

"FACTORS AFFECTING THE ADJUSTMENT  
AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF MALAYSIAN STUDENTS AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY"

Sharon Law L.E.

Education 514

1983

CONTENTS

Contents	i
List of Tables	ii
List of Figures	iii
	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	1
III. METHODOLOGY	6
1. Subjects	6
2. Questionnaire	7
3. Procedure	8
IV. RESULTS	9
V. DISCUSSION	29
REFERENCES	33
APPENDIX	35

LIST OF TABLES

<u>TABLE</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
1	Summary table of students	9
2	Enrolment of students by faculty	9
3	The Importance of study aims of students	10
4	Academic Performance	11
5	Overall Average Grade	12
6	Nationality of flatmates	12
7	Happy with Accommodation	13
8	Bonded to work for Government	16
9	Comparison in academic problems	18
10	Ranking of study-related difficulties for Malaysians	19
11	Ranking of study-related difficulties for New Zealanders	19
12	Club membership for first year	20
13	Club membership at present	20
14	Attendance at Club Meetings	21
15	Attending functions with people from my own country	22
16	Attending functions with people from Malaysia or New Zealand	22
17	Invitation to homes for drinks or meals	22
18	Casual contact - having lunch or coffee	23
19	Number of Kiwi or Malaysian students you know well enough to visit without being invited	23
20	Comparison of factors influencing academic performance	26

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>FIGURE</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
1	Problems with English	14
2	Impressions of Malaysian and New Zealand Students	24

"FACTORS AFFECTING THE ADJUSTMENT  
AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF MALAYSIAN STUDENTS AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY"

For many foreign students, trying to fit into a new society without any formal introduction requires strenuous effort and the problems encountered are not to be underestimated. If, in fact, most foreign students do encounter adjustment problems, what effect do these difficulties have on their academic performance? Are the problems a real hindrance? How are their studies affected? The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of the adjustment process on one group of foreign students' academic achievement. The group studied was Malaysian students at the University of Canterbury.

The second aim of the study was to examine whether the adjustment problems that these foreign students experienced were unique or whether they could be typical problems that could confront any student at Canterbury University. This comparison is a new aspect to such research as previous studies have focussed only on the difficulties of foreign students alone. If the problems are typical of those faced by all students, then, the solutions for overcoming them should be recommended for all students and not only for a particular group.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

By virtue of New Zealand's past and present economic relationship with South East Asian countries, New Zealand has an obligation to act as host to students coming from that part of the world. It is also one of the aims of the New Zealand foreign policy to provide education and training which will be of value to developing countries.

Students from Malaysia and Singapore had always formed the largest single group of overseas students at the University of Canterbury. They came to New Zealand for many reasons. But no matter what the purpose, the accomplishment of that reason is dependent to a large degree on how well these students can adjust to the new environment and how well they can communicate with those about them.

The problem of language is one which faces many foreign students. Smith (1955) reported that overseas students usually experienced frustrations when they

found themselves unable to communicate adequately with their lecturers, fellow students and associates in daily life. According to Smith, good communication provided the setting in which other problems of adjustment were most easily solved while blocked or distorted communication gave rise to other personal difficulties.

Eldridge (1960) also stated that overseas students found that they had to work harder than the host students because their rate of reading in many cases was much slower than the average local student's. The problem of English could be particularly acute in the first few months after arrival because actual speaking with a European may sometimes demand changes in pronunciation as well. This problem was also evident in Noor's study where on arrival 48% of the students expressed great difficulty in understanding lectures (1968, p.79). This early period could be very frustrating as the foreign students tried to understand daily conversation.

Deutch and Won (1963) administered questionnaires to 94 foreign trainees from 29 different nations undergoing training in the United States under the Sponsorship of the Agency for International Development. From the responses they concluded that an important factor in determining the trainees' degree of satisfaction with their social experience in the United States was their facility with the English language. Thus, it is obvious that language plays an important role in facilitating the adjustment process.

Foreign students are also usually confronted with financial difficulties. It was reported that 25% of the foreign students in Australia had financial problems. (Hearder, undated, p.2) Even though, it is one of the general conditions in the issuing of a student entry permit that sufficient funds are available for the student's maintenance throughout his/her stay in that particular country, (Overseas Students in New Zealand, 1980, p.3) unforeseen circumstances do occur, such as a devaluation of currency, unexpected sickness or the student's family experiencing heavy financial reverses. Hence, some students may have to supplement their allowances with part time jobs which may result in less study time being available. Clearly, lack of money can cause foreign students considerable worries.

Previous research has also cited the different educational system in a foreign country as posing "education shock" for foreign students (Selby and Clyde, 1966, Hearder, undated). The relaxed atmosphere of Western educational institutions, seminar learning situations and the questioning of teachers are new to Asian Students who have always been taught to "respect and revere teachers" (Hearder, undated, p.2). The rigid secondary school atmosphere

no longer exists at University. Instead students are encouraged to develop "an inquisitive and critical attitude of mind". (Tuoc, 1968, p.72). The image of God - professors and lecturers must be dropped in favour of a new one where they are considered as teachers and guides. Such a free, open and relaxed relationship between teachers and students is something foreign which students have to learn and adapt to.

The aspect of accommodation as an influencing factor in the adjustment process is also an important area, but there have been very few research studies done on it. According to Gibbs, "Good accommodation is of utmost importance to every overseas student and it often has considerable bearing on his success in his work" (undated, p.1). Overseas students have problems in this area because they are trying to cope with a new way of life on a very limited budget and therefore can rarely afford to apply for a room in a student hostel. Consequently, they will take up the cheapest form of student accommodation, usually sharing old flats and doing their own cooking. Sometimes it was not only a problem of renting the cheapest flat, but being refused places of accommodation because they were coloured students from overseas and thought to be untidy (Ng, 1962, p.80).

Parkyn (1967) examined the possibility of factors other than scholastic aptitude or ability that might have a consistent general influence upon university performance. The survey was carried out in the different universities in New Zealand on 1st and 3rd year students. The figures given showed the percentage of passes of the students according to the type of lodgings they had. The results from this study showed that in the majority of cases, students in flats showed a poorer performance than those living in halls of residence, at home or board. However, most students go flatting because it is the cheapest alternative. Boarding is not always available and living at home, while good, is not possible for overseas students.

Apart from these few studies on specific adjustment problems, most of the existing literature dealt with the aspect of social adjustment, such as relevant personality variables which might have a bearing on the outcome of the student's study (Sewell and Davidson, 1956). They reported that the foreign student's field of study and purpose in coming to the United States would be expected to influence the extent and nature of the contacts they would wish to have with American life and culture. Such a finding could also be seen in a study by Noor who administered self report questionnaires on 220 overseas students at University of Canterbury in 1968. Half of the students in Noor's sample were under special bonds or contracts which meant that jobs

back home were guaranteed. Consequently, their chief aim was to complete their degrees or training as soon as possible. They had little concern about what was happening around them (p. 123).

Other studies (Deutsch and Won, 1963, Goldsen, Suchman and Williams, 1956; Cook and Selltiz 1962; Selltiz, Hopson and Cook, 1956) investigated the factors associated with the development of cross-cultural social interaction as well as factors influencing the attitudes of foreign students toward their host country. Generally it was found that the degree to which an overseas student could integrate with the local students could be measured by their participation in the community and the extra curricular activities on campus.

The existing research studies on foreign students' adjustment are somewhat dated and have dealt mainly with general problems. There is very little data and information in relation to specific living problems such as money, housing, study skills and emotional stresses. In fact, very few studies have ever been carried out to examine the effects of these problems on academic performance. This present study was an attempt to investigate these aspects as well as to compare the problems that Malaysian students at the University of Canterbury face with the problems of a group of European, New Zealand students.

The method used to gather data was a self-report questionnaire which was specifically designed to obtain information on the study aims of Malaysian students and their opinions as to the effects of living problems such as accommodation, language, finances, educational experience and social life on their academic performance. A parallel questionnaire was constructed for the New Zealand students for comparative purposes on the same five aspects of the student's life.

#### EXPECTED FINDINGS

- 1) It was expected that both Malaysian and New Zealand students would have difficulty in finding suitable accommodation. (This is because of the increasing number of students at the University and the limited housing in the suburb of Ilam).
- 2) The problem of studying using the English language would be greater among the Malaysians than the New Zealanders. (This is expected as the Malaysians come from a totally different environment where English is not so widely spoken but is only a subject being taught in schools).



3) The third expected finding was that Malaysians would face greater financial problems than the local students. (Unlike former times where the vast majority of the overseas students were scholarship holders or received some form of financial aid from the government, most of the present overseas students are private which means that they are fully supported by their families back in their own countries. (Ng, 1962; Noor, 1968).

4) As far as academic difficulties are concerned, Malaysians would have more problems in adjusting to New Zealand teaching methods in university compared to their New Zealand counterparts. (This is because Asian students had been taught to respect and defer to their teachers as well as receive much academic guidance while New Zealand students had been taught to question their teachers and be more outspoken in class).

