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From Tranquility to Mobility: The Adaptability of Continual Transfer Students

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ABSTRACT

An array of circumstances motivates a student's reason for school transfer. From being closer to home, to being unsatisfied with the school's academics, and the list goes on. A student shifting to another school concurs a variance of difficult situations which equally demands a diversified scheme of adaptation. These hardships, if dealt with conscientiously, could yield opportunities for individual breakthrough. This research follows a qualitative method making use of sequential delineation and inductive approach revealing adaptive skills manifested by Senior High School transfer students in Qatar. The transfer students in Qatar effectuated school adjustment by developing their personality, nurturing their relationships, sustaining the environment, and understanding the curriculum. Substantial evidence authenticates that these skills were the most efficient in overcoming the adversities associated with continual school transfer. Thus, transfer students are encouraged to raise their self-awareness through the findings propounded by the study inaugurating integrative methods which could augment their adaptive paradigm and resilience through tough stages in life.

Keywords: *Student Transfer, School Adjustment, School Environment, Senior High School, State of Qatar*

INTRODUCTION

The student transfer is becoming a frequent behavior and is no longer considered as a peripheral act (Zilvinskis, J., & Dumford, A. D, 2018). According to Simone (2014), one-third of the first-time transferees, around 35%, will have experienced transferring at least once when basing it in a six-year period. A much simpler term referring to the transfer behavior is the word 'Student Mobility,' more formally defined as the movement of students from one institution to another (Welsh, 2017). While a frequent behavior of transferring or the so-called frequent 'student mobility' is another phenomenon that can be considered as an essential issue occurring in many school districts (Welsh, 2018), other resources considers transferring as prevalent across the United States wherein urban school setting is mostly affected (Institute of Medicine & National Research Council, 2010; U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2010; as cited by Welsh, 2018).

With student mobility becoming a frequent behavior, it is acquiring schools to expand on open enrollment options (Welsh, 2018). Welsh further added that the promotion of integration in schools could be potentially done through the use of school choice policies that will give parents the freedom to choose the desired schools their child would attend.

High mobility rates in different institutions have said to have a greater percentage of minorities and low-income students (Mao, Whitsett, & Mellor, 1997; Nelson, Simoni, & Adelman, 1996; as cited by Welsh, 2017). The effect of school mobility may be a cause of school segregation, or rather it can be a cause and consequence of each other, wherein a student may change school due to segregation while student mobility may continue or expand segregation (Welsh, 2018). Families and schools are two factors that initiate the effects of mobility on a student, but there is a greater number on the families that enable the causes of mobility (Rumberger, 2015). Social and economic factors drive the cause of student mobility which includes (Kerbow, 1996; Kerbow, Azcoitia, & Buell, 2003; Pribesh & Downey, 1999; Rumberger, 2003; Rumberger & Larson, 1998; Rumberger, Larson, Ream, & Palardy, 1999; Swanson & Schneider, 1999; as cited by Welsh, 2017):

- Residential mobility;
- Family circumstances and income;
- Economic opportunity;
- School preferences;

Among the following factors, residential mobility is the majority reason for the mobility of a student (Institute of Medicine & National Research Council, 2010; Reynolds et al., 2009; Rumberger, 2003; as cited by Welsh 2017). To further dive into Welsh's (2017) study, it suggests the two main types of student mobility, structural and non-structural mobility. The first type of student mobility, structural mobility, involves the usual transitioning of students to a higher level or, in simple terms, a promotional type of transfer, for example, the transition of a student from elementary to middle school. While the other type of transfer can be termed as non-structural or non-promotional mobility that is defined as the type of transfer when a student switch schools for non-promotional purposes or in their own choice, for example switching between different middle schools. Changing schools may occur due to a variety of reasons, Rumberger, Larson, Ream, and Palardy (1999, p. 76; as cited by Welsh, 2017), these reasons for student mobility are divided into two categories, "reactive" and "strategic." The "reactive" type of reason for student mobility is considered as unplanned moves that were brought up by family or school situations, while the "strategic" type of reason is the opposite of the "reactive" reason where student mobility is purposely done to achieve a specific goal.

With all considerations in mind, this paper argues that the struggles can be overcome through a repetitive cycle of frustration to the adaptation of transfer students in their new institutions (O'Connor, 2018), which gives an idea of the potentialities for common adaptation skills these students possess. Thus, this objective is to identify the skills that are needed for continual transferees to adapt to their unfamiliar environment, mainly focusing on the possibilities of similarity. Furthermore, the transfer experience should be given the focus on the strategies that ease the transfer process and make completion successful. Every individual transferee cannot be treated the same since everyone comes with different backgrounds and goals, as suggested by Schwientek (Hope, 2016). However, there is initial maladjustment that transfer students experience when transitioning, which can also be termed as transfer shock, this maladjustment leads to lower GPA that still recovers after the shock has passed (D'Amico et al., 2014; Hills, 1965). According to several studies on transfer students (Lester, Leonard, & Mathias, 2013; Townsend, 1994; Townsend & Wilson, 2009; as cited by Maliszewski, 2019), the recovery of transfer students can be achieved through social and academic integration. Lester et al. (2013) conveyed that students felt a better sense of engagement when faculty intervened with creating opportunities in making interactions. Factors that impact a successful transfer is the giving of pre-transfer advising to guide the students before the beginning of a transition (Berger & Malaney, 2003; Davies & Dickmann, 1998; Hood et al., 2009; Miller, 2013; Smith et al., 2009; as cited by Maliszewski, 2019). In addition to giving advice and the interaction with institutional agents, the influence of

