, the qualities of effective and helpful counsellors, the helpful factors in counselling, and reasons for or not going to counselling, *Chapter Six* discusses the summary of main findings, comparison with previous research, and implications for theory. *Chapter Seven* presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 2

Overview of Foreign Students

2.1   Introduction

When international students arrive at overseas universities, the circumstances suddenly and simultaneously impose a variety of competing and sometimes contradictory roles that must be learned. When the requirements of those roles are realistically perceived and effectively learned, the student's experience is likely to be successful, but when the roles are not accommodated, the resulting identify diffusion and role conflict may affect the student's emotional well-being, and present serious obstacles to the achievement of educational objectives.

Even though international students are from a whole variety of countries and culture, they are expected to conform to the culture of their host country.   This is not much of a problem for students from Western countries, but it can prove to be **difficult** for students from developing countries whose customs are often so different from their host country. This survey considers **counselling** for foreign students, especially those from Malaysia.

2.2   Distinctive Aspects of Foreign Students as Clients

2.2.1   Foreign students are people in transition.

Foreign students will only be in the host country temporarily. They are in a state of transition having left the security of their home country to come to a foreign land to achieve their academic goal. Although this phase of their lives will only last for a few years, it can be both trying and traumatic. Once in the host country, foreign students tend to question their purpose and identity. In addition to dealing with changes in personal growth, they also have to contend with an alien environment (d'Ardenne & Mahtani, 1989).

Foreign students must decide where they want to be on continuum between functional adjustment to the host culture; just learning to do what they must do in order

to get by, and assimilation, taking as much of the host culture as possible and making it their own (Thomas & Althen, 1989).

2.2.2 Foreign students have different basic assumptions and values.

Foreign students in Western countries often have trouble adjusting to the informal nature of the locals. Another complaint is that domestic students are always so busy that it is difficult to make friends with them. Foreign students are mostly from cultures which are quietly different. They come from societies where people are integrally related with others and everyone is expected to conform. Femandez (1988) remarked that Asian children are brought up in a society where filial piety and difference to elder are stressed. Nigerians too are brought up to respect their elders and those in authority (Idowu, 1985). Often in their countries, there is hierarchy in which males are seen as superior. According to Sue and Sue (1990), relationships in traditional Asian cultures tend to be more authoritarian and hierarchical and the father is effectively the rule of the family. Theirs is a culture where only close friends and relatives can be trusted and it would be inappropriate and even dangerous to reveal oneself to others.

According to Pedersen (1991) foreign students relied more on fellow nationals for help with personal problems since counselling would result in a loss of status. Many foreign students felt that their problems cannot be solved by talking to a counsellor, attending workshops, reading self-help books or by practising new behaviours. They may believed that their problems are fated to occur and it is beyond the control of others to solve them. According to Sue and Sue (1990), Third World groups tended to have an external locus of control which means that they believed that actions and their reinforcing events occur independently of each other and the future is decided more by chance and luck. They believed that their problems must be borne. Therefore, a counsellor who deals with foreign students may first need to convince them that something can be done about their problems.

2.2.3 Foreign setting.

Although all students are under pressure to excel in their studies, foreign students may have other problems to contend with as well. They face difficulties with the language and the different education system. On top of that, they may also have trouble with immigration authorities and financial problems. In a study conducted by Xia (1991) on the adjustment process of Asian students at the University of Wisconsin, it was found that Indonesian and Chinese students experienced more problems with the English language, finances, and religious issues while Malaysian students are faced with language, studies, finances, and religious as well as with immigration authorities. Moon (1991) found that Korean students on the other hand, found their most difficulty are with the English language, and finances.

2.2.4 Foreign students have a distinctive social support system.

Foreign students typically have a different social support system from domestic students. Not only are their family and friends far way, they may also not understand the experiences that the student is going through. So, the students may turn to their **fellow-**nationals in the same university for help. Foreign students tend to create a subculture of fellow-nationals as their primary support system (Pedersen, 1991). Furnham and Alibhai (1985) found that foreign students preferred their co-national similarities. Pedersen (1991) found that most of the 781 foreign students at the University of Minnesota went to their fellow national for help with personal problems. This was reported to be because fellow-nationals were accessible and acceptable to them as helpers.

2.2.5 Foreign students may not share the counsellor's conception of the counsellor's de.

Counsellors are trained to listen and help clients explore their concerns and feeling. In this way, the **counsellor** and client will seek a solution together. The typical foreign student client on the other hand expects **counsellors** to express their opinions and do most of the talking. For example, it is reported that Nigerian students' upbringing

conflicts with the method of counselling that emphasise self-help. They expect to be given a 'cure' by the counsellor (Idowu, 1985). When Pedersen (1991) reviewed the literature on counselling expectations of foreign students, he found that Chinese and Iranian students had higher expectations of counsellor's empathy while African and Iranian students had higher expectations of directiveness, expertise and concreteness. Foreign students, on the whole, had higher expectations of counsellor nurturance. Pedersen (1991) also mentioned that the sample of Chinese students were less motivated and felt less responsible for their improvement. Mau and Jepsen (1988) found that Chinese and American students had different attitudes toward the counsellor and counselling process, in that Chinese students saw the counsellors as directive and as the decision-maker when compared to American students.

Clients from minority groups are often seen as less attractive, less verbal, unintelligent and less successful. This is also stressed by Sundberg (1981) who commented that therapy is perceived as not for the quiet, ugly, old, indigent, and dissimilar culturally. Sue and Sue (1990), identified three possible causes of conflict for third world groups. They are: (a) counsellors expect clients to be open to a certain degree; (b) counsellors expect clients to talk about their personal problems, and (c) counselling is seen as ambiguous. Asian cultures associate maturity and wisdom with the ability to control emotions and feelings. And this gives the counsellor a negative impression of the client. According to d' Ardenne and Mahtani (1989), the counsellor and client need to discuss the counselling process and the counsellor's role, as well as the client's responsibility and interaction in the counselling relationship to avoid misunderstanding about their respective roles.

2.3   Issues in Counselling Foreign Students

According to Thomas and Althen (1989), there are four issues that arise when counselling foreign students as clients. They are:

1.   <u>Cultural stereotyping</u>.

It is human nature to generalize about other groups of people that one has limited or **superficial** contact with. This applies to counsellors who deal with foreign students as well. Their training provided little exposure to multi-cultural counselling and as a result, the problem of counsellor stereotyping arises. Some negative stereotypes of foreign students are their poor command of English, their clannish nature, and their tendency to be manipulative.   Some positive stereotypes are that foreign students are intelligent, motivated, courteous, polite, and conscientious. The problem of counsellor stereotyping can be decreased with counsellors becoming more aware of their own stereotypes of foreign students and by finding ways to overcome them.

2   .   <u>Finding the factors affecting a foreign student's situation</u>.

Every foreign student is different. A foreign student's situation is a function of a number of factors. They include cultural background, personality, the country of origin, the number of fellow nationals in the university's community, the local community's reception of foreign students, social status at home, age, English language proficiency, amount of time in host country, availability of suitable food and the opportunity to perform religious practices.

3.   <u>Difficulty in **identifying** to source of problems</u>.

In cross-cultural counselling, it is more difficult to diagnose the problem. This is because cultural factors have to be taken into consideration as well. A foreign student's problem could be due to a combination of intercultural problems, interpersonal problems as well as pathological disorders. Although counsellors should be sensitive to cultural differences, there is such a thing being too cultural sensitive. This is when counsellors attribute everything to cultural differences. Counsellors must therefore be balanced in their approach and achieve 'cultural competence'.

4.   <u>Doubts about appropriateness</u> of conventional <u>Western approaches</u> to <u>counselling</u>.

Counsellors may have doubts about the suitability of Western approaches in **counselling** foreign students. For example, Carl Rogers' person-centered approach is generally considered to be less effective with foreign clients. This is because this approach sees clients as being in control whereas foreign students tend to have external locus of control (Fernandez, 1988). Foreign clients typically want firm guidance and to be told what to do.

Statistics show that most overseas students who came to Britain are from developing countries, many from small towns, remote villages, some of which do not even have basic necessities such as electricity and piped water.   This contrasts with overseas students from developed countries (Krishnasamy, 1994). When students are suddenly plucked from homes and transferred to a highly advanced and often intimidating city, it is natural that they face serious problems.   Some make the adjustments, although with great difficulty, while others might totally adopt the culture and customs in a desperate attempt to survive.

Livingstone (1960) observed that if the student responds too eagerly to his new environment, an eventual conflict ensue between the claims of two different worlds for him, a situation which has been described as the dilemma of overlapping membership. If he seeks to safeguard his cultural identity, he may harden his mind and his senses against the many benefits which this new experience could bring him. Either way, the student is assailed with doubts and anxieties that reduce his waning efficiency and produce mood swings of bewildering intensity.

It is known that students from abroad who arrive in Britain for the **first** time face difficulties in their new environment not only they lack information about their life in Britain, but also because they come with different cultural backgrounds. These students need someone to help them to adjust to this situation and give them useful advice.

Many studies have shown that is a difference between students who come from Western and non-western countries, in their attitudes toward seeking professional help for their problems. Western students seem to have more positive attitudes than others in the case of personal problems (Dadfar & Frienlander, 1982). According to them, Western and non-western societies have been said to differ on dimensions of authoritarian, restrictiveness, and acceptability of help outside the family, which may account for the more positive responses by Western students. This attitudes towards help may come from the background of students in their family, society, education and their individual experience.

According to Caplan (1974) (cited in Krishnasamy, 1994), the importance of the informal assistance what he called 'kith and kin' support system even in societies where professional assistance is available, help from peers continues to be the preferred source of assistance for many. Therefore, a natural support system exerts an important influence in confirming or disconfirming of the individual's problems, in providing assistance, and in recommending which health seeking of health restoring activities are appropriate for the individual. In cross-cultural context, counsellors may overlook, misinterpret or be misinformed of the positive role that natural support system can play in preventing personal problems thus be prone to overlook the possibilities for furthering clients' growth by reinforcing, strengthening or collaborating with these system. The fact of intra-group assistance and co-operation is a basic element of human assistance (Caplan, 1974) (cited in Krishnasamy, 1994).

CHAPTER 3

Literature Review

3.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review. Those publications that exist were mostly from American and some were from British sources. This chapter is divided into four sections: the first will discuss problems faced by foreign students; second, the roles of the counsellor; third, attitude towards counsellor; and fourth, the qualities of counsellors and helpful factors in counselling.

3.2   Problems Faced by Foreign Students

Downing (1968) described the problem areas that students faced are educational problems, social adjustment, personal concerns, personality and adjustment, problems of home and family, emotional problems, the selection of vocation and problems of finances.   Newsome et al. (1973) identified a number of problem categories experienced by students. They *are* subject choice, academic difficulties, study habits, leaving or transferring to other universities, seeking vocational information, vocational indecision, personal problems, seeking information and concern for others.   Milner (1974) summarised students problems as to include personal problems like adaptation, the search for satisfying relationships, choice of career, developmental difficulties, emotional disturbance, academic problems such as study habits, academic pressure, the quality of teaching and practical problems like accommodation and financial difficulties.

The problems faced by foreign students are numerous and varied. They have been addressed by several authors including Livingstone (1960), Sen (1970), Thomas and Althen (1989), and Elsey and Kinnel (1990). An overseas students suddenly finds himself not having a support system which provides for him emotionally, culturally and socially. The student's expected response is one of varying degrees of anxiety and loneliness. This phenomenon has been described by Oberg (1960) as 'culture shock'. It is seen an occupational diseases undergone by those who are transplanted into a culture that

is to theirs. Culture shock is triggered of by a person losing his familiar signs or social intercourse such as gestures, facial expressions, etc (Oberg, 1960). The major problem are discussed bellow.

A typical problem faced by foreign students is adjusting to a new culture. According to Thomas and **Althen** (1989, **p.220)** cultural adjustment is a 'psychological process that focuses on the attitudinal and emotional adjustment of the individual to the new environment'. The authors go on to say that most writers generally agreed on three distinct stages of adjustment. The first stage or the *honeymoon stage* is when individuals are excited by the novel experience. Then come to the second stage or the *crisis stage* when 'culture shock' is most intense. At this stage, individuals are confused as they encounter new values, behaviours, beliefs, and lifestyles. The third stage is the recovery *stage.* This is when individuals begin to appreciate and understand the new culture. Oberg (1960) added a fourth stage which is the *adjustment stage.* This is when individuals begin to function effectively in the new culture.

Livingstone (1960) suggested dividing the experiences of foreign students into four stages or phases. The first three phases are similar to the stages mentioned above. The first phase, the *spectator phase,* is filled with curiosity, expectation and enjoyment. The second phase is the *involvement phase,* where students are confronted with the demands of the environment on them. The third or the *coming-to-terms phase* is marked by achievements which restore their confidence. The final phase, the *pre-departure phase* is filled with anxiety as foreign students prepare to return to their home countries.

Thomas and **Althen** (1989) used a **conceptualisation** of cultural adjustment which is based on the understanding that different personalities will respond differently to new cultures, a view which is also taken by Sen (1970) in her study of overseas students and nurses. This becomes clear when the way different students deal with the same situation is considered. While some may meet it as a challenge to be overcome, there are others who become hostile or shrink into their shells.

Culture shock refers to the negative aspect of cultural adjustment. It is the normal process of adaptation to cultural stress. Its symptoms include psychological strain, a sense of loss, rejection, confusion, surprise, anxiety, and feelings of importance (d' Ardenne & Mahtani, 1989).

Leong (1984) reviewed the literature on counselling international students with regard to three types of problem situation. These are: (a) problems common to all college students, such as being away from home, living with peers, and being autonomous; (b) problems involved adjustment to being away from home for a long period time, problems similar to those experienced by diplomats, businessmen, missionaries, military personnel, and others, such as cultural shock, culture fatigue, or role shock, and (c) problems unique to international students, relating to financial difficulties, immigration problems, and others.

Church (1982) reviewed 30 years of research, found a consistent hierarchy of problems among international students, including language difficulties, financial problems, adjustment to a new educational system, homesickness, and adjustment to social customs or norms. When foreign students face monetary problems, they have limited avenues to turn to. They are neither allowed to work nor are eligible for state financial aid programmes. This can very stressful for the students. Idowu (1985) found that the most severe problems experienced by African students were financial.

Social isolation, depression, and paranoia are common mental disturbances faced by some foreign students. These are considered to be due to culture shock as well as the adjustment stress faced by students. This is illustrated by foreign students who faced a complicated series of crises connected to entering university and adjusting to a foreign culture as well as keeping in touch with their own identity (Pedersen, 1991).

One of the comprehensive studies done on overseas students to date is by Al-Shawi (1990). His study was concerned with full-time, postgraduate students mainly from developing countries. He came up with several findings. Firstly, overseas students

in Britain identified 16 problems areas, the highest frequency areas being; social relations, financial problems, self-concept, study problems and culture shock. Secondly, there were differences between overseas students themselves in many problem areas, according to; country of origin, type of accommodation, quality of information given, etc. Thirdly, the majority of overseas students who had major problems had consulted either their own friends or their tutors. Fourthly, student counsellors had different views on the counselling of overseas students but the majority agreed that it is important to develop their knowledge and skills in multi-cultural counselling.

Another study was conducted by Chow (1989) on a sample of 44 Hong Kong students at Keele University which reported several findings. The major problems faced by Hong Kong students was related to their language proficiency, both oral and written. This is further compounded by the fact that Hong Kong students turn to their family members to solve problems and not to seek help from outside the family system. It is also considered a shame to seek help from professional counsellors. Another problematic area is the cultural conflict which a Hong Kong faced in Britain. He or she undergoes a transition from a collective ego identity to an individual, orientated ego formation.