5) For socializing with others, it was expected that compared with the findings of Ng (1962) and Noor (1968) there would be less interaction between the overseas students and the New Zealanders. (This is because there is a greater number of foreign students on campus now compared to the 1960's and 1970's. Consequently they are more content to keep to themselves rather than to seek the company of New Zealand students).

## METHODOLOGY

### Subjects

The subjects participating in this study were Malaysians (including eight Singaporeans) and New Zealand students who had been at the university of Canterbury for at least a year. This was necessary because the study was only applicable to students who had at least a year of experience at the university. The self-report questionnaires were administered to 133 male and 58 female students in all faculties.

The questionnaires were distributed to as many Malaysians as possible. The total number given out was 160, with 113 returned. The 113 Asian respondents were made up of 80 male students and 53 females with an average age of 22.31 years.

Eleven copies of the questionnaires were incomplete, 30 were lost and 6 students refused to complete them. Some of the reasons given were that the questions were too personal and detailed. Even though no names were asked for and the information was kept confidential, respondents still felt that their identity was at risk because the Malaysian and Singaporean student community is so small in Christchurch. Respondents also expressed problems in trying to answer the open-ended questions at the end of each section; that is, the brief description on how the various problems had affected their academic performance. The question involved a more thoughtful and detailed answer and some respondents were reluctant to spend time answering them.

Most of the questionnaires were distributed and collected by the writer. Perhaps another reason why many forms were not handed back was that the students were told that the forms would be collected after an agreed length of time. In about 50% of the cases, the students had not filled the questionnaires within the arbitrarily agreed period. As a result, some of the students had to be approached more than once in order to get completed questionnaires back.

As for the New Zealand sample, 100 copies of the questionnaires were distributed with 78 returned. This group of respondents consisted of 53 male students and 25 females. The average age was 20.57 years with the majority being 2nd year students. The response rate was good and students appeared to have few problems in completing the questionnaires.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

A self-report questionnaire was formulated in order to obtain raw data. It contained both forced - choice and open - ended questions.

Most of the questions in the questionnaire were derived by referring to research in the field of cross-cultural education. For example, questions on the study aims of overseas students in this study were taken from a "Survey of Overseas Students" (Educational Services Unit, Lincoln College, New Zealand, 1982).

A number of items on language facility and socializing with others were taken from "A study of overseas students at the University of Canterbury" (Noor, 1962).

The section on academic difficulties was also based on the study "Problems of First Year Students" (Educational Research and Advisory Unit, University of Canterbury, 1978).

Most of the questions or ideas borrowed were modified or changed to suit the present study. For example instead of "Yes" or "No" answers with regard to problems in the use of English language, five point scaled responses were used.

For comparative purposes, a parallel questionnaire was constructed for the New Zealand students. The questions and in most cases the actual words used were similar to the Asian student's copy. Only the list of the academic aims of students at University in the two questionnaires were necessarily different.

## PILOT TEST

A pilot test was carried out when the first draft of the questionnaire was completed. It was administered to 6 Malaysians and 6 New Zealand students (3 males and 3 females in each group). These students had completed at least one year of study at University of Canterbury.

The 12 students were approached personally or by telephone and asked to fill out the questionnaire. They were urged to suggest improvements with regard to the lay-out, wording, structure and possible ambiguities in the questions. Where it was not possible for a personal interview, the respondents were asked to write their criticisms and suggestions on the front page of the

questionnaire. The students were also requested to note the length of time taken to complete the questionnaire. This was to ensure that the questionnaire was not so long that it would discourage respondents from completing it.

Valuable comments from the students were obtained and their suggestions were incorporated into the final copy of the questionnaire.

#### PROCEDURE

The questionnaires were administered in February 1983. Asian students staying in the university flats, private flats, board and other places of residence were visited. The addresses of these students were obtained from the Canterbury Malaysian and Singaporean student's telephone directory.

The purpose of the study and a brief explanation for each section of the questionnaire was given. Ample time was given for them to complete the questionnaires which were collected 3 - 4 days later. Assurance was given that the information would be treated with strict confidence.

With the New Zealand sample, the questionnaires were distributed to the students in the Arts, Science and Engineering libraries during the first few days of the new academic year (March 1983). As with the Asian sample, only students who had been at the University of Canterbury for at least a year were approached to complete the questionnaires. The purpose of the survey was briefly explained to each of the respondents sitting in the library. The questionnaires were distributed and collected by the researcher 30 minutes later.

RESULTS

Table 1: Summary Table of Students

	Sex		Ave Age	Course of Study					Marital Status			Total
	M	F		B.A.	B.Sc.	Law	B.Com	B.E.	Single	Married	Divorced	
M'sians	80	33	22.31	9	27	6	27	43	109	4	-	113
Kiwis	53	25	20.57	26	26	2	11	13	70	6	1	78

The total number of Asian respondents was 113 out of the 160 originally given questionnaires, while for the New Zealand sample, 78 of 100 responded to the survey.

Analysis of Subjects

Sex: A 2 x 2 chi-square analysis was used to determine whether there was any significant difference between the sexes in the two samples. The obtained  $\chi^2$  (0.0679, d.f. = 1) was not significant ( $p > .05$ ). The number of male and female students in each sample was more or less the same but in both cases, there were more male students than female.

Age:

A t - test analysis revealed significantly different average ages for the two groups. ( $t = 5.18$ , d.f. = 188,  $p < 0.05$ ). The Malaysian sample was significantly older (22.31 years versus 20.57 years).

Course of Study:

As seen from Table 1, a greater number of Malaysian students are in the Commerce and Engineering faculties while the majority of the New Zealand sample are in the Arts and Science. This is also evident in the table shown below.

Table 2: Enrolment of students by faculty (%)

	Arts	Science	Law	Commerce	Engineering
M'sians	6.75	25.401	14.147	22.186	31.189
N.Z.ers	37.511	20.912	9.059	15.681	11.685

(Figures from the Educational Research and Advisory Unit, University of Canterbury, 1982)

Perhaps one reason to explain the above situation is that overseas students are more likely to take up courses which will equip them for a specific job once they are back in their own countries.

Study Aims Of Students

Table 3: The Importance of Study Aims of Students

Variable	Malaysians		Kiwis		t	p
	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD		
Gaining a qualification for a job in my own country	1.536	0.568	1.816	0.795	2.65	<0.05
Gaining a qualification for a job outside my country	2.477	0.761	2.184	0.828	2.50	< 0.05
Fulfilling my parents aspirations for me	2.009	0.745	3.000	0.783	10.74	<0.01

Students were asked to indicate the degree of importance attached to various aims of study using a four point scale (1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = not important, 4 = very unimportant) (Appendix p.36)

This means value of 1.536 shown above indicate that gaining a qualification is very important to the Malaysian students while the average of 1.816 show that this aim is only important for the New Zealand students.

The table above show that there were only 3 significant differences between the 2 samples for the 10 aims of study at university. Though gaining a qualification is important for both groups of students, it is a significantly more important goal for overseas students.

Doing well to fulfill parent's aspirations seems more significant for overseas students compared to their New Zealand counterparts. Family ties are thought to be much stronger in an Asian upbringing and it is the expectation of the parents that their children will get their degree, return home and be successful in a job which will enable the family to move up the social and economic ladder. The eldest child in the family is also expected to help

finance his/her younger brother's and sister's education. Therefore, the significant difference for this particular aim of study could be attributed to differences in cultural values.

Level of Satisfaction with Academic Performance

Table 4: Academic Performance

Variable	Malaysians		Kiwis		t	p
	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD		
Importance of succeeding academically to achieve stated aims	1.6106	0.589	1.671	0.526	0.72	NS
Satisfaction with actual level of academic performance	2.098	0.747	2.000	0.707	0.91	NS
Satisfaction based on level of ability	2.212	0.737	2.156	0.844	0.49	NS
Overall Grade	6.333	2.915	5.689	2.189	1.71	NS

The above table shows no significant differences where the goal of succeeding academically is concerned. The satisfaction of their own level of academic performance was also fairly similar with 61.9% of the Malaysians and 60.3% of New Zealanders who commented that they were somewhat satisfied.

Table 5: Overall Average Grade

Malaysians			New Zealanders	
Grades	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
D (1)	-	-	1	1.3
C-(2)	-	-	3	3.8
C (3)	10	8.8	9	11.5
C+(4)	17	15.0	13	16.7
B-(5)	7	6.2	8	10.3
B (6)	31	27.4	14	17.9
B+(7)	24	21.2	10	12.8
A-(8)	7	6.2	5	6.4
A (9)	10	8.3	9	11.5
A+(10)	4	3.5	2	2.6
Group Ave.	6.333 (B to B+)		5.689 (B- to B)	

Table 5 show a slightly higher estimated overall average grade among the Malaysians. This may be an indication that this group of foreign students attend university with clear definite goals and are often under much pressure to do well after all the parent's financial sacrifice to sent them abroad to study.

RESULTS ON FACTORS INFLUENCING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

A) Accommodation

Chi - square analysis revealed a significant difference between the 2 samples with regard to places of residence ( $\chi^2 = 81.11$ , d.f. = 5, p 0.05). Of the Malaysian students 64.6% live in flats compared with only 32.1% of the New Zealanders. As would be expected, the majority of the local students live at home.

