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## Academic stress, psychological adaptation, and sociocultural adaptation of undergraduate international students in the University of Santo Tomas

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**Introduction:** International students (IS) are vulnerable individuals that often experiences challenges in adaptation, which leads them to experience anxiety and depression. The Philippines has become a popular choice for international study, but there is a lack of knowledge about adaptation status of international students in the country. This study aims to fill the gap of knowledge regarding the adaptation status of international students in the Philippines by determining the level of academic stress (AS), psychological adaptation (PA), and sociocultural adaptation (SCA) experienced by international students enrolled in a metropolitan university in Manila, Philippines and to find a significant correlation among the 3 variables.

**Method:** Using a descriptive-correlational design, the researchers combined two survey tools to determine the level of AS, PA, and SCA. Pearson correlation was used to determine if there is a significant difference between the 3 variables. Convenience sampling was used to gather the participants. A total of 59 undergraduate international students participated in the study. The rights of the participants were upheld throughout the entire study.

**Results:** Results showed that the participants experience moderate levels of academic stress (mean=3.83, SD=1.49), moderate levels of psychological adaptation (mean=3.43, SD=1.49), and high levels of sociocultural adaptation (mean=4.42, SD=1.38). The results also showed that AS is significantly correlated to PA, PA is significantly correlated to SCA, and AS is not significantly correlated to SCA.

**Discussion:** Undergraduate IS experienced moderate stress in school, adapted moderate usage of various coping patterns, and adapted highly to other people and their surroundings. IS become more psychologically adapted as they experience more stress, while they become less stressed when they build relationships and explore their surroundings. Interventions for specific concerns should be addressed individually.

### Biography

Carla Maries I Ricafort is a Level IV student of the University of Santo Tomas College of Nursing, Manila, Philippines. She finished her Primary and Secondary Education in United States 2003-2011. Inspired by her own experiences of becoming an international student and the relentless care demonstrated by nurses, she aspires to seek higher education and health care profession in other continents such as Europe and North America. Because of her love for culture, she continues to strive for the acculturative needs of her fellow international students by leading the university's international student organization as the President of the UST International Students Association from 2014-2016.

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