A study of the problems and counselling need of Malaysian students at Keele University by Krishnasamy (1994) pointed out that one of the major problems faced by Malaysian students is the feeling of missing their families. 65% of the respondents stated that they missed their families and relatives at home. 58% of the respondents stated that they were worried about their finances. Another problems faced by Malaysian students were related to academic work, examinations, food, and feeling of discrimination.

3.3   The Roles of the **Counsellors**

The basic functions of counsellors, regardless of setting, were clearly stated by Wrenn (1965). They are: (a) to provide a relationship between the **counsellor** and the counsellee, the most prominent qualities of which is that of mutual trust of each in the

other; (b) to provide alternatives in self-understanding and in the course of action open to the client; (c) to provide some degree of intervention of the situation in which the client finds' himself and with 'important others' in the client's immediate life; (d) to provide leadership in developing a healthy psychological environment for his client, and (e) to provide improvement of the counselling process through constant individual criticism and (for some counsellor) extensively to improve process through research.

Athinson et al. (1993) provided an excellent discussion of a wide spectrum of possible professional options open to multicultural **counsellors**. There professional roles include: (a) advocate, (b) change agent, (c) consultant, (d) advisor, (e) facilitator of indigenous support system, and **(f)** facilitator of indigenous healing methods.

Perdesen (1978) identified several appropriate goals for those who are interested in working with clients from other cultures. The goals include: (a) increasing the counsellor's awareness of the ways that cultural differences effect the counselling process, (b) identifying advantages and disadvantages of working with clients who are culturally different, (c) anticipating the adjustment process for a client moving one culture to another, (d) estimating the client's own cultural bias, (e) understanding value affiliations derived from socio-economic status and sex role are also culturally based, and **(f)** estimating how cultural values influence test interpretation.

3.4   Attitudes Toward **Counsellors'** Characteristics

The problems foreign students typically faced can be discerned from the problems they bring into the counselling sessions. Littlewood (1992) suggested that non-Europeans prefer to express their distress as either physical or religious rather than psychological problems. According to Fernandez **(1988),** Southeast Asian are reserved and shy about problems because they do not want to be looked down upon. Idowu (1985) said that disclosing personal problems to a counsellor is seen by Africans not only as a sign of weakness, but also as divulging family secrets. Studies conducted by Tanaka-Matsumi and **Marsella** (1976) and **Kleinman** (1977) suggested that when students suffer from

somatic **complaints** without an organic basic, they may in fact by experiencing depression.

According to Church (1982), the most prevalent problems reported by foreign students have to do with language, their studies, homesickness, and adjusting to social custom. Foreign students usually seek assistance with problems that they feel are acceptable to discuss with someone outside their circle of family and close friends. These problems include those that concern work, finances or immigration laws. They seldom begin discussions with a personal problem. For Nigerians, personal matters can only be discussed with family and friends (Idowu, 1985).

The gender of students is an important personal factor in counselling. In the research of Cook et al. (1984), women displayed a more positive attitude towards counselling, including a greater willingness to seek counselling before problems become serious. Perceiving counselling as a preventive measure is not shared by men. Men strongly preferred self-reliance or people they knew well as sources of help instead. Penny and Buckles (1966) (cited in Webster & Fretz, 1978)) have pointed out that males preferred 'no one' more often, than did females. Allen and Cole's (1987) research have found that female international students are more likely to seek counselling than males and that the females are more likely to somatize their symptoms.

Fuller (1964) (cited in Webster & Fretz, 1978) found that both male and female clients preferred to seek help from counsellors of the same gender. According to Smith (1974), research on the preferences of university students for counsellors, the respondents preferred counsellors of similar age, socio-economic background, and religious orientation. This is especially true when they want help with regard to the moral, ethical or religious problems. They would prefer the counsellor's gender to be same as that of the student when dealing with a personal-social problem such as a sex problem. Minority group members ascribed more importantly to counsellor's and client's race similarity. The research conducted by Mau and Jepsen (1988) toward counselling and counselling

services indicated that counsellor characteristics are not of great concern, but Chinese student expressed a preference for older counsellors with the same racial background. Female students tend to prefer a female counsellor rather than a male counsellor. Fuller (1964) (cited in Webster and Fretz, 1987), suggested that both males and females prefer to seek help from same-sex counsellors.

3.5   The Qualities of Counsellors and Helpful Factors in Counselling

Rogers (196 1) considered the attitudes of therapist as the most important qualities for therapeutic change. It is far more important than the therapist's expertise, knowledge and skills and experience of being a client. Corey et al. (1979) (cited in Brennier, 1982, p.32 1) affirmed that, 'the personal attributes of the therapist are the single most important determinant of successful therapy'. Jourard (1968) (cited in Brennier, 1982, p.57-58) also pointed out that 'effective psychotherapists, who succeed in inviting sufferers to change their previous ways of being, are not technicians'. Strupp (1960) (cited in Aveline, 1990) further stressed that 'the greatest technical skill can offer no substitute for or will obviate the pre-eminent need for integrity, honesty, and dedication on the part of the therapist'.

Onother study done at New York University by Bailey (1940) listed the key characteristics of counsellors as: sympathetic understanding of youth, emotional stability, broad scope of knowledge and interest, good judgement, and common sense. Another study at the University of Pennsylvania by Cox (1945) attempted to approach this problem of the evaluation of the counsellor at the secondary school level by a case study technique. He identified 24 characteristics. They are fairness, sincerity, personality, good character and wholesome philosophy, common sense, health, emotional stability, approachability, ability to get along with people, sympathetic understanding of youth, interest in people, understanding people different from self, flexibility and adaptability, intelligence and mental alertness, social culture, broad knowledge and interests, leadership, awareness of one's own limitations, professional attitude, sense of mission, interest in guidance and personnel work, understanding of classroom conditions,

understanding of working condition, and understanding of social and economic conditions.

Murphy et al. (1984) research on clients receiving mainly cognitive-behavioural psychotherapy found that the following curative factors have helped them in their treatment. These are getting advice from the therapist; *'talking to someone interested in their problems'; 'encouragement and reassurance';* *'talking to someone who understands';* and *'the installation of hope and self understanding',*

Hunt (1985) and Mayer and Timms (1970) pointed out that the experience of catharsis or emotional release is also frequently considered as helpful. Feifel and Eells (1963) studied clients in psychodynamic therapy. They reported that they have been helped basically by *'the opportunity to talk over problems* '; 'catharsis, **outlet** for tensions, help in expressing feelings' and *'attitudes and characteristics of the therapist'.* Llewelyn (1988) found that what clients find most helpful during therapy in descending order of importance are reassurance or relief, problem solving, insight, events, whereas from the therapist's perspectives, they are insight, problem solving and reassurance or relief which are most helpful. After termination of therapy, the factors clients find most helpful are problem solution, personal contact and reassurance or relief while therapists consider the most helpful factors to be insight, personal contact and problem solution, (Llewelyn, 1988).

CHAPTER 4

Methodology of Research

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology. It is divided into sections covering the purpose of study, design of research instrument, pilot study, statistical analysis and the sample of study.

4.2   Purpose of Study

This a descriptive research and the primary objectives of this study are to:

1.   identify problems faced by Malaysian students and resources referred to by students when they are having problems, and

2.   indicate students' opinion regarding qualities of effective counsellors, the preferred characteristics of **counsellor** and kind of problems that students would consider taking to **counselling**.

While the secondary **obkective** of this study is:

3.   to seek relationships between gender, race, age, language, religion, and culture with regard to selection of counsellors. To achieve the **secodary** objective the following hypotheses have been constructed:

   a.   There is a significant difference between respondents' gender towards selection of counsellors' gender.

   b.   There is a significant difference between respondents gender towards selection of counsellors' age.

   c.   Threre is a significant difference between respondents gender toward selection of **counsellor's** religion.

   d.   There is a significant difference between respondents gender towards selection of counsellors' race.

   e.   There is significant different between respondents gender towards selection of counsellors' language.

f.   There is significant different between respondents gender towards selection counsellors' culture.

4.3   Research Instrument

The questionnaire was constructed by the researcher. It is based on the works of Chow (1989) and Chong (1991), with some adaptations and changes made to fit the Malaysian culture. The questionnaire is made up three major parts, (Appendix B). Essentially it consists of (a) the personal background; (b) a survey about their problems and needs. This part explores problems faced by the students and their preferences in seeking help, and (c) a survey of attitude of students toward counselling. This part indicates students' opinions regarding qualities of effective counsellors, the preferred characteristics of counsellors and kinds of reasons that students would consider taking to counselling.

4.4   Pilot Study

An initial pilot study was conducted in Keele, in which 13 questionnaires were distributed and 10 were returned. Due to the shortage of time, the researcher was only able to make corrections from the students' responses or comments about the questionnaire. There was no time to do a second pilot study. Questionnaires were personally distributed by the researcher. Besides this, a few questions were asked beside the major questionnaires, (see Appendix A). These questions were: (a) How long did it take you to complete?, (b) Were the instructions clear?, (c) Were any of the questions unclear or ambiguous?, (d) Did you object to answer any questions?, (e) In you opinion, has any major topic been omitted?, (f) Was the layout of the questionnaire clear/attractive?, and (g) Any comment?.

Some changes were made based on the feedback from the respondents, (see Appendix A and B). They are:

1. questions numbers 4 and 5 were combined and changed from *'you are studying at the University of ?'* to *'Place of study: University of. . . . . course:.....................'*.

2.   questions number 7 was changed from *'Which year are you studying in this country?'* to *'Year of study?'*.

3.   questions number 10 was changed from *'If married or cohabiting, are you living here with your partner'* to *'If married are you living here with your husband/wife?'*.

4.   questions number 12 was changed from *'What type of financial support?'* to *'Type of financial support?'*.

5.   questions number 13 was changed from *'What is/was your father/guardian's occupation?'* to *'Father 's/guardian 's?'*.

6.   questions number 1 (iii) (a) part three *'if you have one'* cancelled.

7.   questions number 2(b) was changed from *'the counsellor has experience of being a client'* to *'the counsellor has experienced being a client himself.*

The results of the pilot study indicated some level of reliability of the questionnaire used. With regard to the survey of difficulties experienced, the level of reliability reported by Cronbach alpha is 0.84, while the standardized item alpha is 0.82. The items surveying the attitudes toward counselling were found to have a reliability Cronbach alpha of 0.40 and a standardized item alpha of 0.64. These value indicated that the questionnaire piloted has adequate levels of reliability.

4.5   Statistical Analysis

Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Specifically two analysis were used: (a) descriptive statistics, and (b) cross-tabulation (or chi-square) to measure **significant** relationships between variables.

The decision to use these analysis was based on Siegel (1976) who gave the following reasons for advocating a non-parametric technique: (a) usually, the shape of the population distribution does not affect the validity of the probabilities obtained from the test; (b) it is applicable to a small sample; (c) test are available for ordinal and nominal data, and (d) techniques are easy to learn and apply.

For these reason, it was found that the non-parametric techniques of hypothesis testing is suitable for data of this study, and the chi-square test in particular is appropriate for testing significance.

4.6 Sample of Study

There were approximately 80 Malaysian students in Keele University for the academic year 1994-1995. They included both genders, undergraduate and postgraduate. They were of three major ethnic groups: **Malays,** Chinese, Indians and others. A total of 80 questionnaires were distributed to the Malaysian students. The Malaysian Students Society from the university itself, and the researchers' friends assisted in questionnaire distribution. The completed questionnaires were returned to the Department between the10th of May and 22nd of May 1995. A total of 54 questionnaires were returned from the respondents, giving a 67.5% return rate.

Of these, 53.7% were from the male respondents and 46.3% were from female. Their ages ranged from 20 to 40. The majority of them were between 21 to 25 year of age respondents.(68.5%). 57.4% of the students were **Malays,** 35.2% Chinese, 3.7% Indians and 3.7% others races. 35.2% of the students had been in Britain for a year or less and 3 1.5% had been two years in Britain. Most of the students were single, **87.0%,** and did not have any relatives in Britain. The following tables show the characteristics of the respondents.

Table 4.1:   Distribution of respondents by gender

Value label	Value	Frequency	%
Male	l	2 9	53.7
Female	2	2 5	46.3
	N	5 4	100.0

2 4

Figure 4.1:   Distribution of respondents according to
              gender

Frequency :29 (53.7%)   y: 25(46.3%)

- ■ Male
- □ Female
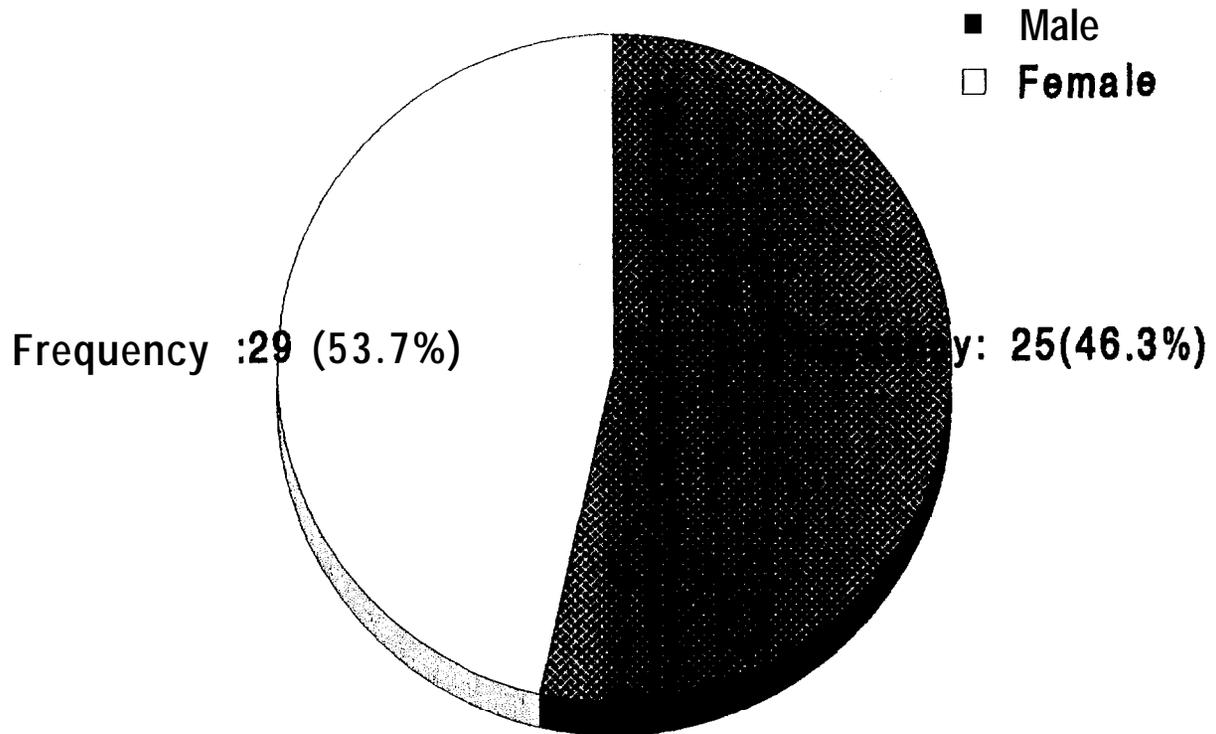
Age was classified into six categories: less than 20, 2 I-25 years, 26-30 years, 3 1-35 years, 36-40 years, and over 4 I years. The majority of respondents were less then 25 years old. The following percentages were found 69.8% aged 21-25 years, 1 I .3% aged 26-30 years, 5.7% aged 31-35 years, 7.5% aged 36-40 years, and 3.8% aged more than 41 years (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2:   Distribution of respondents by age