Table 6: Nationality of Flatmates

	Nationality of Flatmates				
	% in flats	M'sians	S'poreans	N.Z'ers	Other Foreign Students
Malaysians	79.6	74.8	0.9	0.9	6.3
N. Zealanders	32.4	1.3	-	32.5	1.3



For those who are flatting, the results above show that there is very little difference in the choice of flatmates as both groups of students still preferred to live with those of the same nationality.

Table 7: Happy With Accommodation:

In Percentages

	Yes	No
M'sians	89.2	10.8
N. Zealanders	89.6	10.4

Overall, both groups of students appeared to be very satisfied with their present accommodation.

As for preference in types of accommodation, a large proportion of students preferred to go flatting (Malaysians 66.7% and New Zealanders 62.5%). Twenty two percent of the New Zealand students were happy to be at home whereas Malaysians do not have much choice but to opt for flats.

Summary for Accommodation

The answers to the open - ended questions on how accommodation had influenced students' academic performance were categorized into distance from University, noisy neighbourhood, unconsiderate flatmates, misunderstanding with landlady, family problems or on the other hand, little or no effects on their studies. A frequency count for each category was kept accordingly.

Although more than half of the students in each sample indicated that they were happy with their present place of accommodation it was not completely problem free. Instead much effort is given to accommodate these difficulties.

Distance from the University and the time spent in travelling to and from the University were the most common complaints. This had the adverse effects of causing students to miss lectures and to spend relatively large amounts of energy and money in travelling to and fro. The furthest distance travelled was 10 km.

Fourteen out of the 35 New Zealand respondents who lived at home quoted family pressure as having a negative influence on their academic performance. Pressures such as family problems, responsibilities and tense home atmosphere

have all affected the amount of work they could do. However, there were also those who had received much encouragement from their family members.

Problems with flatmates seemed to be a problem more with Malaysians than New Zealanders. Perhaps one reason is that sometimes foreign students were being put together (for example in the University flats) without any prior knowledge of one another's likes and dislikes. Conflicts could arise out of such no-choice situations.

Five Asian students have experienced problems with their landlady which had resulted in a rift between the host family and the boarder.

Other minor problems included noise level and coldness in the flat.

Overall, the results show that New Zealand students tend to live further away from University while foreign students have managed to secure accommodation closer to the University.

Evidences of the above problems gives support to the expected finding that both groups of students would have difficulties in finding suitable accommodation.

B) Language

Figure 1: Problems with English

Problem with English during first few months

M'sian	Kiwis			
$\bar{x}$	$\bar{x}$	t	p	
3.646	4.346	4.80	<0.05	Spoken
4.081	4.308	2.06	<0.05	Written
3.867	4.051	1.29	NS	Understanding lectures
3.616	4.038	2.63	<0.05	Taking down lecture notes

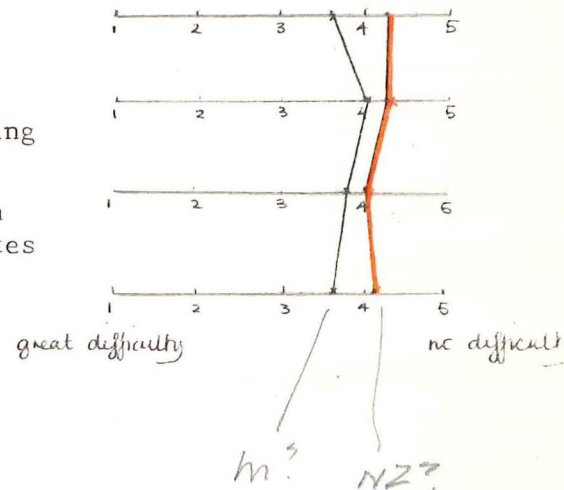


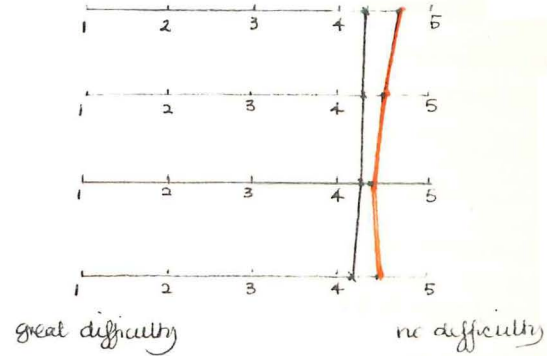
Figure 1 continued

Problem with English during time of survey

M'sian	Kiwis		
$\bar{x}$	$\bar{x}$	t	p
4.345	4.667	3.21	<0.05
4.319	4.538	1.98	NS
4.313	4.397	0.79	NS
4.261	4.474	1.85	NS

Spoken  
Written  
Understanding Lectures  
Taking down lecture notes

— Malaysians  
— New Zealanders



The significant difference in the t tests shown in Figure 1 revealed that Malaysians have greater problems in spoken and written English and in taking down lecture notes. Such differences were expected as foreign students had to try and understand a different accent and pronunciation.

Language difficulties were only apparent during the initial period when the students first arrived but showed considerable improvement after they had been in the country for some time. The main difficulty seems to be with spoken English.

Summary Section For English Language

Even though there were some initial difficulties, especially for the Malaysian students, both samples (39.8% Malaysians and 42.3% New Zealanders) stated that their facility with the English language had little effect on their academic performance.

A similar frequency count was kept for the answers to the open - ended questions on the influence of communication skills. There were 5 main categories: Cost me some marks, difficulties in expression and explanation in assignments, inability to participate in class discussions, little or no effects but ability in communication skills had enhanced learning.

Only 5 Malaysians and 7 New Zealanders reported that problems with English had cost them some marks. Lack of communication skills had also inhibited some students from clarifying important questions in class. Twenty Malaysians

(18%) and 9 New Zealanders (12%) reported having great problems in expressing themselves in written assignments.

The relatively few problems in communication skills among the Malaysian students could possibly be explained by the fact that a large number of students (52.2%) had come from schools where English was the main medium of instruction. English was taught only as a subject in 31% of the sample. This implied that even though the majority of the overseas students had to get used to the New Zealand accent, the effects of their communication skills on their academic performance might not be as bad as expected. For those whose English had been a real hindrance, attempts were made to choose mathematical subjects or courses which did not involve lots of reading or essay writing. This supports the expected finding that Malaysians would have language problems but probably affects more of those who had gone to schools where English was taught as a second language.

C) Financial

Of the Malaysian students, 92.9% were private students. That is, they received the bulk of their financial aid from their parents or other family members. There were none on government scholarships. The rest of the students had loans from a special scheme.

Fifty-five out of the seventy-eight New Zealand respondents depended on their holiday savings plus bursary or family support to finance their schooling. Only 14 students relied on their bursary alone.

A further indication of private financial support was whether the students were under any kind of bond to work for the government after completing their studies. A chi - square analysis revealed no significant differences between the 2 samples ( $\chi^2 = 5.968$ , d.f. = 2,  $p > 0.05$ ).

Table 8: Bonded to work for Government

	Yes	No
M'sian	2	110
Kiwis	7	71

### Summary

Five main categories were drawn up for the answers on the part played by financial difficulties on students' academic performance. They include: much worries and anxieties, live on a tight budget, dependence on library books, take up a part time job and lastly no problems.

For those who had much problems, excessive thinking about financial matters had caused a lot of stress and strain among both groups of students. Worrying about the coming weeks expenses such as rent and food have also resulted in difficulties in concentration as well as draining of one's energy which otherwise could be spent on studies.

The inability to afford text-books is a very common problem among both groups of students. Hence, dependence on library books was so high on the list that some literally "live in the library buildings". This problem becomes "critical" around the examination period when the books were not always available.

Working part time, restricted social life, living on a very tight budget, eating very little or living in a mediocre flat were some of the ways to make ends meet while others borrowed from friends or took out a loan to remedy the situation.

Financial difficulties confront 33.63% of Malaysians and 30.77% of the New Zealand students. This figure and the problems discussed above do not support the expected finding that overseas students would have more financial burden than the New Zealand students.

### D) Educational Experience / Academic Difficulties

Significant differences in academic difficulties between the two groups existed on the following items.

Table 9: Comparison in Academic Problems

	Malaysians		New Zealanders		Chi-Square	p
	Yes, a Problem	Not, a Problem	Yes, a Problem	Not, a Problem		
Taking responsibility to organise own studies	23	90	28	40	4.929	<0.05
Establishing bet. personal and academic life	49	64	47	31	4.614	<0.05
Expressing one's own views in class	58	55	28	50	4.438	<0.05
Developing appropriate study techniques	40	72	24	53	0.420	<0.05

The problems of organizing one's own studies and establishing priorities are greater among the New Zealand students than the overseas students.

It may be the case that Asian students give small consideration to personal preferences but much consideration to their studies because their chief goal is to complete their studies as soon as possible due to parents' financial sacrifice.

On the other hand, Malaysians have more difficulties in class participation and developing appropriate study techniques. The former problem was predicted because Asian students had always been taught to respect teachers and not to ask too many questions. Their lack of facility in spoken English could also perhaps account for this inhibition.

