



Perceptions of New Students' Coping Skills during their First Year in the University: a Case Study

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The focus of this study is to explore the perceptions of first year's students studying at a local university in Malaysia. A qualitative approach using a phenomenology approach was implemented to gathered data from a purposeful sample of 40 first years' students studying at the faculty of Education and Social Sciences. Data collection tools that were utilized in this study were individual interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews (written journals in the form of diary entries by individual students). Data was coded and transcribed. The data analysis entailed the use of constant comparison method to look for similarities and differences. In addition to this, triangulation of different types of data sources from individual interviews, focus group discussions and document reviews were also employed to further determined the trustworthiness of the data. The main themes that emerged from the final data analysis comprised of a supportive environment which looked at both the learning and the social emotional support. These themes seemed to be vital in coping and adjustment to the initial adjustment studying in the university. The learning support involved development of learning styles and skills and teaching strategies practices by lecturers and developing to be self-regulated learners. The social and emotional support involved parental involvement and participation, mentoring and coaching by peers and lecturers, interpersonal communication and interactions, development of social skills to survive in the university campus. Overall, this study provided some insights for new students as a preparation method for both mentally, socially and what to expect during the first year in studying in the university.