Value label	Value	Male	Female	N	%
<20	1	1		1	1.9
21-25	2	17	20	37	69. 8
26- 30	3	3	3	6	11. 3
31- 35	4	2	1	3	5.7
36- 40	5	3	1	4	7.5
>41	6	2		2	3. 8
did not answer	9	1		1	1.9
	N	29	25	54	100.0

Figure 4.2:   Distribution of respondents according to age
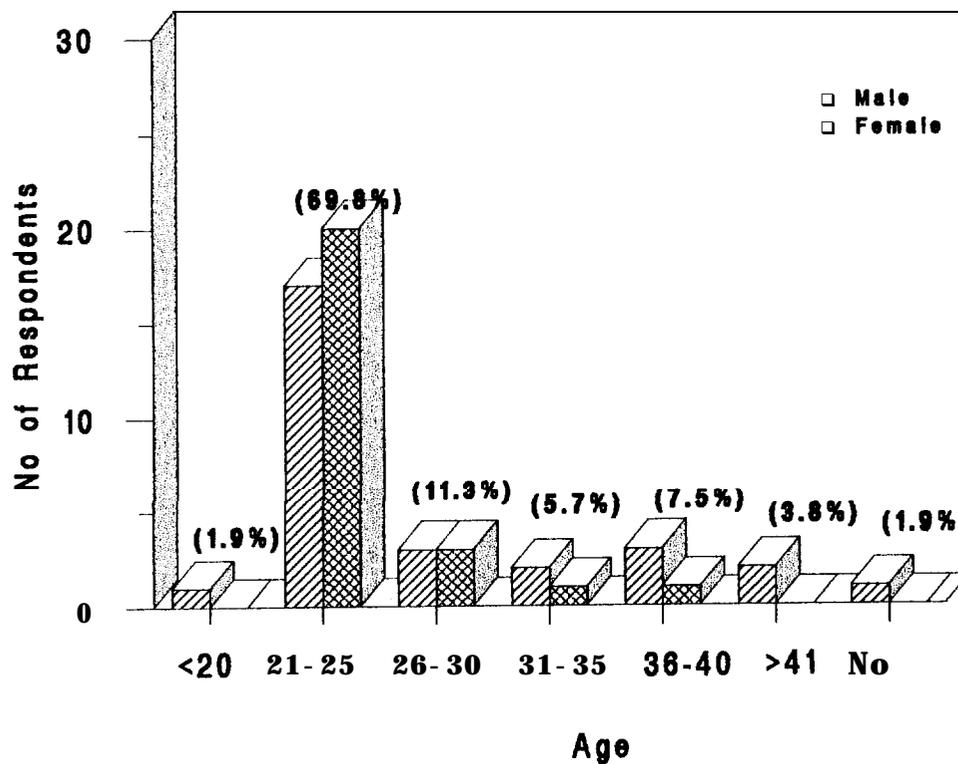
Race was classified into four categories: Malay, Chinese, Indian, and Others. The majority were Malays, 57.4%, Chinese 35.2%, Indian 3.7% and others 3.7% (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Distribution of respondents by race

Value label	Value	Male	Female	N	(%)
Malay	1	16	15	31	57.4
Chinese	2	12	7	19	35.2
Indian	3		2	2	3.7
Others	4	1	1	2	3.7
	N	29	25	54	100.0

Figure 4.3: Distribution of respondents according to race
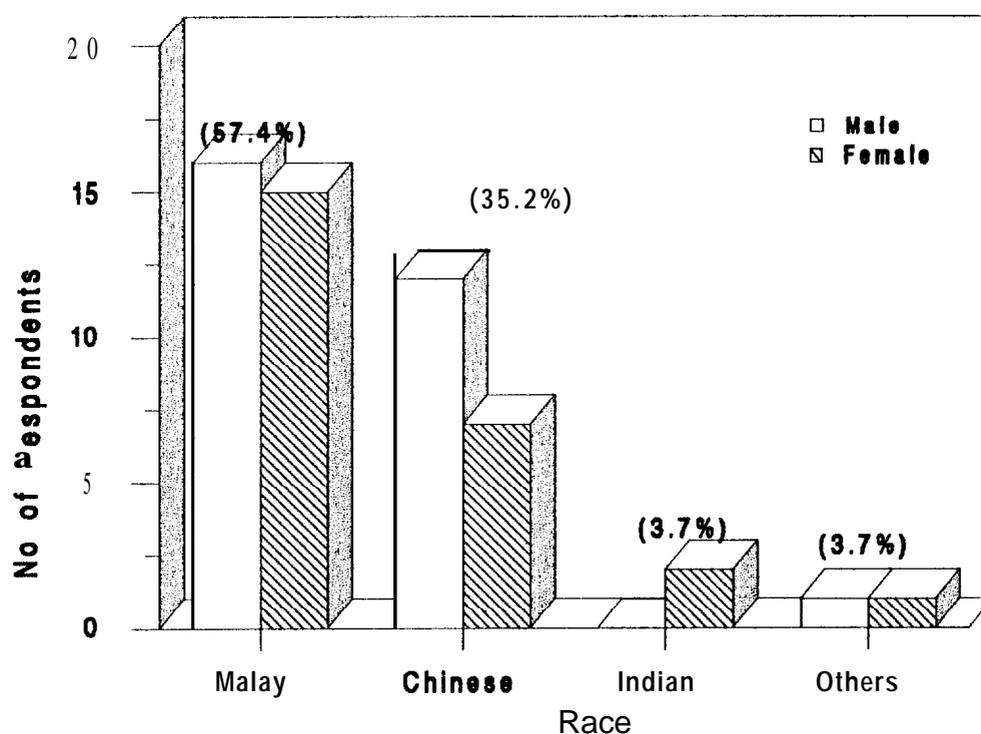
Level of academic was classified into two categories: undergraduate, and post graduate. It was found that 64.2% were undergraduate students, and 35.8% were post graduates (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 :   Distribution of respondents by level of academic

Value label	Value	Male	female	N	(%)
Undergraduate	l	1 4	2 0	3 4	64.2
Post graduate	2	1 4	5	1 9	35.8
Did not answer	9	I		1	1.9
	N	2 9	2 5	5 4	100.0

Figure 4.4:   Distribution of respondents according to level of academic
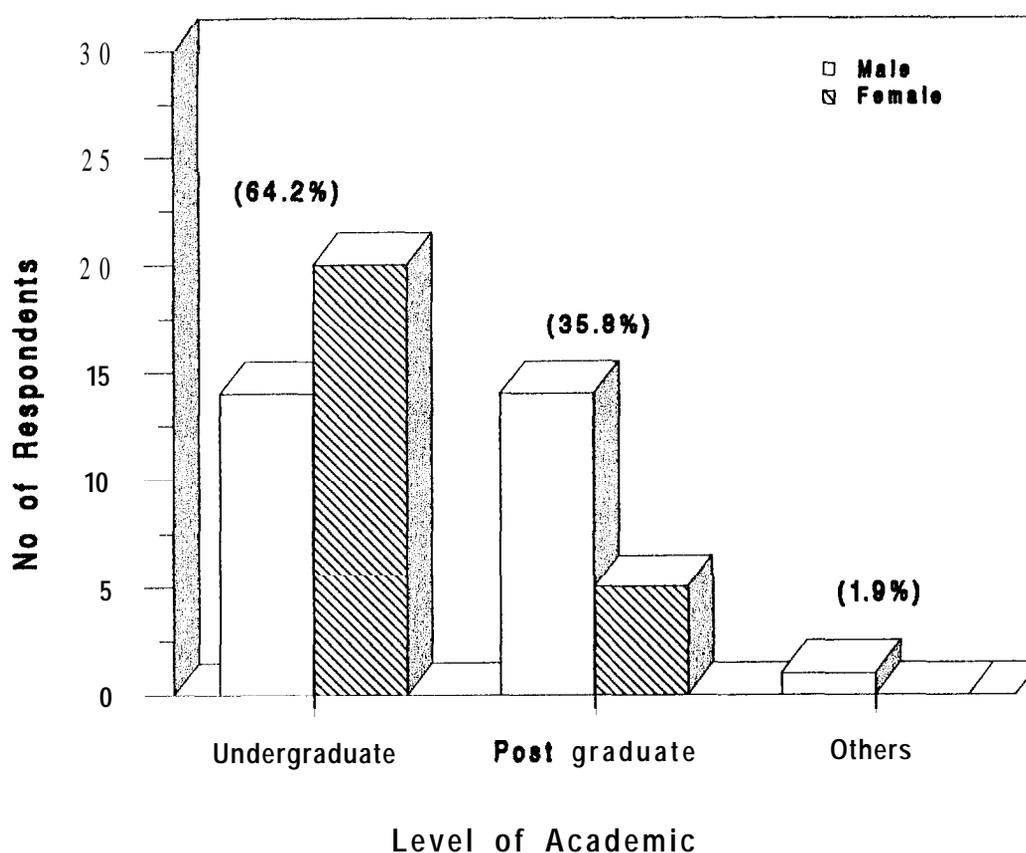
Year of study was classified into four categories: The first year, second year, third year and more than three years. It was found that 46.3% were first year students, 38.9% were second year, 13.0% were third year, and I .9% more than three year (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5:   **Distribution of respondents by year of study**

Value label	Value	Male	FemaleN		(%)
First	1	18	7	2 5	46.3
Second	2	5	16	21	38.9
Third	3	5	2	7	13.0
> 3 year	4	1		1	1.9
	N	2 9	2 5	5 4	100.0

Figure 4.5:   **Distribution of respondents according to year of study**
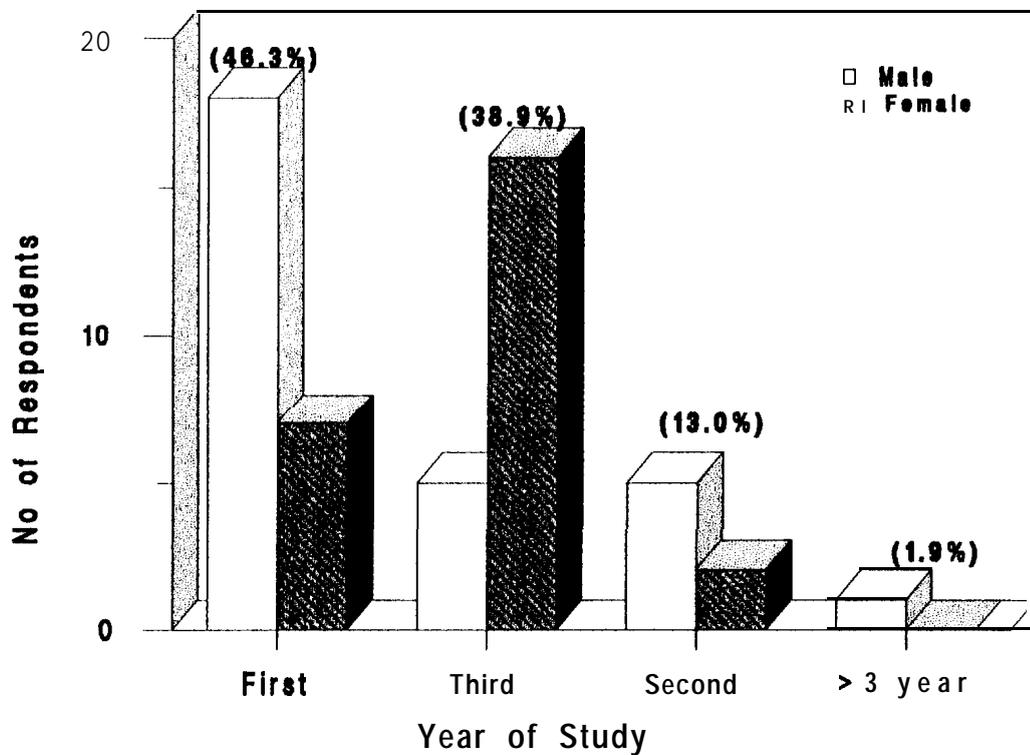
Marital status was classified into three categories: single, married and separated. It was found that 87.0% were single, 11.1% were married and 1.9% were separated (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Distribution of respondents by marital status

Value label	Value	Male	Female	N	(%)
Single	l	23	24	47	87.0
Married	2	6		6	11.1
Separated	3		1	1	1.9
	N	29	25	54	100.0

Figure 4.6: Distribution of respondents according to marital status
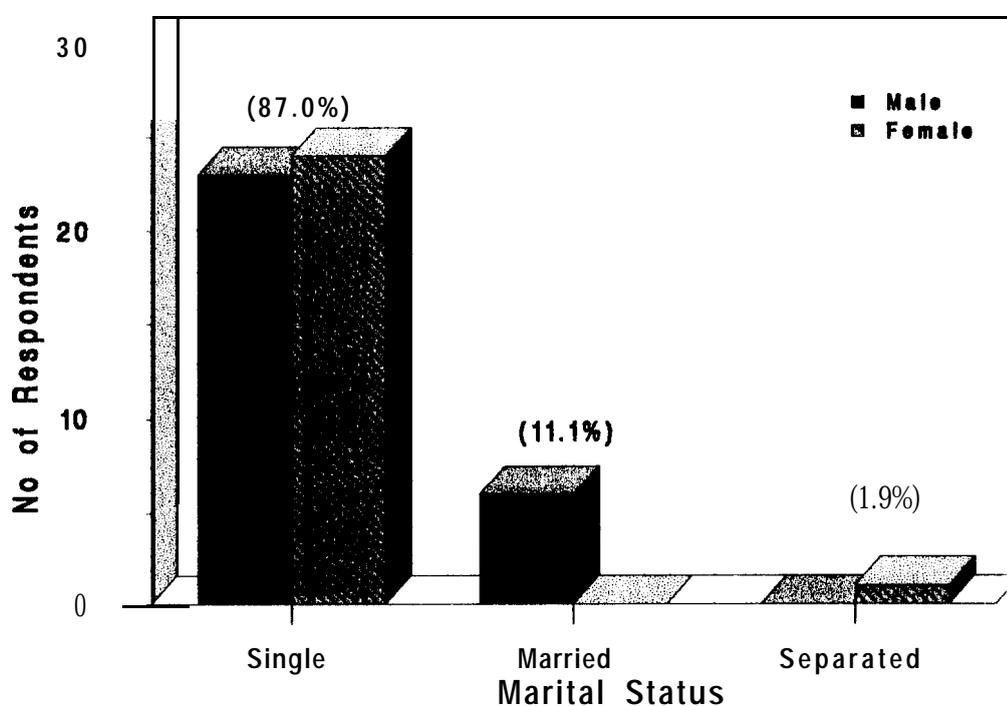
Length of stay in Britain was **categorised** as: one year, two years, three years, and more than three years. The following was found, 35.2% for one year, 31.5% for two years, 18.5% for three years, and 14.8% for more than three years (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: **Distribution of respondents by lenght of stay in Britain**

Value label	Value	Male	FemaleN		(%)
1 year	1	13	6	19	**35. 2**
2 year	**2**	**5**	**12**	**17**	**31. 5**
3 year	**3**	**4**	**6**	**10**	**18. 5**
> **3** year	**4**	**7**	1	**8**	**14. 8**
	N	**29**	**25**	**54**	**100. 0**