Malaysians' difficulty in developing appropriate study techniques may be due to the fact that they are still not familiar with New Zealand methods of teaching.

Ranking of Study-Related Difficulties

Table 10: Malaysians

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>%</u>
i)	Class participation	30	26.5
d)	Priorities between personal and academic life	16	14.2
j)	Study techniques	13	11.5
c)	Organizing own studies	9	8.0

Table 11: New Zealanders

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>%</u>
d)	Priorities between personal and academic life	20	25.6
h)	Independent thought in assignments	15	19.2
c)	Organizing own studies	9	11.5
i)	Class participation	5	6.4

As for the Malaysian sample, 26.5% stated that class participation was their most difficult problem while the New Zealand students quoted that establishing priorities between personal and academic life was their chief problem.

In comparing both groups of students, the type of difficulties encountered are quite similar except for item (h) and (j) that is, expressing independent thoughts in assignments and developing appropriate study techniques. Perhaps one reason why independent thought is not a major problem among foreign students is that most of them take up mathematical or technical subjects where such skills are not as crucial as in Arts subjects.

Unlike the overseas students, New Zealanders may be in University for other purposes other than just pursuing a degree. Consequently, many had difficulties where self-motivation and self-discipline were concerned.

Summary of Educational Experience On Academic Performance

Frequency count was also being kept for responses to the open-ended questions

in this section. The negative responses were categorized into "spoon-feeding" at school and not encouraged in active class participation (especially with the Malaysian students). On the other hand, positive answers included smooth transition from school to University as well as school which had helped to develop good study habits.

Compared with the New Zealand sample, the kind of educational experience that Malaysian students had been exposed to had some influence in their academic performance. They generally felt that spoon feeding and accepting class material uncritically had restricted freedom of thought and repressed creativity at University level. It could be the case that Asians had always been taught to show respect to those in authority and the elderly. Respect involved submission which meant that students were not encouraged to be outspoken in class. Such passiveness had indirectly been carried through to University class discussions or tutorials. This difficulty in class participation partly supports the expected finding but as far as the rest of the academic problems are concerned, there are no significant differences.

However, 51.28% of the New Zealand students stated that the kind of educational experience they had received did not present much problem. Instead, school had helped them to acquire the necessary skills for higher education.

E) Socialising With Others

Table 12: Club Membership For First Year (in %)

No. of Clubs	1	2	3	None
M'sians	85.7	11.4	0.0	2.9
N.Z'ers	53.5	30.2	16.3	0.0

Table 13: Club Membership At Present (in %)

No. of Clubs	1	2	3	None
M'sians	87.1	9.7	0.0	3.2
N.Z'ers	52.6	21.1	26.3	0.0



The results above showed that a large proportion of both groups of students were members of at least one club. Generally, it could be said that New Zealand students participated in more clubs around the campus.

A possible explanation for the low participation in clubs is that being private students, Malaysians are very cautious as to how they spent their money because joining clubs meant paying membership fees. Secondly, it could also mean that the private students were by and large more concerned about their studies since they came here on their own accord and with definite goals.

Attendance at Club Meetings

Table 14: Attendance At Club Meetings (in%)

	All Meetings	Most Meetings	Few	None	Not Applicable
M'sians	3.6	20.7	14.4	13.5	47.7
N.Z'ers	2.7	38.7	24.0	4.0	30.7

The table above show that Malaysians were not only members of less clubs but if they were members, they also attended less of the meetings.

General Activities Around Campus

A higher percentage of Malaysians took part in the general activities around campus such as capping dinner, food fair and others (37.8% of Malaysians versus 32.1% New Zealanders).

It is thought that there is a higher participation in such organized activities because they do not involve long term commitments compared to club memberships.

With Whom Do You Usually Attend These Functions?

Table 15: Attending Functions With People From My Own Country (in%)

	Always/Often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never	Missing Cases
M'sians	80.6	8.8	4.4	6.2
N.Z'ers	67.9	7.7	8.9	15.4

Table 16: Attending Functions With People From Malaysia or N.Z. (in%)

	Always/Often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never	Missing Cases
M'sians with NZ students	14.2	27.4	32.7	25.7
N.Z'ers with M'sian stud.	2.6	14.1	41.0	42.3

Table 15 showed that Malaysian students attended more functions with people from their own countries than the New Zealand sample (80.6% versus 67.9%)

Table 16 does indicate some degree of interaction between the 2 groups of students. As there are more New Zealand students than Malaysians on campus, it is expected that the chances of Malaysians going out with New Zealanders are greater than vice - versa.

Table 17: Invitation to Homes for drinks or meals (in%)

No. of times	10	5 - 10	1 - 5	None
M'sians invited to N.Z. homes	17.1	22.5	52.3	8.1
N.Z'ers invited to M'sians homes	2.6	0.0	35.5	61.8

The above table shows that Malaysians have been invited more often to New Zealand homes. The number of New Zealanders who had never been invited to Malaysian homes is still very high. There might not be absolute assimilation between the groups but the 35.5% who had been invited does reflect some degree of interaction between the two student groups.

Table 18: Casual Contact - Having Lunch or Coffee

	Often	Sometimes	once in a while	Never	Chi - Square	p
Lunch with N.Z. students	16	35	49	11	24.375	<0.05
Lunch with M'sian students	5	10	35	28		

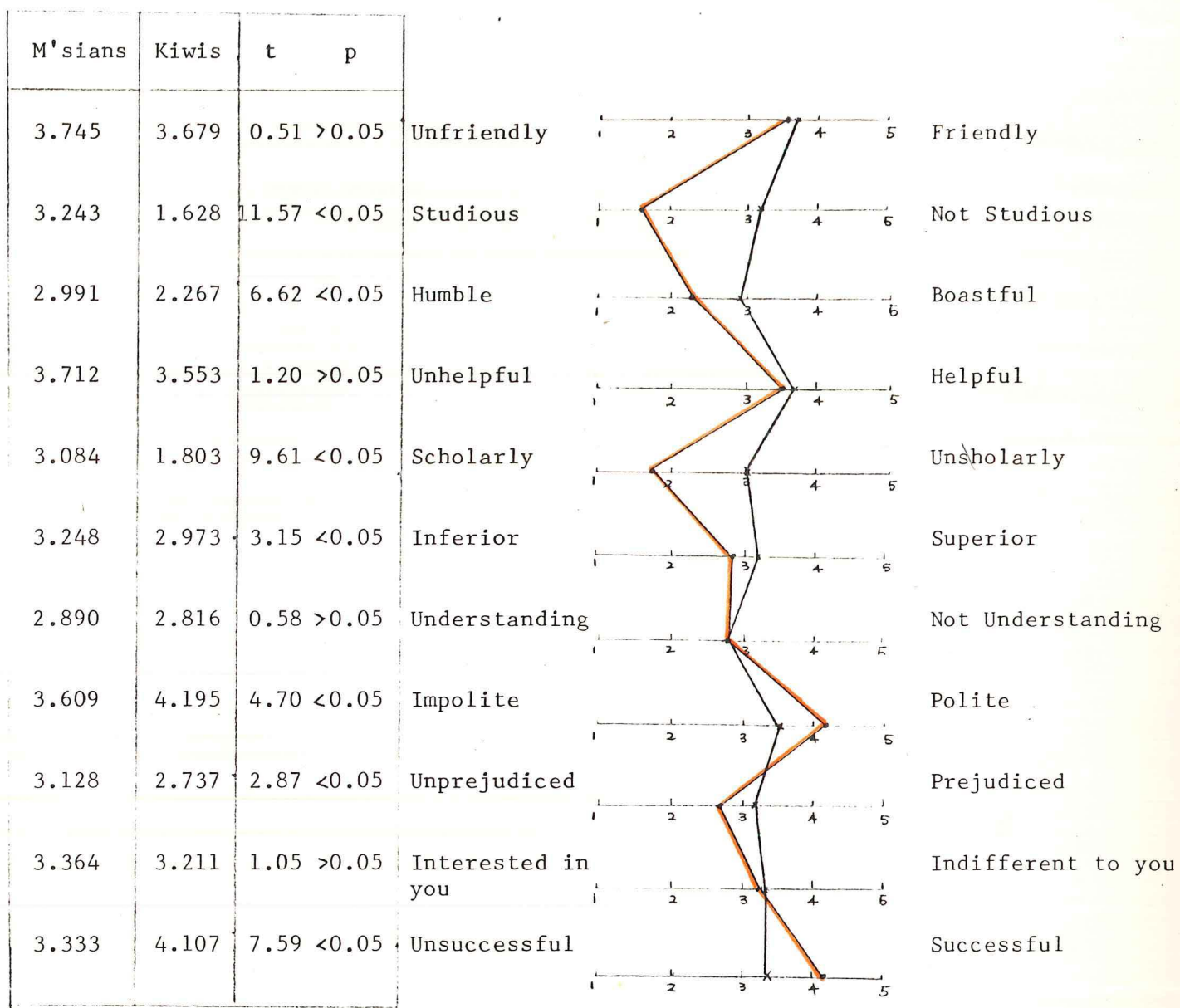
The significant difference between the 2 groups at the 0.05 level showed that Malaysians had more contact with New Zealand students.