Figure 4.7: **Distribution of respondents according to lenght of stay in Britain**

Financial support was classified into four categories: parent, scholarship, self support, and others. It was found that 35.2% were on parental support, 40.7% were on scholarship, 1.9% were self-supported, and 20.4% were on other sources (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: **Distribution of respondents by financial support**

Value label	Value	Male	Female	N	(%)
Parent	1	12	7	19	35.2
Scholarship	2	13	9	22	40.7
Self	3	1		1	1.9
Others	4	2	9	11	20.4
did not answer	9	1		1	1.9
	N	29	25	54	100.0

Figure 4.8: **Distribution of respondents according to financial support**
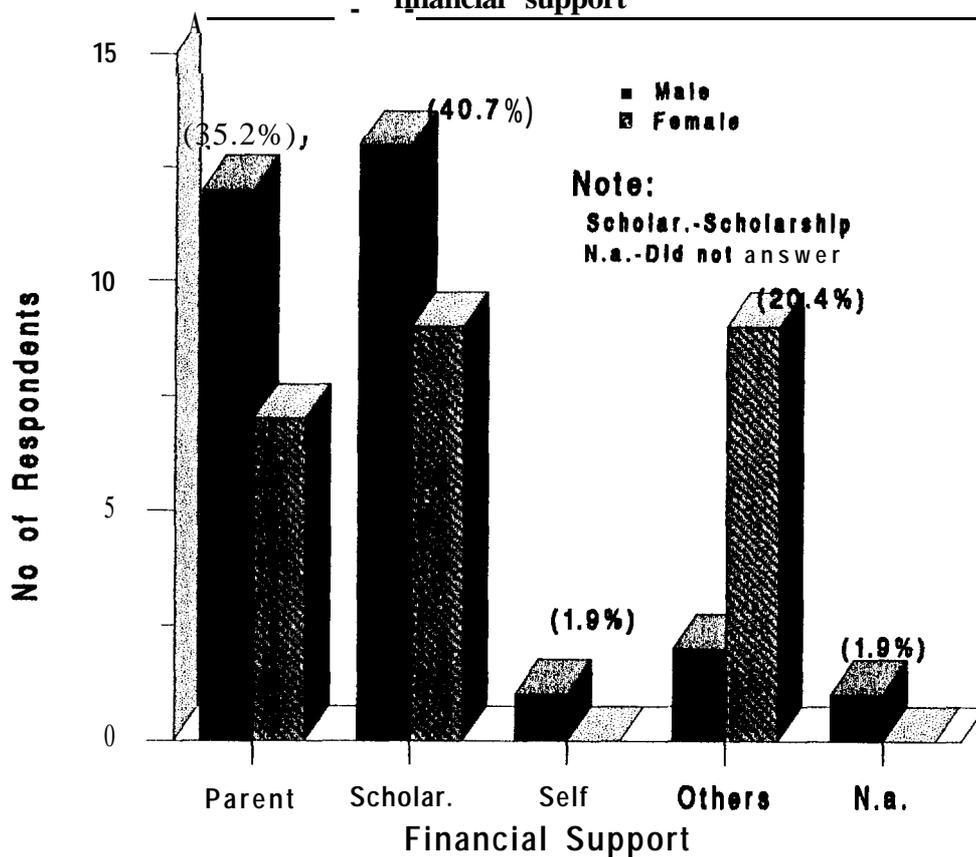
The 'use of counselling services' were clasified two categories: 'Yes' (for those using the services) and 'No' (for those not using the services). It was found that 72.2% students did not use the counselling services, and 24.1% used the counselling services (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.9:   Distribution of respondents by using counselling services.

Value label	Value	Male	Female	N	(%)
N o	1	23	16	39	72.2
Yes	2	5	8	13	24.1
did not answer	9	1	1	2	3.7
	N	29	25	54	100.0

Figure 4.9:   Distribution of respondents using counselling services
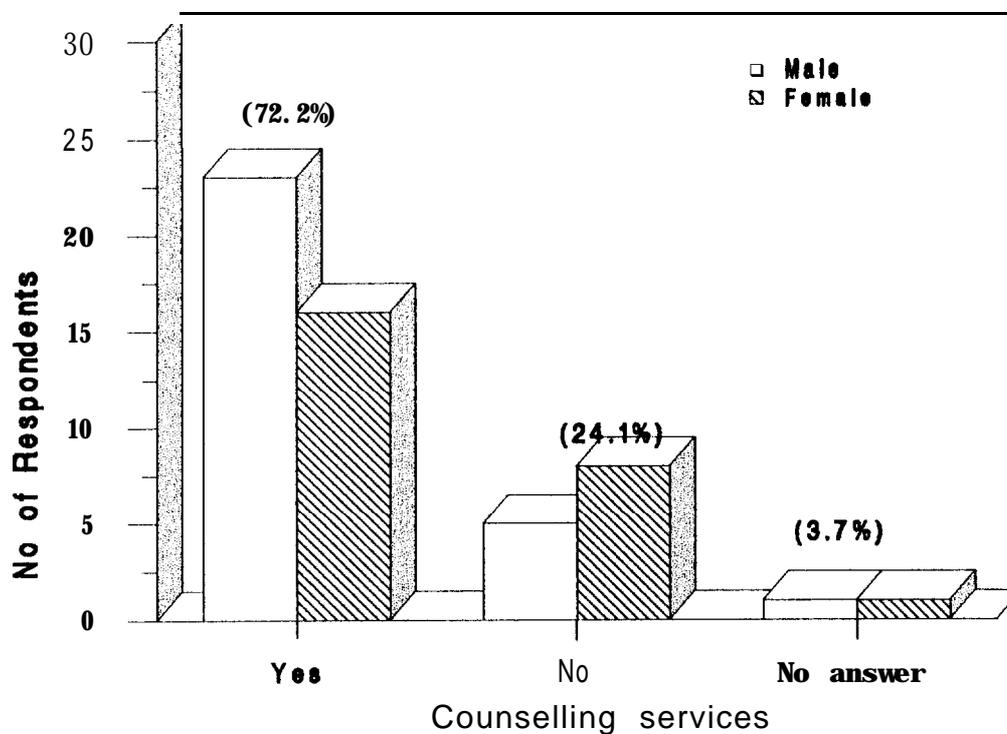
4.7   Summary

A questionnaire constructed by the researcher was used in the study. Questionnaires were administrated to overseas Malaysian students both from the undergraduate and post graduate cohorts at the University of Keele. A pilot study was also conducted.

CHAPTER 5

Results of the Survey

5.1   Introduction

The core of this study was to investigate the expressed problems of students at the university level, their attitudes toward counselling, and the relationships between gender, age, culture, religion, language, and race. For the purpose of this section, it was decided to analyse: first, problems faced by Malaysian students; second, counsellors' characteristics; third, the qualities of an effective and helpful counsellor; fourth, the helpful factors in counselling; fifth, reasons for considering going to counselling; and sixth, reasons for not going to counselling.

5.2   Results of the Various Sections

5.2.1   Problems faced by Malaysian students.

Problems faced by Malaysian students were classified into six categories: financial problems, study problems, personal problems, adaptation problems, homesick problems, and depression problems. It was found that study problem contributed **66.6%,** financial **57.4%,** personal **46.2%,** adaptation **42.5%,** homesick **9.3%,** and depression 1.9% of the respondents' problems (see Table 5. I).

Table 5.1: **Distribution of respondents facing difficulties during their stay in Britain.**

Year in Britain:	1 year		2 year		3 year		>3 year		N		Total
Gender:	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	%
Kind of problem:											
Finan- N	7	4	1	8	2	3	5	1	15	16	31
cial %	12.9	7.4	1.9	14.8	3.7	5.6	9.2	1.9	27.8	29.6	57.4
Study N	9	6	2	7	3	4	4	1	18	18	36
%	16.6	11.1	3.7	12.9	5.6	7.4	7.4	1.9	33.3	33.3	66.6
Perso- N	8	3	1	5	2	4	2	0	13	12	25
nal %	14.8	5.6	1.9	9.2	3.7	7.4	3.7	0.0	24.0	22.2	46.2
Adap- N	8	2	0	7	1	4	1	0	10	13	23
tation %	14.8	3.7	0.0	12.9	1.9	7.4	1.9	0.0	18.5	24.0	42.5
Home- N	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	1	5
sick %	7.4	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.4	1.9	9.3
Dep- N	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
press %	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	1.9

5.2.2 Counsellor's characteristics.

A chi-square test was applied to the relationship between students gender and counsellor's gender, and it was found to be statistically non-significant. X^2 (2, N= 54) = 0.32917. p >.05. This reflects the fact that both male and female students do not differ in their preferences for counsellors' gender. However, around 35 - 40% of respondents reported a preference for a counsellor of the same sex as themselves (see Table 5.2).

A chi-square test was applied to the relationship between students' gender and counsellor's age, and found to be statistically non-significant. X^2 (2, N= 54) = 3.60089, p >.05. This reflect that fact that both male and female students do not differ in their preferences regarding counsellor's age (see Table 5.3).

A chi-square test was applied to be the relationship between students' gender and counsellor's religion, and found to be statistically non-significant. X^2 **(2,** N= **54)** = **4.91665.** $p > .05$. This reflects the fact that both male and female students do not deffer in their preference of counsellor's religion. This shows that religion is not a criteria in choosing **counsellors** (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.2: Counsellor's gender and students' gender.

Gender	Value	Not Important	Different	Same
Male	1	**17** **58. 6%**	**2** **6. 9%**	10 **34. 5%**
Female	**2**	**14** **56. 0%**	1 **4. 0%**	10 **40. 0%**
	N	**31** **57. 4%**	**3** **5. 6%**	**20** **37. 0%**

Chi-Square		d.f	sign	
0.32917		**2**	**0. 8482**	

Table 5.3: Counsellor's age and students gender

Gender	Value	Not Important	Same	Older
Male	1	**9** **31. 0%**	**7** **24. 1%**	**13** **44. 8%**
Female	**2**	**14** **56. 0%**	**3** **12. 0%**	**8** **32. 0%**
	N	**23** **42. 6%**	10 **18. 5%**	**21** **38. 9%**

Chi-square		d.f	sign	
3. 60089		**2**	**0. 1652**	

A chi-square test was applied to the relationship between students' gender and counsellor's race, and found to be statistically non-significant. X^2 **(2,** N = **54**) =

2.03032, $p > .05$. This reflects that fact that both male and female students do not differ in their preference of counsellor's race. It means that race is not a criteria in choosing counsellors (see Table 5.5).

Table 5.4:   Counsellor's religion and students' gender

Gender	Value	Not Important	No Religion	Different	Same
Male	I	14 48.3%	5 17.2%	10 34.5%	0 0.0%
Female	2	16 64.0%		9 36.0%	0 0.0%
	N	3 0 55.6%	5 9.3%	19 35.2%	0 0.0%
Chi-square 4.91665		d.f 2	sign 0.0856		

Table 5.5:   Counsellor's race and students' gender

Gender	Value	Not Important	Different	Same
Male	I	15 51.7%	1 3.4%	13 44.8%
Female	2	17 68.0%		8 32.0%
	N	3 2 59.3%	1 1.9%	21 38.9%
Chi-square 2.03032		d.f 2	sign 0.3632	

A chi-square test was applied to the relationship between students' gender and counsellor's language and found to be statistically non-significant. X^2 $(2, N = 54)$ $=1.20659$, $p > .05$. This reflects the fact that both male and female students did not

deffer in their preferences of the counsellor's language. Therefore, that language is not a criteria in choosing **counsellors** (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.6: Counsellor's language and students' gender

Gender	Value	Not Important	Different	Same
Male	1	19 67.9%		9 32.1%
Female	2	16 66.7%	1 4.2%	7 29.2%
	N	35 67.3%	1 1.9%	16 30.8%
Chi-square		d.f	sign	
1.20659		2	0.5470	

Table 5.7: Counsellor's culture and students' gender

Gender	Value	Not Important	Different	Same
Male	1	13 44.8%		16 55.2%
Female	2	11 44.0%		14 56.0%
	N	24 44.4%		30 55.6%
Chi-square .00372		d.f 1	sign 0.9513	

A chi-square test was applied to the relationship between students' gender and counsellor's culture, and found to be statistically no significant. X^2 (2, N = 54) = 0.00372 **p** > .05. This reflects the fact that both male and female students do not differ in their preferences of counsellor's culture. Culture is therefore is not a criteria in choosing

counsellors. However, around 55 - 56% of respondents reported a preference for counsellor a same culture as themselves (see Table 5.7).

5.2.3 <u>The qualities of an effective and helpful counsellor</u>.

Table 5.8: The qualities of an effective and helpful counsellor

Value		Least Important						Most Important		Score	Rank Order
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		

*Items

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
a	N	16	3	1	2	2	7	10	13	259	6
	%	29.6	5.6	1.9	3.7	3.7	13.0	18.5	24.1		
b	N	5	15	4	1	4	8	7	10	204	8
	%	9.3	27.8	7.4	1.9	7.4	14.8	13.0	18.5		
c	N	5	2	1	5	3	7	11	20	326	1
	%	4.3	3.7	1.9	9.3	5.6	13.0	20.4	37.0		
d	N	3	5	3	4	9	9	5	16	265	5
	%	5.6	9.3	5.6	7.4	16.7	16.7	9.3	29.6		
e	N	3	6	3	8	6	4	14	9	296	3
	%	5.7	11.3	5.7	15.1	11.3	7.5	26.4	17.0		
f	N	0	1	10	4	11	6	13	10	310	2
	%	0.0	1.9	18.5	5.6	20.6	11.1	24.1	18.5		
g	N	4	3	2	9	6	12	10	8	288	4
	%	7.4	5.6	3.1	16.7	11.1	22.2	18.5	14.8		
h	N	5	4	10	8	3	8	10	6	256	7
	%	9.3	7.4	18.5	14.8	5.6	14.8	18.5	11.1		

* Item (see Appendix B, page 95)

a   The counsellor has previous teaching experience.

b   The counsellor has **experince** being a client himself.

c	The counsellor is able to understand students from the students' point of view.
d	The counsellor is a 'real' person, not just doing a job.
e	The counsellor is able to accept what student tell him or her without passing judgment.
f	The counsellor has a lot of knowledge about the problem that students experience.
g	The counsellor will share with the students what he or she honestly feel toward them
h	The counsellor is able to explain why student have had problems

The results shown above indicate that the most important and the least important qualities of the **counsellors** are as follows (see Table 5.9).