Table 19: Number of Kiwi or Malaysian Students you know well enough to visit without being invited.

No. of friends	1 - 5	6 - 10	10	None	$\bar{x}$
M'sians	89	13	2	52	4.3
	75.4%	21.3%	3.2%	46%	
Kiwis	22	5	1	50	3.3
	78.5%	17.9%	3.6%	64.1%	

The average number of New Zealand students, Asians could visit without being invited was 4.3 while with the New Zealand sample, the average was 3.3. It should be noted that 46% of the Malaysians and 64.1% of the Kiwis reported that they did not have one student of the other group they could visit uninvited. This reflects generally the low level of socializing between the two groups of students.

Figure 2: Impressions of Malaysian and New Zealand Students



——— Malaysian's impressions of New Zealander Students  
——— New Zealander's impressions of Malaysian Students

The above figure shows that there is a general agreement among the New Zealand respondents that the overseas students were "studious", "scholarly" and "successful".

New Zealand respondents also felt that the overseas students were humble and polite. This aspect could perhaps be traced back to the students' background. Most of them came from situations where a great deal of respect is shown to elders. Sometimes an Asian student would feel very uncomfortable when they were requested to call their lecturers or landlord by their first names. Holding on to their traditions had made them appear very polite in the eyes of the New Zealanders.

There were no significant differences between the 2 samples for the rest of the personality traits - friendly, helpful, understanding and interested in you.

#### Summary On How Contact With Malaysians / Kiwis Had Influenced Academic Performance

For this summary section, a similar frequency count was kept for the open-ended answers which were categorized into academic influence such as helping each other in certain subjects and the inspiration to work harder while the personal effects included the influence to be confident in one's own ideas, broadening outlook as well as an enriching experience to know people from another culture.

Of the New Zealanders 61.5% had no Malaysian or Singaporean students in class and thus were not in a position to comment on their influence on their studies. On the other hand, Malaysians had a wider contact with the Kiwis since the number of Kiwis on campus is so much greater.

The result of socializing with New Zealand students had indirectly influenced overseas students to be more outspoken in class discussions as well as become more critical, practical and decisive. Those who had lots of interaction commented that socializing had brought about positive effects as there was always something to learn from one another.

The New Zealand students felt very much the same way, i.e. that relating to overseas students had broadened their outlook as well as helped them in some subjects (especially science). Some felt that the presence of the overseas students was a challenge to their own progress and performance.

In spite of the advantages that could be gained from each other, the results show very low level of socializing between the 2 groups of students. This was predicted in the expected finding.

Counselling

Out of the 113 Malaysian students, 16 had been to see the student counselor compared with only 2 New Zealanders with regard to problems of accommodation, communication skills, financial, academic difficulties and socializing with others.

Even though seeking the help of a counselor is a new experience for many Malaysian students, some had resorted to this service to deal with their problems. Those who had utilized this service commented that counselling was helpful in that they had gained a listening ear and had received constructive advice.

On the other hand, a large proportion of students reported that their problems were not serious enough to warrant a visit. Three Malaysians felt that they preferred to solve the problems with their Malaysian friends and would rather not seek counsel from strangers.

Only 3 Asians and 2 New Zealand students had never heard of the counselling service.

Summary

Table 20: Comparison of Factors Influencing Academic Performance

Variable	Malaysians		New Zealanders		t	p
	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD		
Accommodation	3.954	1.083	4.013	1.094	0.36	NS
Language	3.936	1.052	4.221	0.941	1.90	NS
Financial	3.782	1.112	3.962	1.232	1.04	NS
Educational Background	3.700	1.071	4.128	1.085	2.69	<0.05
Socializing with others	3.385	1.209	3.795	1.132	2.35	<0.05

Students were asked to indicate the degree to which each of the five factors had adversely affected their academic performance using a 5 point scale (1 = great difficulty ..... 5 = no difficulty). (Appendix p. 43) The mean value of 3.954 shown in the table above, therefore, indicate<sup>s</sup> that accommodation do not present much difficulty or has any major influence on their academic performance.

1) t tests analysis show no significant difference with regard to the problem of finding suitable accommodation. A total of 38.1% of the Malaysian students and 42.3% of New Zealanders marked point 5, that is, "no difficulty" with accommodation.

The results above also indicate that there is little influence on their academic performance.

2) Contrary to expected findings, t tests revealed no significant difference in perceived language problems. The overseas students had some language difficulties but they were not unsurmountable. The main problem lies with the spoken language, that is, making oneself understood in everyday conversation.

3) The absence of a significant difference for financial problems did not support the expected finding that overseas students would encounter more difficulties in this particular area.

Foreign students depended very much on their families while the local students relied on their holiday savings plus bursary.

The mean value of 3.782 for Malaysians and 3.962 for New Zealanders is an indication that financial stresses had had some influence on their academic achievement.

4) The significant difference in educational background between the 2 samples showed that Malaysians had more problems in adjusting to New Zealand teaching methods. Most of the New Zealand respondents felt that school had adequately prepared them for University in terms of approach to studies and study skills while Malaysians felt that they were at a disadvantage with the kind of educational system they had been exposed to.

5) Out of the factors which could have an effect on academic performance, socializing with others tops the list as being the most difficult problem for both groups of students. The significant difference ( $t = 2.35$ ,  $d.f. = 185$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) could possibly be explained by the fact that interpersonal relationships take time to develop and with lecture classes being large and impersonal, this problem becomes even more difficult.

One Malaysian student commented that it was not only difficult to socialize with New Zealand students but impossible!

It should be noted that all five factor means are greater than 3, the mid point of the five-point difficulty scale. None of the factors seemed to present severe problems for either group.



## DISCUSSION

1) The results support the expected finding that both groups of students would have difficulties in finding suitable accommodation near the University. More than half of the New Zealand and Malaysian sample (66.7% and 62.5%) still preferred to flat but the lack of housing near the campus meant that students had to travel long distances to get to University. This is especially true with the New Zealand sample where 35.89% and only 9.73% of the Malaysian students who complained about long distances to University.

2) The expected finding that Malaysians would have greater problems in the use of English language was only significant for the spoken level (i.e. their fluency in daily conversation),  $t = 3.21$ , d.f. = 189,  $p < 0.05$ . There was not much difference in the written, understanding of lectures and taking down of lecture notes. Both groups seem to show fairly similar levels of competency in their communication skills.

It is also interesting to note that Malaysian students have managed to cope with the problem of English inspite of the initial difficulties they encountered when they first arrived in the country.

3) Contrary to the expected finding, overseas students did not have greater financial difficulties than the New Zealand students. The percentage of Malaysians and New Zealand students who had money problems was 33.63% and 30.77%.

These figures are more or less similar. Another finding is that unlike the 1960's, the number of government sponsored overseas students to University of Canterbury have dropped dramatically with 92.9% being private students in the Malaysian sample.

4) Evidence to support overseas students' difficulty in adjusting to New Zealand teaching methods was only found in class participation and developing appropriate study techniques. T - tests showed no significant differences between groups on the rest of the academic problems listed in the questionnaire.

Being more goal oriented, it appeared that overseas students have less problems with external discipline and motivation in their studies compared to their New Zealand counterparts.

5) The fifth expected finding was the low level of socializing between the two groups of students. This was evident in the result where 61.8% of the New Zealanders who had never been to Malaysian homes for drinks or meals and the 64.1% who did not even have one foreign student to visit without being invited. These figures are much higher than Noor's study (1968) where only 38% of the overseas students had never spent time with students from other countries (p. 88).

Such a finding illustrates the limited and superficial relationships between the two groups of students. As far as club memberships are concerned, Malaysians preferred to be "spectators" rather than "participants".

#### Comment on the Problems Experienced By the two groups

This study revealed that the adjustment problems that previous literature had cited do not only affect foreign students. The host students also experience similar difficulties, for example with accommodation and finances.

The difficulties expressed by foreign students in their academic life and in the use of the English language are by no means so severe as to have a detrimental effect on their studies. Such problems are surmountable as time passes.

Both groups of students found it equally hard to get to know each other. It may be the case that such difficulties in socializing, arise from the institutional characteristics such as the large impersonal lecture classes which provide little opportunity for close contact and not so much a result of personal deficiencies.

### Implications And Recommendations

1) Due to the shortage of housing, students travelled long distances to get to University. The answer to this problem may lie in the building of more flats and not halls of residence as they are often beyond the budget of the average student.

Another implication is that, overseas students must be prepared in future to travel too like many of their New Zealand counterparts.

2) As to the problem of language, counsellors, teaching staff and experienced overseas students could help newly arrival foreign students to cope with initial English difficulties and to assure them that the situation will improve in later stages.

3) Financial difficulties have placed a lot of stress and strain on both groups of students. Out of the total New Zealand sample, 70.512% of the respondents depended on their holiday savings and bursary. This implied that if students were not able to find a holiday job, they probably would not be able to continue their University studies the following year. The government should be made aware of this and be encouraged to provide or insure holiday employment for students.

A recommendation for the overseas students is that they should have access to loans or funds from the University or other host organisations to assist in times of financial difficulties.

4) Lecturers and tutors need to be aware of the genuine problem of overseas students in class participation and to give encouragement to assist these foreign students to overcome this particular problem.

5) One academic recommendation is that besides showing first year students how to use the library, study skills programmes such as planning timetables, establishing personal and academic priorities, and time management could be conducted during the first few weeks of the academic year. This would help both the overseas and local students to organize their studies and to anticipate unforeseen academic problems.

6) New Zealand and Malaysian students need not look upon each other as a competitive threat to academic performances but should instead learn from each other, academically, socially and culturally.

REFERENCES

- Cajoleas, L.P. Counselling overseas students. Journal of Higher Education, 1958, 29, 209 - 212
- Cook, S.W. and Selltitz, C. Factors influencing the attitudes of foreign students towards the host countries. Journal of Social Issues, 1962, 18 7 - 23
- Davies, J.M. Foreign student adviser: a new profession? Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1961, 335, 91 - 98
- Deutsch, S.E. and Won, Y.M.G. Some factors in the adjustment of foreign nationals in the United States, Journal of Social Issues, 1963, 19 115 - 122
- Eldridge, J.E.T. Overseas students at Leicester university: some problems of adjustment and communication. Race 1960, 2, 50 - 59
- Gibbs, A. Overseas students and private board, Christchurch, Counsellor for Overseas Students, undated.
- Goldsen, R.K. and Suchman, E.A. and Robin, M.W.J. Factors associated with the development of cross-cultural social interaction. Journal of Social Issues, 1966, 12, 26 - 32
- Hearder, K. Trans-cultural counselling, Canberra, Council for Overseas students Paper No 3, undated.
- Ng, W. Overseas students: a general survey of the presence of overseas students in Christchurch and an investigation into the opinions of these students as to their general problems of adjustment to the conditions of living in Christchurch. Unpublished master dissertation, University of Canterbury, 1962.
- Noor, M. A study of the overseas students in Christchurch. Unpublished master dissertation, University of Canterbury, 1968.
- Overseas students in New Zealand. Australian and New Zealand student services association. 1980.

- Parkyn, G.W. Success and failure at the University (Vol 2) Wellington, New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 1967.
- Problems of First Year Students, Educational Research and Advisory Unit, University of Canterbury, Christchurch. Paper No 47, 1978.
- Schild, E.O. The foreign student as stranger learning the norms of the host culture. Journal of Social Issues, 1962, 18 41 - 45
- Selby, H.A. and Clyde, M. Foreign students at a high pressure University. Sociology of Education, 1966, 39 138 - 154.
- Selltiz, C., Hopson, A.L., and Cook, S.W. The effects of situational factors on personal interaction between foreign students and Americans. Journal of Social Issues, 1956, 12 33 - 44
- Sewell, W.H., Morris, R.T., and Davidson, O.M. Scandinavian student's images of the United States, a study in cross-cultural education. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1951, 295 126 - 135
- Sewell, W.H. and Davidson, O.M. The adjustment of Scandinavian students. Journal of Social Issues. 1956, 12, 9 - 19
- Smith, B.M. Cross-cultural education as a research area. Journal of Social Issues, 1956, 12, 3 - 8
- Smith, B.M. Some features of foreign student's adjustment. Journal of Higher Education, 1955, 26, 231 - 241
- Survey of Overseas Students, Educational Services Unit, Lincoln College, Christchurch, New Zealand 1982.
- Thompson, R.H.T. Overseas students in New Zealand some anomalies in status. Journal of the Institute of Race Relations, 1962, 4, 14 - 25
- Tuoc, T.K. Our New Zealand Experience. Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1968.

APPENDIX

SURVEY OF MALAYSIAN AND SINGAPOREAN STUDENTS  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Purpose: The purpose of this survey is to examine the factors that influence academic performance among Malaysian and Singaporean students at Canterbury University.

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

BLACK COLOUR = MALAYSIAN  
RED COLOUR = NEW ZEALANDER

- (1) Sex M  F  M = 80 / 53  
F = 33 / 25
- (2) Age \_\_\_\_\_  $\bar{x}$  = 22.313 / 20.577  
 $\sigma$  = 1.92 / 2.69
- (3) Race \_\_\_\_\_ CHINESE = 112 EUROPEAN = 77  
INDIAN = 1 MAORI = 1
- (4) Religion \_\_\_\_\_ CHRISTIANITY = 50.4% / 64.1% MUSLIM = 0% / 1.3% ATHEIST = 0.9% / 3.8% TAOISM = 1.8%  
BUDDHISM = 13.3% / 0% HINDU = 0.9% / 0% NIL = 31.9% / 29.5% = 0%
- (5) Nationality \_\_\_\_\_ MALAYSIAN = 105 NEW ZEALANDER = 78  
SINGAPOREAN = 8
- (6) Course of study \_\_\_\_\_ B.A. = 9 / 26 LAW = 6 / 2 B.E. = 43 / 13  
B.Sc. = 27 / 26 B.Com = 27 / 11
- (7) Year of study (i.e., 1st, 2nd, 3rd) \_\_\_\_\_  $\bar{x}$  = 2.288 / 2.493
- (8) Marital status \_\_\_\_\_ SINGLE = 109 / 70 DIVORCED = 0 / 1  
MARRIED = 4 / 6
- (9) Did you attend High School here? Yes  = 1 No  = 2 YES = 47  
NO = 66

THIS IS A LIST OF WHAT COULD BE THE AIMS OF OVERSEAS STUDENTS AT CANTERBURY UNIVERSITY.

Please rate these aims according to your own belief of their importance for yourself.

- Key: 1 = Very important  
 2 = Important  
 3 = Not important  
 4 = Very unimportant

Place the number 1, 2, 3 or 4 in the box beside each aim. Do not put more than one number in the box.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Gaining a qualification which will qualify me for a job in my own country.	$\bar{x} = 1.536$ $\sigma = 0.568$	$\bar{x} = 1.816$ $\sigma = 0.795$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gaining a qualification which will qualify me for a job outside my country.	$\bar{x} = 2.477$ $\sigma = 0.761$	$\bar{x} = 2.184$ $\sigma = 0.828$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Experiencing a life style which is different to that in my own country.	$\bar{x} = 2.225$ $\sigma = 0.147$	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning about and acquiring as much experience in my field as possible.	$\bar{x} = 1.739$ $\sigma = 0.670$	$\bar{x} = 1.697$ , $\sigma = 0.674$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fostering the spirit of international goodwill and understanding.		$\bar{x} = 2.373$ $\sigma = 0.689$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seeing as much of New Zealand as possible.		$\bar{x} = 2.345$ $\sigma = 0.771$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Finding out how New Zealanders live.		$\bar{x} = 2.473$ $\sigma = 0.713$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fulfilling my parents' aspirations for me.	$\bar{x} = 2.009$ $\sigma = 0.745$	$\bar{x} = 3.000$ $\sigma = 0.783$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Could not gain entry into a university in my own country.		$\bar{x} = 2.615$ $\sigma = 1.008$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Others (please list): _____	$\bar{x} = 1.929$ $\sigma = 0.917$	$\bar{x} = 1.294$ $\sigma = 0.470$

(1) How important is succeeding academically in achieving your stated aims as listed above?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely important	$\bar{x} = 1.611$	$\bar{x} = 1.671$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Important	$\sigma = 0.589$	$\sigma = 0.526$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unimportant		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Extremely unimportant		

(2) How satisfied are you with your actual level of academic performance?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Completely satisfied	$\bar{x} = 2.098$	$\bar{x} = 2.000$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat satisfied	$\sigma = 0.747$	$\sigma = 0.707$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat dissatisfied		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Completely dissatisfied		



(3) Given your actual level of ability, how satisfied are you with your degree of academic success?

- Completely satisfied  $\bar{x} = 2.212$   $\bar{x} = 2.156$
- Somewhat satisfied  $\sigma = 0.737$   $\sigma = 0.844$
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Completely dissatisfied

(4) What was your overall average grade last year? (Please circle one the the following.)

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-
10	09	08	07	06	05	04	03	02

$\bar{x} = 6.333$   
 $\bar{x} = 5.689$

NUMEROUS FACTORS CAN AFFECT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE. BELOW ARE 5 SECTIONS, EACH DEALING WITH A SEPARATE FACTOR. PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW.

- A. Accommodation
- B. Language
- C. Financial
- D. Educational Background
- E. Socializing with Others

A. ACCOMMODATION

- (1) Where do you live?
- =1 Halls of Residence
  - =2 University Flats (e.g. Ilam Flats)
  - =3 Private Flats
  - =4 Boarding
  - =5 Others (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_

(2) If you are in a flat, what nationality are your flatmates?  
1 = MALAYSIAN    2 = SINGAPOREAN    3 = NEW ZEALANDER    4 = OTHER FOREIGN STUDENTS

(3) Are you happy with the place you are staying in? Yes  =1 No  =2  
YES = 99 / 69  
NO = 12 / 8

(4) Ideally, what type of accommodation would you prefer?