Table: 5.9: The important qualities of an effective and helpful counsellor

Rank Order	Item	Most Important							Least Important
		8	7	6	**5**	4	3	2	1
1	c.	The counsellor is able to understand students from the students' point of view							
2	f.	The counsellor has a lot of knowledge about the problem that students experience.							
3	e.	The counsellor is able to accept what students tell him or her without passing judgement.							
4	**g**.	The counsellor will share with the students what he or she honestly feels towards them.							
5	d.	The counsellor is a 'real' person, not just doing a job.							
6	a.	The counsellor has previous teaching experience							
7	h.	The counsellor is able to explain why students have had problems.							
8	b.	The counsellor has experienced being a client himself							

5.2.4   The helpful factors in counselling.

Table   5.10:   Helpful factors in counselling

	Value	SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1	Score	Rank Order
*Items								
a	N	23	22	4	5	0	225	4
	%	42.6	40.7	7.4	9.3	0.0		
b	N	34	20	0	0	0	250	1
	%	63.0	37.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
c	N	19	30	5	0	0	230	2
	%	35.2	55.6	9.3	0.0	0.0		
d	N	20	25	9	0	0	227	3
	%	37.0	46.3	16.7	0.0	0.0		
e	N	13	29	12	0	0	217	7
	%	24.1	53.7	22.2	0.0	0.0		
f	N	19	25	8	2	0	223	5
	%	35.2	46.3	14.8	3.7	0.0		
g	N	7	15	24	6	2	181	16
	%	13.0	27.8	44.4	11.1	3.7		
h	N	10	26	16	1	1	205	12
	%	18.5	48.1	29.6	1.9	1.9		
i	N	8	30	15	1	0	206	11
	%	14.8	55.6	27.8	1.9	0.0		
j	N	II	31	11	1	0	218	6
	%	20.4	57.4	20.4	1.9	0.0		
k	N	16	22	16	0	0	216	8
	%	29.6	40.7	29.6	0.0	0.0		
l	N	10	28	16	0	0	210	10
	%	18.5	51.9	29.6	0.0	0.0		
m	N	12	29	12	1	0	212	9
	%	22.2	53.7	22.2	1.9	0.0		
n	N	7	32	11	4	0	204	13
	%	13.0	59.3	20.4	7.4	0		
o	N	7	20	21	4	2	188	15
	%	13.0	37.0	38.9	7.4	3.7		
P	N	14	14	21	2	3	192	14
	%	25.9	25.9	38.9	3.7	5.9		

*Item (see appendix B, page 96)

a. Talking to someone interested in my problem.
b. Talking to someone who understand.
c. Attention given by counsellor.
d. Support offered by counsellor.
e. Advice given by counsellor.
f. Encouragement and reassurance given by counsellor.
g. Expression of strong emotion.
h. Instillation of hope.
i. Relizing I am not alone.
j. Further self-understanding.
k. Self-acceptance.
l. Gaining insight.
m. Problem clarification.
n. Gaining information
o. Behavioural change.
p. Problem solution.

The results show that the most helpful factors in counselling indicated by students

are following (see Table 5.11).

Table 5.11: The most helpful factors in counselling

Rank Order	Item	Most Helpful	5	4	3	2	1	Least Helpful
1	b	Talking to someone who understand.						
2	c	Attention given by counsellor.						
3	d	Support offer by counsellor.						
4	a	Talking to someone interested in my problem.						
5	f	Encouragement and reassurance given by counsellor.						
6	j	Further self-understanding.						
7	e	Advice given by counsellor.						
8	k	Self-acceptance.						
9	m	Problem clarification.						
10	l	Gaining insight.						
	1	Realizing I am not alone.						
12	h	Instillation of hope.						
13	n	Gaining information.						
14	p	Problem solution.						
15	0	Behaviour change.						
16	g	Expression of strong emotion.						

5.2.5 Reasons for considering going to counselling.

Table 5.12:   Reasons for consider going to **counselling**

	Value	SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1	Score	Rank Order
*Items								
a	N	7	18	22	5	2	185	4
	%	13.0	33.3	40.7	9.3	2		
b	N	12	26	13	2	1	208	2
	%	22.2	48.1	24.1	3.7	1.9		
c	N	17	20	14	1	2	211	1
	%	31.5	37.0	25.9	1.9	3.7		
d	N	4	13	23	10	4	165	6
	%	7.4	24.1	42.6	18.5	7.4		
e	N	7	16	14	14	3	172	5
	%	13.0	29.6	25.9	25.9	5.6		
f	N	8	26	16	2	2	198	3
	%	14.8	48.1	29.6	3.7	3.7		

*Item (see appendix B, page 98).
a. Counsellors are much more mature than me.
b. Counsellors have undergone training to help people.
c. Counsellors much more experienced in helping people to solve their problems.
d. The people around me cannot help me.
e. I do not want people who are related to me to know my problem.
f. I do not want people who are related to me to be affected by my problem.

The results shown above indicate that students would consider seeking counsellors for the following reasons: first, *'counsellors are much more experienced in helping people to solve their problems';* second, *'counsellors have undergone training to help people;* third, *'I do not want people who are related to me to be affected by my problem;* fourth, *'counsellors are much more mature than me';* fifth, *!I do not want people*

who are related to me to know my problem'; and lastly, *'the people around me cannot help me'.*

5.2.6 Reasons for not considering going to counselling.

Table 5.13: Reasons for not considering going to **counselling**

	Value	SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1	Score	Rank Order
*Items.								
a	N	8	23	19	4	0	197	2
	%	14.8	42.6	35.2	7.4	0.0		
b	N	7	6	21	15	5	157	7
	%	13.0	11.1	38.9	27.8	9.3		
c	N	8	22	20	2	2	194	3
	%	14.8	40.7	37.0	3.7	3.7		
d	N	5	18	24	5	2	181	4
	%	9.3	33.3	44.4	9.3	3.7		
e	*N*	1	15	24	10	4	161	6
	%	1.9	27.8	44.4	18.5	7.4		
f	*N*	7	13	25	9	0	198	1
	%	13.0	24.1	46.3	16.7	0.0		
g	*N*	2	13	18	15	6	152	8
	%	3.7	24.1	33.3	27.8	11.1		
h	*N*	0	18	28	6	2	170	5
	%	0.0	33.3	51.9	11.1	3.7		
i	N	0	6	12	15	21	111	9
	%	0.0	11.1	22.2	27.8	38.9		

*Items (see appendix B, page 98).
a. I prefer to solve problems by myself
b. Counsellors are strangers, I do not want to share my problems with strangers.
c. I prefer to ask friends for help they understand me better.
d. I prefer to consult my parents for they can help me better.

e. 1 prefer to consult my tutor as he or she can knows me
    better and I trust he or she can help me.
f. l know how best to solve my problem.
g. I do not want to be **labelled** as a problematic student.
h. I prefer to consult people in the religious organisation I go to.
i. My friends will laughs at me if I go for counselling.

The results show indicate that students would not consider going to counselling for that following reasons (see Table 5.14).

Table 5.14:   Reasons why respondents considered not going to counselling

Rank Order	Item	Strongly Agree	5	4	3	2	1	Strongly Disagree
1	f	I know how best to solve my problem.						
2	a	I prefer to solve the problem by myself.						
3	c	I prefer to ask friends for thier help because they understand me better.						
4	d	I prefer to consult my parents for they can help me better.						
5	h	I prefer to consult people in the religious organisation I go to.						
6	e	I prefer to consult my tutor as he or she knows me better. and I trust he or she can help me.						
7	b	Counsellors are strangers, I do not want to share my problem with strangers.						
8	g	I do not want to be **labelled** as a problematic student.						
9	i	My friends will laugh at me if go for counselling.						

5.3   Limitations of Research Metholodology

There are a few limitation in this research:

1. Since the study is basically descriptive in design, it might limits the generalizability of the findings;

2.   The small number of respondents further limits the generalizability of the research   findings;

3.   Though the research instruments have been piloted (to a small sample of 10 respondents), it is still felt that further pilot study needs to be done (especially at least to a sample of 30 respondents) as to refine the instruments further;

4.   This research has basically answered the specific primary and secondary objectives that have been identified in the study. However, it is felt that other research questions can be explored, given the time. Example of other research questions are: 'to seek different perceptions of married and single students toward the counselling services' or 'to seek different perceptions of undergraduate and post graduate students toward counselling services', etc, and

5.   Basically, the chi-square analysis has been used to seek relationships between gender, race, age, language, religion, and culture with regard to counsellors' selection. It is also felt that the multiple regression analysis can also be used to the predictor the various variables in selection of counsellors.

5.4   Summary

        In summary, the sample in this study was 54 Malaysian students who had come to Britain for their studies. The results showed that Malaysian students in Keele University identified six problem areas: fiancial problems, study problems, personal problems, adaptation problems, homesick, and depresssion problems. Meanwhile, their attitudes toward counselling, such as, counsellors' characteristics like same gender, age, religious, culture, and race were not significant for them.

        'The counsellor has experienced being a client himself'; 'the counsellor has a lot of knowledge about the problem that students experience'; and 'the counsellor is able to accept what students tell him or her without passing judgement' are most important qualities of counsellors considered by the respondents. The respondents reported that they would be comfortable when the counsellors exhibit the following attitudes: First,

'talking to someone who understand; second, *'attention given by counsellor';* third, *'support offered by counsellor';* fourth, *'talking to someone who is interested in my problem',* and fifth, *'encouragement and ressurance given by counsellor!*

Respondents also reported strongly that they would go for counselling for the following reasons: First, *'counsellors are much more experienced in helping people to solve their problem';* Second, *'counsellors have undergone training to help people';* third, *'I do not want people who are related to me to be affected by my problem, and* forth, *counsellors are much more mature than me!* Results also indicated that the respondents would not consider going to counselling because: first, *'They know how best to solve their problem ';* second, *'they prefer to solve problem by themselves',* and third, *'they prefer to ask friends for help, their friends understand them better!*

CHAPTER 6

Discussion of Results

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the results of the study. The discussion will focus on problems faced by Malaysian students, the attitudes toward **counsellors** characteristics, the factors and qualities of an effective and helpful **counsellor,** and reasons for considering going or not going for **counselling.** A summary concludes this chapter.

6.2 Problems Faced by Malaysian Students

The major problems faced by Malaysian students in this survey is related to the area of study (see Table 5.1). It included academic problems, language problems, work pressure, examination problems, work load, etc. For the study problems, some of their descriptions are as folllows: *'a lot **of** assignments to be done: 'language problems', 'difficulty to communicate with **English** people', 'give-up with studies', 'work pressures', 'study skill problems',* and *'examination pressures'.*

Most of the respondents reported being worried about their examinations. When they came to the university, they had high expectations of academic achievement because they are good students. They are selected student to come here, but later as time goes on, expectations become more realistic. Some of them felt a lack of self confidence, feeling threatened by the more expressive and articulative home students. Some students seemed to have a problem relating to their tutors. They were not able to develop a good relationship with the academic staff. This result shows some similarity with Krishnasamy (1994) who found that respondents experienced racial discrimination.

Upon further examination, it was clear that they perceived such discrimination mostly in their respective departments. Some of them made the following remarks: *'because **of** language was not fit to do English, a lot **of disrepancy** in markings and putting overseas students down due to **English** grammar', 'this factor has repetitively*

been used as a reason by the lecturers when giving low marks', and *'I feel some tutors are prejudiced against overseas students'.*

There seemed to be a gap between the students and the teaching staff. There might also be different teaching methodology from their home country. The students felt that they needed some time to adjust to the English style of lecturing and tutorials. However, it is difficult to get a clear picture of what the students perceive as discrimination. It might be because that students academic capability were be low or the students might be in a department pursuing a course that he or she is not particularly interested in. Thus they might not be taking personal responsibility for his or her poor academic performance by attributing racist tendencies on the part of the tutor. It is possible that some tutors might be **practising** preferential treament due to their own personality traits. When analysing this situation, it would be pertinent to bear in mind that the Malaysian students come from an educational setting that discourages overt expression which is considered impolite. Students and young people are taught to revere their teachers and observe a respectful silence in the classroom. Krishnasamy (1994, **p.40)** said that 'this attitude stems from the philosophical heritage of all the three main races in Malaysia where the teacher is seen as a "guru" (teacher). Students in Malaysia schools usually speak only when addressed by the "guru" and the interactive styles of teaching is not prevalent in Malaysia. In British context, the Malaysian students might find that this attitude is not understood or favoured. This might lead to misunderstanding on both sides'

Of all the problems experienced, the most common problem described by the Malaysian students in the main survey is related to language difficulties. For example, one student gave a brief description as the following: *'Language is a big problem because I am not familiar with the **pronounciation',*** and *'the main problem is the language, when I learn and communicate with local people in English, not a language of my mother tongue',* and *'sometimes I find it hard to express my self in the right words'.*

In other words, language problem may be greatly related to communication and writing. It also affects their academic achievement as mentioned earlier. However, they might overcome this problem when they stay longer in Britain, Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1966) found that confidence in one's ability to speak the language in an important condition for satisfactory adjusment.

The second problem area of great concern to Malaysian students or respondents at Keele is that of the financial problem. 57.4% of the respondents stated that they are worried about their finances. Some of them made comments as follows: *'it is too expensive to live in this country', 'I had to work because the cost of living is very high', 'I am worried about money, not enough money', 'allowance given barely adequate', 'I am having difficulty in paying the fees', 'looking for summer, part-time employment',* and so on.

Although the majority of them are government sponsored students, they still seem to worry about finances. This could be due to several factors. One of the factor may be that they do not know how to manage themselves, especially how to spend the money approriately. This is because they were new in this country. The longer they live here, the problems might be reduced (see Table 5.1).

According to Krishnasamy (1994), Malaysian students worry about finance may be because of several factors: *First,* the amout of money each student receives is just sufficient to cover necessities with no surplus for extras. *Second,* some students may not be able to budget their income. *Thirdly,* having come from a third world country, there seems to be an inevitable comparison with Malaysian prices. *Forthly,* there is a constant feeling of insecurity as they have no access to loan in Britain like their British counterparts. Many Malaysian students also resent having to pay full-fees and this seems to give rise to feelings of being discriminated upon.

The third problem faced by Malaysian students is that of the personal problems. It contributes 46.2% of the respondents having this problems (see Table 5.1). Personal

problems include relationship with people, medical problems, career choice, feeling anxious, feeling bored, problem with the family, and so on.   Some of them made descriptions as follows: *'I have problem relationship with room-mates or friends', 'problems to communicate to English people', 'feeling loneliness', 'I am feeling bored and sometimes fed-up', 'difficulty in communication, hearing and writing: 'I worried about my career', 'boring- nothing much to do excetp for the casino',* and so on.

This finding is similar to the study done by **Perkin** et al. (1977). They found that overseas students have adjusment difficulties like racial, language, unfriendliness of the people from the community, homesickness, and interaction with people from their own country. Based on the finding, the researcher recommended that organized orientation programme for international students should be provided, more opportunities for interaction between the international srudents and local students be arranged, and better information about the available personal services and facilities for international students be   provided.

Another problem faced by Malaysian students is adaptation.   42.5% of the respondents stated that they faced problem about adaptation in the new envairoment and 9.3% of the respondents have homesick problem (see Table 5.1). Some of their description are: *'I am feeling difficult to adjust to the different social life', 'the first few week, independent made me panic', 'food taste is not lovely', 'culture shock', 'social problem, some English people are too racist', 'getting use to be alone and independent for the first few weeks', 'difficulty in getting on and trusting people from home', 'I felt conflict between my culture and British culture', 'missing family and home', 'I feel homesick',* and so on.

All the statements above show that most of the students faced **difficulties** to adjust themselves in the new environment, especially for the first few weeks when they come to this country. It is a normal process of adaptation to cultural stress. Its symtoms include psychological strain, a sense of loss, rejection, confusion, surprise, anxiety, and

feelings of importance (d' Ardenne & Mahtani, 1989). Cultural adjusment which is based on the understanding that different personallities will respond differently to a new culture.

Feeling of missing their family and home is another problem faced by Malaysian students. This may be because Malaysian students come from a closed-family system. The Malaysian family plays a crucial part in one's development (Krishnasamy, 1994). Malaysian students tend to look to their parents for guidance and support, especially before they are married. When the Malaysian students came to Britain, they find it difficult to be independent, probably need more time to adjust themselves. Table 5.1 shows that a number of students get less problem when they stayed longer in Britain. This is because they would have overcome their problems by then.