	FREQUENCY
<input type="checkbox"/> =1 Halls of Residence	8    5
<input type="checkbox"/> =2 University Flats (e.g. Ilam Flats)	82    48
<input type="checkbox"/> =3 Private Flats	
<input type="checkbox"/> =4 Private Board	22    16
<input type="checkbox"/> =5 Others (please list): _____	

- (5) Please describe how your accommodation (for the past 12 months or so) has affected your studies in the last year (i.e., noise level, distance from varsity, relationship with flatmates).

---



---

B. LANGUAGE

- (1) What was the medium of instruction in your school (or university) before you came to New Zealand?

		<u>FREQUENCY</u>
1	English	59
2	English and Malay	35
3	Chinese	3
4	English and Chinese	13
5	Others (please list):	5

- (2) Did you have any problems with English during your first few months in New Zealand?

(For example, if you had no difficulty with your SPOKEN English, you would place a tick (✓) above the number 5 ( 1    2    3    4    5 )  
great difficulty no difficulty

- (a) SPOKEN

1    2    3    4    5  
great difficulty no difficulty

- (b) WRITTEN

1    2    3    4    5  
great difficulty no difficulty

- (c) UNDERSTANDING LECTURES

1    2    3    4    5  
great difficulty no difficulty

- (d) TAKING DOWN LECTURE NOTES

1    2    3    4    5  
great difficulty no difficulty

- (3) To what extent are you still having problems now?  
 Please place a tick (✓) above the appropriate number.

- (a) SPOKEN

1    2    3    4    5  
great difficulty no difficulty

(b) WRITTEN

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

(c) UNDERSTANDING LECTURES

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

(d) TAKING DOWN LECTURE NOTES

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

(4) In the light of the problems above, how do you think your ability in English has affected your academic performance?

---



---



---

C. FINANCIAL

(1) Indicate the type of financial aid you are presently receiving. (Please tick the appropriate boxes)

- Colombo Plan
- Government Scholarship
- Special Award (e.g., Rotary, Shell, etc.)
- Private (family support)
- Loan from a special scheme
- Others (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Are you under any bond or contract to work for your government or any other organization when you return home?

Yes       No

(3) Describe how money problems have affected your studies this year (e.g., buying textbooks, woollen clothing, rent, fees).

---



---



---

D. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

(1) Which stream were you in during your last two years in High School?

Arts  = 1      Science  = 2      Both  = 3

(2) Below is a list of possible difficulties that students face. Please tick the 3 greatest problems that you faced last academic year.

1 = YES, a problem  
2 = No, not a problem

- a)  Using the library, i.e., finding your own resources or reading materials. YES = 12/6 NO = 101/72
- b)  Approaching lecturers for help. YES = 28/21 NO = 85/57
- c)  Taking responsibility for organizing own study. YES = 23/28 NO = 90/50
- d)  Establishing priorities between personal and academic life. YES = 49/47 NO = 64/51
- e)  Studying subjects which involve an understanding of the N.Z. situation, e.g., law, sociology, etc. YES = 10 NO = 103
- f)  Taking responsibility for meeting deadlines in studies. YES = 29/11 NO = 84/67
- g)  Developing a critical attitude towards studies. YES = 24/17 NO = 88/61
- h)  Expressing independent thought in written assignments. YES = 23/16 NO = 90/62
- i)  Expressing one's own views openly in class, tutorials, seminars, discussion groups. YES = 58/28 NO = 55/50
- j)  Developing appropriate study techniques. YES = 40/24 NO = 72/53
- k)  No problems. YES = 9/8 NO = 103/69
- l)  Others (please list): YES = 14/7 NO = 97/70

Please rank your choices in decreasing order of difficulty.

- i) \_\_\_\_\_
- ii) \_\_\_\_\_
- iii) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) How do you think your educational background (e.g., attitude toward teachers, approach to studies, method of teaching) has influenced your university academic performance?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## E. SOCIALIZING WITH OTHERS

This section deals with your level of social activity while at university and your perceptions of the New Zealand students in campus.

- (1) Were you a member of any of the clubs in the university in the past academic year? (Besides the Canterbury Malaysian and Singaporean Students Association.)

	<u>1st Year</u>	<u>At Present</u>
3 or more clubs	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
1	_____	_____
None	_____	_____

- (2) How many of your club's meetings and functions do you attend?

<input type="checkbox"/>	All of them
<input type="checkbox"/>	Most of them
<input type="checkbox"/>	Few of them
<input type="checkbox"/>	None
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable

- (3) How many organized activities around the campus have you been to in the last 12 months? (e.g., Barn Dance, Capping dinner, CMSA Food Fair).

	FREQUENCY	
<input type="checkbox"/> More than 5	28	17
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 - 5	29	21
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 2	43	25
<input type="checkbox"/> None	12	15

- (4) With whom do you usually attend these functions?

	With people from N.Z.	With people from my own country	With people from other countries
(a) Always	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Often	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Never	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- (5) Up to now, how many N.Z. families have invited you to their homes?  
(This includes having drinks or meals.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	More than 10
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 - ✓
<input type="checkbox"/>	None

- (6) How often do you have lunch, a cup of coffee, attend movies, or have any other social contact with Kiwi students?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Often
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometimes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Once in a while
<input type="checkbox"/>	Never

- (7) How many Kiwi students do you know well enough to visit without being invited?

- (8) What impression do you have of most New Zealand students?

Please tick each of the following scales to indicate where you believe New Zealand students fall between the two extremes at either end. For example, if you believe that most New Zealand students are very friendly, you would indicate this as follows:

unfriendly    .    .    .    .    .    friendly  
                  1    2    3    4    5 ✓

Please place your ticks above the appropriate place on the scale.

(a) unfriendly	.    .    .    .    .	friendly
	1    2    3    4    5	
(b) studious	.    .    .    .    .	not studious
	1    2    3    4    5	
(c) humble	.    .    .    .    .	boastful
	1    2    3    4    5	
(d) unhelpful	.    .    .    .    .	helpful
	1    2    3    4    5	
(e) scholarly	.    .    .    .    .	unscholarly
	1    2    3    4    5	
(f) inferior	.    .    .    .    .	superior
	1    2    3    4    5	
(g) understanding	.    .    .    .    .	not understanding
	1    2    3    4    5	
(h) impolite	.    .    .    .    .	polite
	1    2    3    4    5	
(i) unprejudiced	.    .    .    .    .	prejudiced
	1    2    3    4    5	
(j) interested in you.	.    .    .    .    .	indifferent to you
	1    2    3    4    5	
(k) unsuccessful	.    .    .    .    .	successful
	1    2    3    4    5	



(9) Describe how your contact with Kiwis has affected your academic performance (e.g. contact in discussion groups, group projects, etc.).

---



---



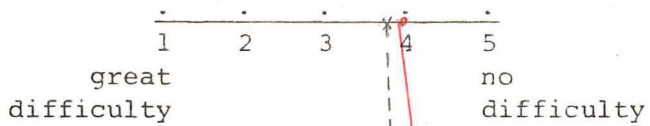
---

SUMMARY

In summary, indicate the degree to which each of the following has adversely affected your academic performance. (Please put a tick (✓) above the appropriate number.)

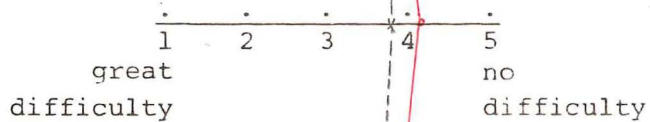
----- M'SIAN  
 ----- KIWI

A. ACCOMMODATION



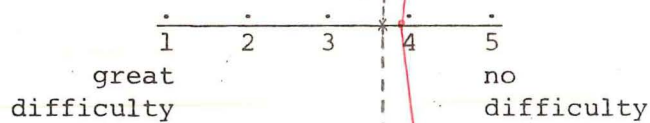
$\bar{x} = 3.954$   $\bar{x} = 4.013$   
 $\sigma = 1.083$   $\sigma = 1.094$

B. LANGUAGE



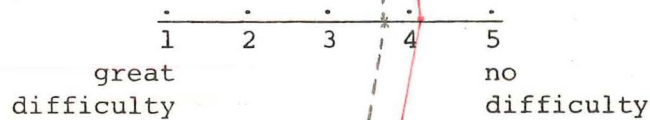
$\bar{x} = 3.936$   $\bar{x} = 4.221$   
 $\sigma = 1.052$   $\sigma = 0.941$

C. FINANCIAL



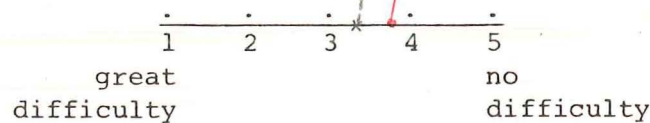
$\bar{x} = 3.782$   $\bar{x} = 3.962$   
 $\sigma = 1.112$   $\sigma = 1.232$

D. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND



$\bar{x} = 3.700$   $\bar{x} = 4.128$   
 $\sigma = 1.071$   $\sigma = 1.085$

E. SOCIALIZING WITH KIWIS



$\bar{x} = 3.385$   $\bar{x} = 3.795$   
 $\sigma = 1.209$   $\sigma = 1.132$

(1) Have you ever seen the Counsellor at the Student Health with regard to any of the problems above?

YES  = 1      NO  = 2

Yes = 16 / 2  
 No = 93 / 76

(a) If 'Yes', how helpful was counselling?

---



---

(b) If 'No', why?

---



---

SURVEY OF NEW ZEALAND STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Purpose: The purpose of this survey is to examine the factors that influenced academic performance among New Zealand students at the University of Canterbury.

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

- 1) Sex       M       F
- 2) Age      \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Race      \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Religion \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Course of study \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Year of study <sup>(1982)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) Marital status \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Which High School did you attend? \_\_\_\_\_



THIS IS A LIST OF WHAT COULD BE THE AIMS OF STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY.

Please rate these aims according to your own belief of their importance for yourself.

Key - 1 Very important  
2 Important  
3 Not important  
4 Very unimportant

Place the number (1, 2, 3 or 4) in the box beside each aim. Do not put more than one number in the box.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Gaining a qualification which will qualify me for a job in my own country.	$\bar{x} = 1.816$ $\sigma = 0.796$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gaining a qualification which will qualify me for a job outside my country.	$\bar{x} = 2.184$ $\sigma = 0.828$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gaining status in wider society.	$\bar{x} = 3.053$ $\sigma = 0.746$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fulfilling my parents' aspirations for me.	$\bar{x} = 3.000$ $\sigma = 0.783$
<input type="checkbox"/>	To find a professional wife or husband.	$\bar{x} = 3.539$ $\sigma = 0.621$
<input type="checkbox"/>	To sort out my vocational interests.	$\bar{x} = 2.289$ $\sigma = 0.907$
<input type="checkbox"/>	To put off having to start work.	$\bar{x} = 3.487$ $\sigma = 0.721$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning as much as possible about a field I am interested in.	$\bar{x} = 1.697$ $\sigma = 0.674$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please list) _____	$\bar{x} = 1.294$ $\sigma = 0.470$

1) How important is succeeding academically in achieving your stated aims?

- Extremely important
- Important
- Unimportant
- Extremely unimportant

2) How satisfied are you with your actual level of academic performance?

- Completely satisfied  
 Somewhat satisfied  
 Somewhat dissatisfied  
 Completely dissatisfied

3) Given your actual level of ability, how satisfied are you with your degree of academic success?

- Completely satisfied  
 Somewhat satisfied  
 Somewhat dissatisfied  
 Completely dissatisfied

4) What was your overall average grade last year? (Please circle one of the following).

A+      A      A-      B+      B      B-      C+      C      C-

---

NUMEROUS FACTORS CAN AFFECT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE. BELOW ARE 5 SECTIONS, EACH DEALING WITH A SEPARATE FACTOR. PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW:

- A. ACCOMMODATION  
B. COMMUNICATION SKILLS  
C. FINANCIAL  
D. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND  
E. SOCIALISING WITH OTHERS

A.

## ACCOMMODATION

1) Where do you live?

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Halls of residence

University flats

Private flats

Private board

At home

Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

2) If you are in a flat, what nationality are your flatmates?  
\_\_\_\_\_3) Are you happy with the place you are staying at?  Yes  No

4) Ideally, what type of accommodation would you prefer?

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Halls of residence

University flats (e.g., Ilam Flats)

Private flats

Private board

Other Please list) \_\_\_\_\_

5) Please describe how your accommodation has affected your studies in the last 12 months. (e.g., family responsibilities, noise level, distance from university, relationship with the people you are staying with).  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B.

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1) Did you have any problems with communication skills during your first few months in university?

(For example, if you had no difficulty with your SPOKEN English, you would place a tick ( ✓ ) above the number 5 ( . . . . ✓ )

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

great  
difficulty

no  
difficulty

a) SPEAKING (e.g., saying what you mean)

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

b) WRITING

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

c) UNDERSTANDING LECTURES

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

d) TAKING DOWN LECTURE NOTES

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

2) To what extent are you still having problems now? (Please place a tick ( ✓ ) above the appropriate number)

a) SPEAKING

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

b) WRITING

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

c) UNDERSTANDING LECTURES

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

d) TAKING DOWN LECTURE NOTES

	.	.	.	.	.
	1	2	3	4	5
great					no
difficulty					difficulty

3) In what ways do you think your ability in communication skills has affected your academic performance?

---



---



---

C.

## FINANCIAL

- 1) Indicate the type of financial aid you are presently receiving.  
(Please tick the appropriate boxes)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Scholarship
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bursary
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teachers College studentship
<input type="checkbox"/>	Government scholarship
<input type="checkbox"/>	Special award (e.g., Rotary, Lions, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private (Family support)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Holiday earnings
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please list) _____

- 2) Are you under any bond or contract to work for your government or any other organisation?

Yes       No

- 3) Did you have any financial problems this year?

Yes       No      YES = 28  
No = 50

- 4) If yes, describe how these money problems have affected your studies this year.

---



---



---

D.

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

- 1) Below is a list of possible difficulties that students face. Please tick the 3 greatest problems that you faced last academic year.

- a)  Using the library, i.e., finding your own resource or reading materials.
- b)  Approaching lecturers for help.
- c)  Taking responsibility for organizing own studies.
- d)  Establishing priorities between personal and academic life.
- e)  Taking responsibility in meeting deadlines.
- f)  Developing a critical attitude towards studies.
- g)  Expressing independent thought in written assignments.
- h)  Expressing one's own views openly in class, for example, tutorials, seminars, discussion groups.
- i)  Developing appropriate study techniques.
- j)  No problems.
- k)  Other (Please list) \_\_\_\_\_

(Please rank your choice in decreasing order of difficulty)

- i) \_\_\_\_\_
- ii) \_\_\_\_\_
- iii) \_\_\_\_\_

2) How do you think your educational background (accepting class material uncritically, study habits, teaching methods) has influenced your university academic performance?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E.

SOCIALISING WITH OTHERS

This section deals with your level of social activity while at University and your perceptions of the largest single group of foreign students at this university, Malaysian and Singaporean students.

1) Were you a member of any of the clubs in the university in the past academic year?

	<u>1st year</u>	<u>At present</u>
3 or more clubs	_____	_____

2 or more clubs	_____	_____
1 or more clubs	_____	_____
None	_____	_____

2) How many of your club's meetings and functions do you attend?

<input type="checkbox"/>	All of them
<input type="checkbox"/>	Most of them
<input type="checkbox"/>	Few of them
<input type="checkbox"/>	None
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable

3) How many organised activities around the campus have you been to in the last 12 months? (e.g., Barn dance, Capping dinner, etc.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	More than 5
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 - 5
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 - 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	None

4) With whom do you usually attend these functions?

	With people from my own country	With people from Malaysia or Singapore
a) Always		
b) Often		
c) Sometimes		
d) Rarely		
e) Never		

5) Up till now, how many Malaysian or Singaporean friends have invited you to their homes? (This includes having meals or drinks).

<input type="checkbox"/>	More than 10
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 - 5
<input type="checkbox"/>	None

- 6) How often do you have lunch, a cup of coffee, attend movies, or have any other social contact with Malaysian or Singaporean students?

	Often
	Sometimes
	Once in a while
	Never

- 7) How many Malaysian or Singaporean students do you know well enough to visit without being invited?
- 

- 8) What impression do you have of most Malaysian and Singaporean students?

Please tick each of the following scales to indicate where you believe Malaysian and Singaporean students fall between the two extremes at either end. For example, if you believe that most Malaysian and Singaporean students are very friendly, you indicate this as follows:

unfriendly · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · ✓ · friendly

Please place your ticks above the appropriate place on the scale.

- |                      |                       |                    |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| a) unfriendly        | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | friendly           |
| b) studious          | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | not studious       |
| c) humble            | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | boastful           |
| d) unhelpful         | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | helpful            |
| e) scholarly         | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | unscholarly        |
| f) inferior          | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | superior           |
| g) understanding     | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | not understanding  |
| h) impolite          | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | polite             |
| i) unprejudiced      | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | prejudiced         |
| j) interested in you | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | indifferent to you |
| k) unsuccessful      | · 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 · | successful         |

- 9) Describe how your contact with Malaysians or Singaporeans has affected your academic performance (e.g., contact in class discussion groups, group project, friendships).
- 
-



SUMMARY

In summary, indicate the degree to which each of the following has adversely affected your academic performance. (Please put a tick (✓) above the appropriate number.

A. ACCOMMODATION

1	2	3	4	5
great difficulty			no difficulty	

B. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1	2	3	4	5
great difficulty			no difficulty	

C. FINANCIAL

1	2	3	4	5
great difficulty			no difficulty	

D. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

1	2	3	4	5
great difficulty			no difficulty	

E. SOCIALISING WITH OTHERS

1	2	3	4	5
great difficulty			no difficulty	

1) Have you ever seen the counsellor at the Student Health Centre with regard to any of the problems above?

Yes

No

a) If YES, how helpful was counselling?

---



---

b) If NO, why?

---



---