Depression is another problem faced by Malaysian students. A small number of students felt this difficulty (1.9%). Some of their descriptions are as follows: *'worried about my examination', 'feeling depress about my future', 'felt some sense of discrimination', 'no confidence about my study', 'feeling anxious',* and so on.

6.3   Seeking Help When Students Having Problems

Students seem to turn to tutors and friends in dealing with study problems. It includes academic problems, work pressure, unsatified with the course and so on (see Appendix C). This finding seems similar to the findings of the studies conducted by Chow (1989) and Krishniasamy (1994) on Hong Kong and Malaysian students at Keele University. However, to what degree they found the answers or help satisfactory from their tutors and friends and also what kind of questions and help they ask and seek from them will need to be found out in further research.

The result also shows that when students faced social problems or personal problems, such as relationship with freinds, feeling depressed, feeling anxious, sexual problems, problems with boyfriends or girlfriends, feeling lonely, family problems, discrimination problems, and so on, they tended to turn to their peer groups or their

partner from the fellow country. This may be because they have no **difficulties** in communication and in understanding one another.

Other problems, such as financial problems, religion, adaptation, feeling bored, and so on, again were referred to their friends. There was no significant number who **seeked** help from the nighltline. A very small number of students referred to the counselling centre for advise in career choice. This may be due to the fact that they felt futile to talk to them as they felt that they would not understand their problems. Similarly, they felt that **nighline** is only for white students in contrast to these students who are Malay or Muslim people, and Chinese or Buddhist.

Krishnasamy **(1994),** interviewed The Head of the Counselling Centre in Keele. They felt that very few overseas students made use of the counselling services although the centre makes every effort to **publicise** it's services to the campus population.

This result also seems similar to the finding of the study conducted by Al-Shawi (1990). There were significant differences in the level of problems experienced by overseas students. The problem areas of high frequency were social relations, followed by the area of financial problems. The majority of overseas students who experienced major problems **prefered** to discuss them with their friends or college tutors. Few of those students said they discussed their major problem with either counsellors or wardens in the university. Cook et al. (1984) found that counsellors are seen as helpful in career choice and stress-related or anxiety problems.

The rankings were also similar to what Webster and Fretz (1978) found in their research on university students. The students would be more ready to seek help from counselling centres when experiencing educational or vocational or career problems rather than experiencing emotional problems. Pedersen (1991) has also reported that international students are much more willing to disclose a personal problem to a **co-**national rather than to any other counselling resources on campus except in the case where the problem must be kept confidential from co-nationals.

6.4   Counsellor's Characteristics

6.4.1 Counsellor's gender.

In the area concerning how students perceive the counsellor's characteristics, most of the respondents (male and female) 57.4% think that the gender of the counsellor is not important (see Table 5.2). This is quite different from the hypothesis that students would prefer a counsellor of the same gender as they would find it easier to disclose themselves and there is a **likehood** for better understanding. However, 37.0% prefer the counsellor's gender to be the same gender rather than different.   This finding seems similar to the finding of the study conducted by Chow (1991) on Hong Kong students in a British university.

6.4.2 Counsellor's age.

In terms of age, most of the respondents (42.6%) think that the age of the counsellor is not important (see Table 5.3). However, there are two different opinions between the male and female students. Most of the male students (44.8%) prefer a counsellor who is older than themselves while only 3 1 .0% felt it is not important. 32.0% of the female respondents prefer for counsellor to be older than themselves while 56.0% felt it is not important. This is also quite different from the hyphothesis which stated that students would prefer a counselor to be much older. This situation can only be applied for students who consider counsellor's age is important to them.   In other words, the hyphothesis can only be considered for male students, but not for female.

6.4.3 Counsellor's religion.

In terms of religion, 55.6% of the respondents think that it is not important for their counsellor to have the same religion (see Table 5.4).   35.3% of the respondents think that they must be of different religion.   However, there is a different degree of agreement between male and female students. 64.3% of the female students think it is not important, but only 48.3% of the male students think it is not important. Thus, again the hyphothesis that students would prefer a counsellor of the same religion is rejected.

6.4.4 **Counsellor's race.**

For the concern of counsellor's race, the majority of the respondents (59.3%) think that this is not important (see Table 5.5). 38.9% think that the counsellors should be of the same race, and only 1.9% think that the counsellors should be different. It means that race is not a criteria in choosing counsellors.   The issue of counsellor preference is far from settled, and most of the studies in this matter show conflicting results, some in favour of similar race counsellors while some in the opposite direction (Thompson **&** Cimbolic, 1978).

6.4.5 **Counsellor's language.**

In the area related to counsellor's language, most of the respondents (67.3%) think that this is not important (see Table 5.6). 30.8% of the students think that the counsellor should use the same language, and only 1.9% think that it should be of different of to that of their mother's tongue. For those who prefer the same language, it is probably because language plays a very important role in counselling for them.   Sue (1981) has indicated that counselling has frequently been seen similar to talk therapy. Some of the students, especially when having difficulties with the second language (English), may not feel very competent to speak in a language other than their mother's tongue. They may **find** difficulties in expressing themselves thoroughly and also in listening to the counsellor. However, generally this result shows that language is not a criteria in choosing counsellors.

6.4.6 **Counsellor's culture.**

In terms of culture (see to Table 5.7), the result shows that is no significant difference between respondents' gender and counsellor's culture. It means that culture is not a criteria in choosing counsellor of the same culture. This may be because most of the respondents (64.8%) have been in Britain for more than one year (see to Table 4.7). However, descriptively, it was found that about more than 50% of respondents **prefered** counsellors of the same culture.

In conclusion, these findings are different from what had be done by Higginbotham (1977). He found that overseas students as clients may express preferences for counsellors of similar racial background. There are also preferences for counsellors based on such matter as sex and age. However in his study, he found that Mexican students had high regard for counsellors who came from a different ethic group and had favourable attitude toward counselling.

According to Al-Shawi (1990), it would seem likely that race by itself may not be of importance for overseas students in United Kingdom because when they arrive in Britain their expectations are not to find counsellors from the same race or from their same country. There are sure to be individual differences in preference and other factors have not been clarified by the research so far. According to Sundgerg (1977, p.38), 'the relative importance of the counsellor's race, age, and sex, is likely to be highly susceptible to local reputation and even national mass media effects'.

6.5 The Qualities of an Effective and Helpful Counsellor

The results (see Table 5.8 & 5.9) show that respondents indicated that the most important qualities of an effective helpful student counsellor are: *'the counsellor is able to understand students from the students's own view'; 'the counsellor has a lot of knowledge about the problems that students experiences'; 'the counsellor is able to accept what students tell him or her without passing judgement';* and *'the counsellor will share with the students what he or she honestly feels toward them'.*

Such a result indicates that the core conditions of empathy, genuineness, congruence, and acceptance proposed by client-centered therapy are considered by students as the most important qualities of a counsellor. The result also shows that relationship and understanding between client and counsellor is very important. It is similiar to what Rogers (1957) defined about the characteristics of the relationship, it is: two persons are in psychological contact; the first, *'whom we shall term the client, is in a state of incongruence, being vulnerable or anxious';* the second person, *'whom we call*

the therapist, is congruent or integrated in the relationship'; 'the therapist experiences unconditional positive regard for the client'; 'the therapist expereince an empathic understanding of the client 's internal frame of reference and endeavours to communicate this experience to the client'; and *'the comunication of the client of the therapist's empathic understanding and unconditional positive regard is to a minimal degree achieved'.* The element of congruence, genuineness, acceptance, care, permissiveness, and empathy penetrate such a relationship.

Amongst all these qualities, the least important ones are *'the counsellor has experience being a client himself,* and *'the counselor has previous teaching experience'* which are not directly related to the counsellor's work. Again, this suggests that students considered the attitudes of counsellors as far more important than his or her expertise or experience. This findings is similar to the the study done by Higginbotham (1977). He found that overseas students preference for counsellors were based on having some prior information about the counsellor from someone who had experienced counselling.

6.6   Helpful Factors in Counselling

The results (see Table 5.10 **&** 5.11) show that respondents unanimously agreed that the most helpful factors for them to seek counsellors are: *'talking to someone who understands'; 'attention given by counsellor'; 'support offered by counsellor'; 'talking to someone interested in my problems'; 'encouragement and reassurance given by counsellor',* and so on. This study seems similar to the finding of study conducted by Murphy et al. (1984). Their study on clients receiving mainly cognitive-behaviourai psychotherapy have found the following curative factors which they felt have helped them in their treament. These are: *'getting advice from the therapist'; 'talking to someone interested in their problem'; 'encouragement and reassurance'; 'talking to someone who understands',* and so on. The least helpful factors in counselling are: *'expression of strong emotion'; 'behavoiural change'; 'problem solutions'; 'gaining information';* and *'instillation of hope'.*

This result indicates that this will affect readiness to consult a counsellor and their approach to the counsellor when they meet him. Counsellor must understand their perception and should give strong surpport for them. Atention and support given by counsellor are very important, rather than problem-solving. It is important that student counsellors who are concerned with multi-cultural counselling should first have some general ideas about other cultures. In cultural contact, especially in a counselling relationship, part of the counsellors' role is to accept unconditionally the client. As a result the counsellor should be in a position to understand the cultural background of the client and be non-judgmental (Rogers, 1984).

Burroughs (1987) said that the experiences of overseas students before their arrival in Britain have positively or negatively affected their expectations of what they encounter during their stay in Britain. The greatest barrier in the relationship between a counsellor and an overseas student as a client is the lack of understanding of **socio**-psychological background of overseas students. The counsellor idealy should assimilate completely **the values** of the other cultures to understand the interests, world view, attitudes, and perceptions of those whom he would in some way assist.

According to Fukuhara (1973), Asian students are for instance, often feel a serious stigma in going to counselling services in contrast to Western students, and there are cultural differences in understanding the process of counselling. On the other hand, sometimes the students preference for counselling styles maybe more important than the race difference (Atkinson et al., 1978). Generally speaking, this result could be important for the counsellor to give attention to and to develop their skills when dealing with different clients from various cultures.

6.7   Reasons for Considering to Counselling

Generally the respondents agreed with all the reasons for considering going for counselling (see Table 5.12). The result indicates that the *'counsellor'* rather than other *'people'* is the major reason why respondents would seek counselling. It was agreed: *first,*

'counsellors have much more experience in helping people to solve their problems'; *second,* 'counsellors have undergone training to help people'; *third,* 'I do not want people who are related to me to be affected by my problem'. Respondents to the above, **68.5%, 70.3%,** and 62.9% of the respondents expressed their agreement and even strongly agreed with these reasons. 46.3% of respondents also agreed that *'counsellors are much more mature than they are'.* This may be reasonable because most of them are young people. More than 70% of them are below 25 years old (see Table 4.2). This result also indicates that probably, *'the people around the students cannot help them'* and *'they do not want people who are related to them to he affected by their problems'.* So not wanting *'people who are related to them to know their problem',* they will consider to go for counselling

6.8   Reasons for Not Considering to Counselling

The result shows (see Table 5.13 & 5.14) that respondents only agreed not to consider going for counselling because: *First,* 'they know how best to solve their problems'; *Second,* 'they prefer to solve problems by themselves'; *Third,* 'they prefer to ask their friends for help because they understand them better', and *Fourth,* 'they prefer to consult their parents for they help them better'. The reasons the respondents disagreed **are**: *first,* 'their friends will laugh at them if they go for counselling'; *second,* 'they do not want to be **labelled** as a problematic student', and *third,* 'counsellors are strangers, they do not **want** to share their problems with strangers'.   For the reasons mentioned, it is no surprise to find that only 24.1% of the respondents have used the **counselling sevices** available in Keele (see Table 4.9 and Figure 4.9).

In conclusion, students who considered to go or not to go for counselling might be much more influenced from their cultural background. As mentioned earlier overseas students come to Britain with difference values arising from their different cultural backgrounds, and of these values, of course, some are different from the values of the British society.   It is important that the student counsellors should have knowledge of these different value held by overseas students. The **counsellor's** role has been defined as

consisting of all the activities performed by the student counsellor both during the counselling session and also before and after this process (Milner, 1974).

6.9   Summary

In summary, the major problems faced by Malaysian students were related to study, financial, personal, adaptation, homesick, and depression.   Most of them will prefer their own friends or tutors to help them when they are having problems. Counsellor's gender, age, religion, language, and culture are not significant characteristics for them to choose counsellor.   The result indicates that the core conditions of empathy, genuiness, congruence, and acceptance proposed by **client**-centered therapy are considered by students as the most important qualities of the counsellor.

The main reason considered for going to counselling is that of the *'counsellor'* himself rather than other *'people'*.   Meanwhile the reasons students considered for not going to counselling are because that they prefer to solve the problem themselves, and prefer friends who are can help and understand them better.

Generally speaking, knowledge of other cultures gives the counsellor who is concerned with multi-cultural counselling a high facility and greater communication with clients, and helps the counsellor to understand his or her personality and sees beyond the problems which face the client. Also the knowledge of other cultures helps a counsellor to select the most effective techniques.

CHAPTER 7

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the survey. The implications for further research will also be presented.

7.2   Summary and Conclusions

As mentioned earlier the purpose of this study is to investigate the problems faced and the help **seeked** by Malaysian students, and to find out their attitudes toward counselling. It is hope that the findings of this study will provide an alternative outlook for counselling services especially for cross-cultural counselling.

Specifically, the aim in helping overseas students, especially Malaysians student is to identify those problem areas which concerned them.   Efforts were made at determining specific types of problems. It is also the objective of this study to examine the resources referred to by the students when they are having problems, and to **identify** the reasons why they might seek counselling and the preferences of Malaysian students in seeking counselling services.

The questionnaires were design by the researcher and made up three major parts. Essentially it consists of: (a) the personal **backgroud;** (b) a survey about their problems and need, and (c) a survey of students attitudes toward counselling. An initial pilot study was conducted in Keele University, in which 13 questionnaires were distrubuted and 10 were returned. Due to the shortage of time, the researcher was only able to make corrections from the students' responses or comments about the questionnaires. There was no time to conduct a second pilot study.

The study was limited to Malaysian students from Keele University from both levels of undergraduate and post-graduate studies. They were mainly Malaysian students who are studying in the academic year of 1994-1995.   The sample consisted of 54

students.   Of these 53.7% were male and 46.3% were female. The majority of respondents were less then 25 years old.

This study shows that the major problems experienced by Malaysian students are related to study, financial, personal, adaptation, homesick, and depression problems. These study, also shows that when Malaysian students faced problems, they tend to refer to the appropriate resources for help, especially friends from their country. **Counsellor's** characteristics like same gender, age, religion, culture, and race were not significant for them.

'The counsellor has experienced being a clients himself'; 'the counsellor has a lot of knowledge about the problem that students experience',- and *'the counsellor is able to accept what students tell him or her without passing judgement'* are most important qualities of an effective counsellor considered by students for seeking help from counsellors.   Respondents reported that it would be comfortable for them to seek counsellors who are: *(a) talking to someone who understands; (b) attention given by counsellor; (c) support offered by counsellor; (d) talking to someone who is interested in my problem; (e) encouragement and reassurance given by counsellor,* and so on. This result indicated that the core conditions of empathy, genuiness, congruence, and acceptance proposed by client-centered therapy are considered by students as the most important qualities of the counsellor.

With respect to reasons for going to counselling, the result indicated by the students as being the major one lies in the *'counsellor'* rather than other *'people'.* Meanwhile, the main reason students would consider for not going to counselling is because they prefer to solve the problem themselves and friends can help them rather than going for counselling.

In conclusion, overseas students, especially Malaysian students have great difficulties in financial problems, study problems, culture shock, adaptation, personal problem, and feeling depressed and loneliness. These may result from the new culture

and the strange environment. One of the interesting result shows that those students who had major problems, would consult their friends or tutor, but not the counsellors.

For counsellors who work in multi-cultural settings, this means that they must fit themselves for multi-cultural environment and understand clearly the role of helping overseas students in this area. There are a number of other characteristics of culturally effective counsellors doing their work with overseas students such as understanding of the socio-political forces affecting these students. It is hoped that student counsellors have already demonstrate many of these characteristics. Training courses and counselling services should ensure that the opportunities are given for trainee counsellors and **practising** counsellors to extend and consolidate their skills in counselling.

7.3   Recommendations

7.3.1 Implications of research findings.

The number of Malaysian students in universities and other educational institutions throughout Britain increased steadily until recently. Most of these students have not remained in this country **after** finishing their study. But during their study, Malaysian students encountered a number of problems in many different areas. According to **Dillard** and Chisolm **(1983),** many of these problems may result from disparities in many cultures represented by overseas students.

This study shows that study problems are more related to language difficulties. This issue should be understood by the British universities and by the countries which send their students abroad, and also by the students themselves. For the students having these **difficulties,** they have to attend English courses before starting their studies at the univerisities, but some do not have this opportunity. Many universities have given the opportunities to overseas students to take part in a week or more on intensive English language courses at the beginning of their terms. This facility would help in some ways but it is not enough for overseas students to become fluent in the new language.

The country which is responsible for sending students to study should give enough opportunities for them to have their English tuitions before the students start their studies. Arrangements may be made with the British Council to do this tuitions in their own countries before the students leave. The overseas students also have some responsibilities when they found that they have **difficulties** in English language. They have to try hard and **practise** the language in the new environment.

Another problem faced by Malaysian students are related to financial problems. This study recommends that university should try to provide temporary employment for overseas students. As another resource, universities may offer other facilities, for example, a loan or fund for immediate application. This study also recommends that each institution, prior to enrolling overseas students, to determine what these students perceive as problems and actively develops program and explores ways to reduce their difficulties and hardship. Action of this type will allow for more socialization and more meaningful educational experience on the part of the students.

Overseas students may experience less culture-shock if they were to know more about the general norms or standards of behaviour which they might expect on their arrival. In this case, advance knowledge may be practical for overseas students. This imformation should be provided to them before their arrival in Britain through publication, lectures, and discussion groups. 'The information should contain practical facts which they would need to know immediately upon their arrival. Overseas students need help in the preparation of their theses and a greater understanding of world culture. However, when they arrive in this country some preparation or some guidance have to be considered. This study recommends that specific programs should be designed to integrate the overseas students into the social life of the university and that in particular **counselling** programms for all overseas students must take into account the fact that the national origin tends to affect the severity and type of problems of overseas student.

The findings of this research are almost similar to Krishnasamy's (1994) study. He suggested that overseas students perceived the tutor-student relationship as important. This indicates that it is of vital importance for tutors to build a working relationship with overseas students from the beginning as more often than not, tutors operate as the first point of contact overseas students have with the institution. As such, tutors would be having a working knowledge of the expectations and weaknesses of overseas students. There should also be greater liaisons between the recruiting body of the institution with the various departments concerned so as to prevent a mismatch in terms of academic requirements, attitudes, and language competency.

Tutor must also be able to make appropriate referral to counsellors, for instance if students face personal problem. The academic relationship is important as overseas students expected a lot of feedback, as they were anxious whether their academic performance was up to the tutor's expectations and whether they would be able to pass. It is important that feedback is frequently given as to reduce the anxiety of overseas students.

Another important area of this research shows how important peer group are for the overseas students. Overseas students mostly preferred to be with their friends when they have problems during their study. Based on that result, peer counselling is only likely to be successful at Keele University. Krishnasamy (1994) suggested some of the reason as to why peer counselling programme are suitable at Keele University. They are as follows: (a) the peer counsellor has greater acceptance by new students because he or she comes from a similar cultural or national background; (b) the peer counsellor could relate more quickly to new students as they might have experienced similar difficulties as fresher themselves; (c) peer counsellors probably assumes an earlier and closer role with new students as compared to professional counsellors, and (d) there is no ethnic minority counsellor at Keele University's Counselling Centre

It has to be noted that the research had merely surveyed respondents who were not entirely involed in using the counselling services. This *is* indicated by the small percentage of respondents (24.1%) having used the services. Therefore, the research findings merely reflect the attitudes of non-users of the counselling services. It is hence forth suggested that other research employing users of the counselling services be conducted as it might generate different findings.

7.3.2 Implication for student counsellors.

Student counselling as 'a helping profession' is considered as part a comprehensive guidance for life as a whole. It takes into account students' total outlook on life in order to assist them in developing their individual aspirations, skills, and abilities. McCully (1970) (cited in Baidun, 1987, p. 137) summarised the effects of student counselling by attempting to define a helping profession as: 'One which, based upon its specialised knowledge, applies an intellectual technique to the existential affairs of others toward the end of enabling them to cope more efficiently with the dilemmas and paradoxes that characterize the human condition. Existential problems are defined as those which imply the need for choice on decision, but for which there is no sure external guide to the answer or solution,'.

For these reasons the researcher would make the following recommendation. It is hope that they would serve as guidelines to resolve the problems experienced by foreign students, this include Malaysian students.

1.   *Developing competencies for counselling foreign students.*

The finding of this study indicated no significant differences between respondents' gender to that of the counsellors' culture. However, descriptively, it was found that about more than 50% of respondents prefered counsellors of the same culture, whereas the remainder felt that it was not important. Therefore, it is strongly felt that developing counsellors' competencies in foreign cultures is much desired.

Counsellors cannot be experts on all of the world's culture, but they can develop a sound understanding of their own cultural values and the way their own culture affects people from elsewhere. It is important that student counsellors who are concerned with multi-cultural counselling should have some general idea first about other cultures. In cultural contact, especially in a counselling relationship, part of the counsellor's role is to accept the client unconditionally. As a result the counsellor should be in a position to understand the cultural background of the client and be non-judgemental (Rogers, 1984).

Sundberg (198 1, p.3 15), pointed out that 'the effectiveness of intercultural counselling will be enhanced by the counsellor's general sensitivity to communications, both verbal and non-verbal, and by a knowledge of communication styles in other culture'. Parker (1988) learned three concepts that helped him to become an effective cross-cultural counsellor. *First,* counsellors should be aware of their own attitudes towards minorities and change the negative ones. *Second,* counsellors should have knowledge about the cultures of minority groups. *Third,* counsellors must develop counselling skills with the goals of minority clients. In addition to that, Parker suggested ways to develop sensitivity, knowledge, and skills. These included becoming personally involved with minority group, reading ethnic literature, **practising** counselling ethnic minorities, and exploring personal feelings and beliefs about minorities.

Sabnani et al. (1991) suggested that there are five stages in the development of the white counsellor's competencies in cross-cultural counselling. In **the** *first* stage, there is lack of awareness of one's own culture as well as other ethnic cultures. In the *second* stage, there is awareness of one's stereotypes and racist feeling of superiority and its influence on members of ethnic groups. In *third* stage, there is an inclination to **over-**identify with minority groups. The *fourth* stage sees a withdrawal into one's own culture. The *fifth* stage is the redefinition and integration stage where one develops an identity and incorporates whiteness'.

According to Barker (1990), the basic skills needed to satisfactory handling of problems faced by foreign students are the ability to listen, the ability to observe, the use of body language, and the ability to ask questions.   Sue et al. (1992) proposed 3 1 competencies which specify attitudes, skills and knowledge needed for effective cross-cultural counselling. These concentrated on three aspects of the counsellor's functioning which are: counsellor being aware of their own values and biases; counsellor being aware of the culture and background of the clients; and counsellor needing to acquire appropriate cross-cultural intervention strategies. These are outlined below:

a. *Counsellors have to he aware of their values and biases.*

They need to explore their own values and respect differences that exist between them and their foreign student clients. This is important because counsellors who are insensitive to their values may impose them on their minority clients. They need to check their communication style when they are dealing with clients, because breakdowns in communication may be attributed to the dynamic between them and their clients (Thompson & Lago, 1989).

b. *Counsellor need to be aware of culture and background of their clients.*

Obviously, counsellors cannot be experts in every culture, but they should acquire minimum knowledge of their clients.   Klinneberg (1985, p.34) pointed out that '. . . ..cultural factor are important to counsellors, and they have the responsibility of learning all they can about the cultural background of their clients. It is too much to ask that they become specialists on all cultures of the world; it is not impossible for them, however, to become aware of the range of values and patterns of behaviour of which human societies and individuals are capable and to learn as they can about the particular ethnic groups that constitute their clientele'.

c. *Counsellor need to acquire appropriate cross-cultural intervention strategies and adapt a range of helping responses to the needs of their clients.*

They should respect indigenous help that can be given to the clients from their own community, because such help may take place in religious contexts (Egan, 1990). Counsellors need to be able to send and receive both verbal and non-verbal messages as accurately and appropriately as possible. lvey et al. (I 987) suggested a model to enable counsellors to be effective in multicultural counselling. This model emphasizes careful listening and attending skills.

2.   *Strategies for effective counselling with foreign students.*

The following are modifications in style and approach that Western-trained counsellors can incorporate to be more effective in counselling foreign students (Thomas **& Althen,** 1989).

a.   *Modifying communicative style.*

Counsellors can modify their communicative styles to adapt to those of their clients in order to make them feel more comfortable. Some of the things to be considered are vocal volume, form of interaction, length of acceptable silence, length of conversational turn, eye contact and degree of explicitness, and openness. **d'Ardenne** and Mahtani **(1989),** it is further noted that, the **counsellor** needs to determine the client's basic skills and communication skills as well as particular abilities that are characteristic of **collectivist** cultures. They also emphasized the importance of non-verbal signals in communication.

b.   *Modifying counselling strategies, styles, and client's expectations.*

In order to decide *on* the best treatment strategy to use, the **counsellor** should know the client's cultural values. A study by Thomas (1985) (cited in Thomas **& Althen,** 1989) found that counsellors who paid attention to the wants, wishes, and desires of family and company as they related to a student client were considered more effective and culturally aware.   According to Sue and Sue (1990) many cultures view the psychological unit operation as the family, group or collective society. When dealing

with foreign students, counsellor should be conscious of the foreign students' need to be identified with their family and community. This would go a long way in helping their clients.

A more directive approach tends to work better with foreign students. This is because foreign students typically like to go to an expert to be told what to do. According to d'Ardenne and Mahtani (1989) Asian may not respond well to a reflective approach that focuses on feelings. Therefore, in order to deal more competently with foreign student clients, counsellors should not only be prepared to modify their styles, but also to examine their clients' expectation of counselling.

c. *Others modifiers: Explaining the adjustment process, addressing presenting concerns first, and acknowledging cultural differences.*

Explaining to foreign student clients that it is normal to experience unhappiness, loneliness, and frustration when adjusting to a new environment may help them deal more positively with the experience. Foreign students usually seek counselling with problems that concern their studies, such that this survey shows that career choice is refered to counsellors, although underlying personal problems are often their major concerns. Counsellor should address the presenting problem first before moving on to more personal issues. Acknowledging the cultural difference of both counsellor and client from the very beginning can go a long way in helping the working relationship. The counsellor should acknowledge the cultural value of the foreign student clients.

3. *General guidelines for cross-cultural counselling.*

Johnson and Nadirshaw (1993) have given some recommendations for successful counselling with South Asian clients. They offered the following guidelines for counsellors and therapists which will go some way towards meeting their needs:

a. avoid generalised assumptions based on Eurocentric and racist attitudes. They are inappropriate and insensitive to South Asian communities. Treat each client as an individual;

b. acknowledge the reality of racism and discrimination in the lives of Asian people and how this impacts upon the therapeutic process. Power relationship between therapist and client may reflect the imbalance of power between the indigenous population and the ethnic communities, or between the different genders in society;

c. take account of the structures with South Asian communities which serve to strengthen and support their members. By **recognising** the potential for empowerment and self-help in communities, we can draw upon these strengths when working with an individual;

d. adopt a more flexible approach to other therapeutic values, beliefs, and traditions, and respect them as offering and equally valid perspectives;

e. listen to and accept the client's own way of viewing his or her **difficulties** and the meaning he or she attaches to them. We may also need to re-evaluate the aim of the therapeutic process with Asian clients in terms of personal and social interventions;

f. maintain an open, flexible approach so that it is the client and not the therapist who dictates the goals of the therapy and how the therapy proceeds;

g. be aware that within South Asian communities, the client may not just be individual in the therapy room: his or her family and significant others may have an important role to lay in the therapeutic process; and

h. redefine current concepts of mental health and illness by incorporating religious, ethical, and spiritual dimensions.

7.3.3 Implication of research methodology.

The number of sample in this study is very small and limited only to Malaysian students in **Keele** University. For further research, it is suggested to survey respondents in other universities and institutions in different regions of this country. An investigation should be undertaken into the relationship between culture and problem perception, and to evaluate the effectiveness of **counselling** services from the **counsellors'** perception.

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Appendix A

Pilot Study Questionnaire

Please put a tick (✔) in the appropriate bracket.

1. How long did it take you to complete ? . . . .

2. Were the instructions clear?
    Yes ( )   No ( )

3. Were any of the questions unclear or ambiguous. If so, will you say which and why?

    . . . .

    . . . .

4. Did you object to answering any questions?
    Yes ( )   No ( )

    . . . .

    . . . .

5. In your opinion, has any major topic been omitted?
    Yes ( )   No ( )

    . . . .

    . . . .

6. Was the layout ot the questionnaire clear/attractive?
    Yes ( )   No ( )

    . . . .

    . . . .

7. Any comments?

    . . . .

    . . . .

    . . . .

    . . . .

Questionnaire

I am making a survey of difficulties experienced by Malaysian students in higher learning in Britain. Would you please answer the following questions.

PLEASE PUT A TICK (✓) IN THE APPROPRIATE BRACKET.

PART ONE

A.   Personal Particulars

1.   **Sex: a.**   **( ) Male**   b.   ( ) Female

2.   Age: **a.**   ( ) 20 or below   **b.**   ( ) **21** to 25
          c.   ( ) 26 to 30   **d.**   ( ) 31 to 35
          e.   ( ) 36 to 40   **f.**   ( ) 41 or above

3.   Race: a.   ( ) Malay   b.   ( ) Chinese
          c.   ( ) Indian   **d.**   ( ) other.............
                                                       (please specify)

4.   You are studying at the University of: . . . .*................................
      (please specify)

5.   What course are you taking: ....
      (please specify)

6.   In the academic year **1994/95,** you are studying:
      a.   ( ) an Undergraduate degree course
      b.   ( ) a Masters degree course
      c.   ( ) a **PhD** course
      d.   ( ) other?..
            (please specify)

7. Which year are you studying in this country:

    a. ( ) first year   **b.** ( ) second year

    c. ( ) third year   **d.** ( ) over 3 years

a. You have been in Britain for ....years

9. Marital status:

    a. ( ) single   **b.** ( ) married

    c. ( ) separated   **d.** ( ) cohabiting

10. If married or cohabiting, are you living her with your partner?

    a. ( ) yes   b. ( ) no

11. Do you have any children?

    a. ( ) yes   b. ( ) no

How many? ....

(please specify)

12. What type of financial support?

    a. ( ) parent   **b.** ( ) scholarship

    c. ( ) yourself   **d.** ( ) other:...........

                                    (please specify)

13. What is/was your father/guardian's occupation?

....(please specify)

14. How many brothers and sisters do you have?

    a. ( ) 0 to 2   **b.** ( ) 3 to 4

    c. ( ) 5 to 6   **d.** ( ) more than 7

15. Have you used any counselling service before?

    a. ( ) yes   b. ( ) no

PART TWO

Section A

During your time in Britain you may have experienced difficulties or problems, eg. loneliness, study problems, financial problems etc. Would you please write here the main difficulties you have experienced:

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Section B

On the following page you will see a grid. Along the top of the grid is a list of people or organisations which you may find useful when you experience difficulties. Down the left hand side of the grid is a list of problems often faced by students. Imagine that you are confronted with problems suggested by the headings. Who would you turn to for help? Please answer each question by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box, to indicate the source of help that <u>you oersonallv</u> would use.

PROBLEMS / SOURCE OF PREFERENCES	overseas representative	your partner	a tutor/lecturer	a British friend	academic office	a next door neighbour	nightline	university chaplain	counselling service	a friend from Malaysia	samaritan	hall wardens	accomodations department	others (please specify)
1.	studying problems														
2.	academic problems														
3.	work pressure														
4.	problems with friend; (relationship)														
5.	long term medical problem														
6.	acrorodation problem														
7.	sexual problems														
8.	feeling depressed														
9.	family problem														
10.	financial prablers														
11.	feeling anxious														
12.	problems with bay/girlfriend														
13.	feeling lonely														
14.	feeling discriminat														
15.	feeling bored														
16.	religion														
17.	career choice														
18.	adaptations to new environment														
19.	others (please specify)														

PART THREE

Your Attitude Towards Counselling

PLEASE PUT A TICK (✓) IN APPROPRIATE BRACKETS

1.   If I was considering using a counselling service, it would be important to me that the counseilor's characteristics should be:

    i.   **Gender**

        a.   **( ) same as mine**

        b.   **( ) different from mine**

        c.   **( ) not important**

    ii.   **Age**

        a.   **(   ) much older than I am**

        b.   **(   ) more or less the same age as I am**

        c.   **( ) not important**

    iii.   **Religion**

        a.   **(   ) same as mine (if you have one)**

        b.   **( ) different from mine**

        c.   **( ) no religion**

        d.   **( ) not important**

    iv.   **Race**

        a.   **( ) same as me**

        b.   **( ) different from me**

        c.   **( ) not important**

    v.   **Language**

        a.   **(   ) speak the same mother tongue**

        b.   **(   ) does not speak the same mother tongue**

        c.   **( ) not important**

vi.   culture

     a.   ( ) same as mine

     b.   ( ) different from mine

     c.   ( ) not important

2.   How important are the qualities you would expect from an effective, helpful student counsellor?

(Please indicate their important by numbering them from 1 to 8.

8 represents the most important, whereas 1 represents the least important).

a.   ( )   the counsellor has previous teaching experience

b.   ( )   the counsellor has experience of being a client

c.   ( )   the counsellor is able to understand students from the student's own point of view

d.   ( )   the counsellor is a 'real' person, not just doing a job

e.   ( )   the counsellor is able to accept what students tell him or her without passing judgement

f.   ( )   the counsellor has a lot of knowledge about the problems that students experience

g.   ( )   the counsellor will share with the students what he or she honestly feels towards them

h.   ( )   the counsellor is able to explain why students have had problems

Please put a tick (✔) for the most appropriate choice to indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements.

SA (strongly agree); A (agree); N (neutral); D (disagree); SD (strongly disagree)

3.   The helpful factors in counselling are:

	SA	A	N	D	SD
a. Talking to someone interested in my problem					
b. Talking to someone who understands					
c. Attention given by counsellor					
d. Support offered by counsellor					
e. Advice given by counsellor					
f. Encouragement and reassurance given by counsellor					
g. Expression of strong emotion					
h. Instillation of hope					
i. Realising I am not alone					
j. Further self-understanding					
k. Self-acceptance					
l. Gaining insight					
m. Problem clarification					
n. Gaining information					
o. Behavioural change					
p. Problem solution					
q. Other (please specify) ....*.............................					

4.   I <u>would</u> consider going for counselling because:

	SA	A	N	D	SD
a. counsellors are much more mature than me					
b. counsellors have undergone training to help people					
c. counsellors have much more experience in helping people to solve their problems					
d. the people around me cannot help me					
e. I do not want people who are related to me to know my problem					
f. I do not want people who are related to me to be affected by my problem					
g. Other (please specify)					

5. I would <u>not</u> consider going for counselling because:

	SA	A	N	D	SD
a. I prefer to solve problems by myself					
b. counsellors **are strangers, I do not want to share my problems with strangers**					
c. I prefer to'ask my friends for help for they understand me better					
d. I prefer to consult my parents for they can help me better					
e. I prefer to consult my tutor as he or she knows me better and I trust he or she can help me					
f. I know how best to solve my problem					
g. I do not want to be labelled **as a problematic student**					
h. I prefer to consult people in the religious organisation I go to					
i. my friends will laugh at me if I go for counselling					
j. Other (please specify) .... **Reasons**					

Thank you very much

The End

REMINDER - Please return the questionnaire **by** ....

KEELE
UNIVERSITY

Department of Applied Social Studies
Dr. Chris Phillipson, Professor of Applied Social Studies
and Social Gerontology: Head of Department.

Tel: (01782) 621111 Ext————————
Direct Line: (01782) 58————————

Azmi Shaari,
Department of Applied Social Studies,
University of Keele,
Keele,
Staffordshire,
ST5 5BG

Dear Fellow Students,

Having worked as a student counsellor at the Northern University of Malaysia for the last nine years, I am now studying for a Masters Degree in Counselling at the University of Keele. I am conducting a survey to find out: (a) the difficulties of Malaysian students in Britain and (b) their attitudes towards counseffing. The information collected will be of tremendous use for me to write my dissertation. It is hope. that the finding will contribute to the development of student counselling Services in Malaysia. <u>All information will be treated with strict confidence.</u>

Enclosed is a questionnaire. I would be most grateful if you can complete it at your earliest convenience and give it back to me.

Your consideration in this matter is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully
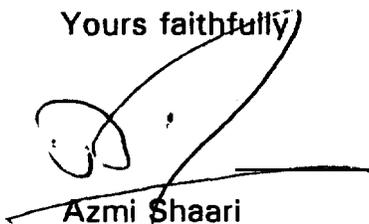
Azmi Shaari

Dr. Miriam Bernard
Dip/MA Gerontology
Director

Dr. Simon Biggs
Undergrad. Studies
Director

Ray Woolfe
Dip/MA Counselling
Director

Jeff Hopkins
Dip/MA Social Work
Director

Questionnaire

Survey of difficulties experienced by Malaysian students in higher learning in Britain. Please answer the following questions.

PLEASE PUT A TICK (✓) IN THE APPROPRIATE BRACKET.

PART ONE

A.   Personal Data

1.   Gender: a.   ( ) Male   b.   ( ) Female

2.   Age: a.   ( ) 20 or below   b.   ( ) 21 to 25
            c.   ( ) 26 to 30   d.   ( ) 31 to 35
            e.   ( ) 36 to 40   f.   ( ) 41 or above

3.   Race: a.   ( ) Malay   b.   ( ) Chinese
            c.   ( ) Indian   d.   ( ) Other.............
                                        (please specify)

4.   Place of Study: University of ....

      Course: ....

5.   In the academic year **1994/95,** you are studying:
      a.   ( ) an Undergraduate degree course
      b.   ( ) a Masters degree course
      c.   ( ) a **PhD** course
      d.   ( ) other: ....
            (please specify)

6. **Year of Study:**
   a.   ( ) first year   b.   ( ) second year
   c.   ( ) third year   d.   ( ) over 3 years

7. **You have been in Britain for .... years**

8. **Marital status:**
   a.   ( ) single   b.   ( ) married
   c.   ( ) separated   d.   ( ) cohabiting

9. **If married, are you living here with your husband/wife?**
   a.   ( ) yes   b.   (ho

10. **Do you have any children?**
    a.   ( ) yes   b.   ( ) no

    How many? ....
    (please specify)

11. **Type of financial support:**
    a.   ( ) parent   b.   ( ) scholarship
    c.   ( ) yourself   d.   (   ) other: ....
                                            (please specify)

12. **Father's/guardian's   occupation:**
    ....(please specify)

13. **How many brothers and sisters do you have?**
    a.   ( ) 0 to 2   b.   ( ) 3 to 4
    c.   ( ) 5 to 6   d.   ( ) more than 7

14. Have you used any counselling service before?

    a.   ( ) yes   b.   ( ) no

PART TWO

Section A

During your stay in Britain, you may have experienced difficulties or problems, such as loneliness, study problems, financial problems etc. Would you please write down the main difficulties you have experienced:

1. ....
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2. ....
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3. ....
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4. ....
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5. ....
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6. ....
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7. ....
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Section B

On the following page you will see a grid. Along the top of the grid is a list of people or organisations which you may find useful when you experience difficulties. Down the left hand side of the grid is a list of problems often faced by students. Imagine that you are confronted with problems suggested by the headings. Who would you turn to for help? Please answer each question by putting a tick (✔) in the appropriate box, to indicate the source of help that <u>vou oersonallv</u> would use.

PROBLEMS \ SOURCE OF PREFERENCES	overseas representative	your partner	a tutor/lecturer	a British friend	academic office	a next door neighbour	nightline	university chaplain	counselling service	a friend from Malaysia	samaritan	hall wardens	accommodation department	others (please specify)
1. studying problems														
2. academic problems														
3. work pressure														
4. problems with friends (relationship)														
5. long term medical problem														
6. accomodation problems														
7. sexual problems														
8. feeling depressed														
9. family problem														
10. financial problems														
11. feeling anxious														
12. problems with boy/girlfriend														
13. feeling lonely														
14. feeling discriminated														
15. feeling bored														
16. religion														
17. career choice														
18. adaptations to new environment														
19. others (please specify)														

PART THREE

Attitude Towards Counselling

PLEASE PUT A TICK (✓) IN APPROPRIATE BRACKETS

1. **If I was considering to use a counselling service, it would be important for me that the counsellor's characteristics be:**

   i. **Gender**

      a. **( ) same as mine**

      b. **( ) different from mine**

      c. **( ) not important**

   ii. **Age**

      a. **( ) much older than I am**

      b. **( ) more or less the same age as I am**

      c. **( ) not important**

   III. **Religion**

      a. **( ) same as mine**

      b. **( ) different from mine**

      c. **( ) no religion**

      d. **( ) not important**

   iv. **Race**

      a. **( ) same as me**

      b. **( ) different from me**

      c. **( ) not important**

v.   **Language**

   a.   **( ) speak the same mother tongue**

   b.   **( ) does not speak the same mother tongue**

   C.   **( ) not important**

vi.   **culture**

   a.   **( ) same as mine**

   b.   **( ) different from mine**

   C.   **( ) not important**

2.   **How important are the qualities you would expect from an effective, helpful student counsellor?**

   (Please indicate their importance by numbering them from 1 to 8.
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   b.   ( )   **the counsellor has experienced being a client himself**

   C.   ( )   **the counsellor is able to understand students from the student's own point of view**

   d.   ( )   **the counsellor is a 'real' person, not just doing a job**

   e.   ( )   **the counsellor is able to accept what students tell him or her without passing judgement**

   f.   ( )   **the counsellor has a lot of knowledge about the problems that students experience**

   g.   ( )   **the counsellor will share with the students what he or she honestly feels towards them**

   h.   ( )   **the counsellor is able to explain why students have had problems**

Please put a tick (✔) for the most appropriate choice to indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements.

SA (strongly agree); A (agree); N (neutral); D (disagree); SD (strongly disagree)

3.   The helpful factors in counselling are:

	SA	A	N	D	SD
a. Talking to someone interested in my problem					
b. Talking to someone who understands					
c. Attention given by counsellor					
d. Support offered by counsellor					
e. Advice given by counsellor					
f. Encouragement and reassurance given by counsellor					
g. Expression of strong emotion					
h. Instillation of hope					
i. Realising I am not alone					
j. Further self-understanding					
k. Self-acceptance					
l. Gaining insight					
m. Problem clarification					
n. Gaining information					
o. Behavioural change					
p. Problem solution					
q. Other (please specify) …………………………………………………….. …………………………………………………….					

4. I <u>would</u> consider going for counselling because:

	SA	A	N	D	SD
a. counsellors are much more mature than me					
b. counsellors have undergone training to help people					
c. counsellors have much more experience in helping people to solve their problems					
d. the people around me cannot help me					
e. I do not want people who are related to me to know my problem					
f. I do not want people who are related to me to be affected by my problem					
g. Other (please specify)					

5.　　　I would **not** consider going for counselling because:

	SA	A	N	D	SD
a. I prefer to solve problems by myself					
b. **counsellors** are strangers, I do not want to share my problems with strangers					
c. I prefer to ask my friends for help for they understand me better					
d. I prefer to consult my parents for they can help me better					
e. I prefer to consult my tutor as he or she knows me better and I trust he or she can help me					
f. I know how best to solve my problem					
g. I do not want to be **labelled** as a problematic student					
h. I prefer to consult people in the religious organisation I go to					
i. my friends will laugh at me if I go for counselling					
j. Other (please specify) .... Reasons					

Thank you very much

The End

REMINDER - Please return the questionnaire by ....

Appendix C

Result of the grid: The students from Malaysia tended to **turn** to people or organisation for help when they encountered **difficulties**

PROBLEMS	overseas representative	your partner	a tutor/lecturer	a British friend	academic office	a next door neighbour	nightline	university chaplain	counselling service	a friend from Malaysia	separation	hall wardens	accommodations department	others (please specify)
1. studying problems	1	7	35	6	1	5	0	0	1	29	0	0	0	3
2. academic problems	0	3	30	3	9	3	0	0	1	19	0	0	0	4
3. work pressure	1	9	9	4	0	6	0	0	1	26	0	1	0	5
4. problems with friends (relationship)	0	9	1	5	0	3	0	0	0	26	0	1	0	5
5. long term medical problem	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	7	0	0	1	13
6. accommodation problems	3	2	1	1	0	3	0	0	0	7	0	7	32	2
7. sexual problems	0	16	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	9	0	0	0	2
8. feeling depressed	0	14	1	8	0	5	2	0	2	26	0	0	0	4
9. family problem	1	16	4	2	0	1	0	1	0	15	0	0	0	8
10. financial problems	3	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	27	0	0	2	14
11. feeling anxious	1	9	3	8	0	2	0	1	1	20	0	0	0	5
12. problems with boy/girlfriend	1	7	1	6	0	4	0	1	1	23	0	0	0	2
13. feeling lonely	0	13	2	7	0	7	0	0	0	31	0	0	0	2
14. feeling discriminated	4	6	4	6	1	2	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	5
15. feeling bored	0	12	2	10	1	0	0	1	3	12	0	1	0	3
16. religion	0	7	1	2	0	1	0	3	0	20	0	1	1	5
17. career choice	3	8	8	2	3	0	0	1	6	5	0	0	1	7
18. adaptations to new environment	1	5	4	10	0	4	0	1	4	18	0	1	2	3
19. others (please specify)	0	0	0	a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1