creating social networks is also significant for the success of the student. Overall, the students establish, imagines, and manages their position in school as a basis for creating relationships with peers (Holton, 2015), leading its way to a successful transfer process.

With transfer becoming a normative occurrence, it is very much needed to expand knowledge and to further understand its effects on multiple areas on a person's life (Langenkamp, 2016). This has driven the researchers' concerns and interest in proceeding with this timely research. Lastly, the researchers are particularly interested in capturing the experiences of continual transferees to the skills needed in adapting to a new learning environment.

METHOD

Research Design

This study is a qualitative research that deals with the phenomenological aspect of continual transferees. Qualitative adaptation research is influenced mainly by sociological and psychological well-being of individuals (Kamoche, 1997). This approach focuses on the impression adjustment and emotional experience of individuals in a new surrounding (Bevan, 1965). Schwandt, Denzin, & Lincoln (1994), clearly stated that this approach's main feature is to understand the interpretations of practices or experiences to comprehend further about people's thoughts. In the study of Buyse, Verschueren, Verachtert, et al. (2009), they gained insights through observing the said experiences of their respondents descriptively to maintain the fluidity of their design. In this type of study, the researchers aspire to accurately describe the phenomenon while refraining any set biases but remain faithful to the facts (Groenewald, 2004).

The phenomenological approach is being employed in this study since it focuses on understanding the lived experiences and perceptions of the participants concerning the adaptation skills of continual transferees.

Research Locus and Sample

This study was conducted in Philippine School Doha (PSD) — incorporated as a non-stock, non-profit educational corporation serving the Filipino community in the State of Qatar. Known as the leading learning institution as per Philippine basic education is concerned, the birth of Philippine School Doha resulted in the determination of pioneering students who are scholarly when it comes to the field of research. PSD has always delivered its excellence in every aspect, especially in the total development of each student's maximum potential through the provision of high-quality education, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and student formation. Whereas, some interviews were conducted in the most convenient location for the participants' interviews, in Barwa City, Messaimer area and Fereej Kulaib, Al Qateef street in Doha, Qatar.

The chosen participants of this study were senior high school students who have experienced a minimum of two school transfers throughout their high school years. The selection of participants was made possible through qualitative non-probability sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that a researcher uses to choose a sample of subjects and units from a population (Etikan et al., 2016). This type of sampling is widely used in



Figure 1. Map of Qatar

<https://maps.google.com> , [mapshttps://maps.google.com](https://maps.google.com) , [maps](https://maps.google.com)

qualitative research to gather information related to the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015). These respondents were chosen with regards to their numerous school transfers as they have been exhibited to various types of environments and people. The six gathered participants were said to have a range of three to five transfers throughout their high school years. The researchers strongly believe that these participants will be able to yield

valuable responses as they have encountered different transferal circumstances.

Data Collection and Ethical Consideration

Data required in this study were gathered through a semi-structured interview with the help of instruments such as the robotfoto, the twenty-five developmental questions, and a semi-structured interview guide. The robotfoto, according to Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002), it makes use of the personal information of participants, more specifically in this research information related to the number of schools was included. The twenty-five developmental questions was used in order to uncover the experience of the participants in certain aspects of their lives (Kimball, 2007). The semi-structured interview guide was also used in following up on specific concepts to explore specific experiences ensuring that the sensitivity of the subject being researched will float in participants' consciousness (Cohen & Crabtree 2006). Data gathered were transcribed precisely with the help of the recording gadget, and the participants were guaranteed to have their responses to be treated with the utmost confidentiality (Collis & Hussey, 2003).

With regard to the data collection proper, an appropriate interview was enacted. This is an essential part and is useful when conducting phenomenological qualitative research. With this being considered as a crucial aspect and valuable in the process of conducting phenomenological qualitative research is because of it being the focus of the main study (Barrett & Twycross, 2018). To seek approval, the researchers made use of a consent letter from participants.

Data Analysis

The researchers have followed the inductive approach in theme development (Dudovskiy, 2011; Vallesteros, 2018) to broadly analyze the gathered data in this study: (1) reading and reviewing of the transcribed data to acquire the over-all sense of the participants' idea or opinion; (2) identifying meaning units, which are small units; (3) translating the meaning of the units from the preferred language of the participants (emic) to the language of the researchers (etic); (4) categorization of the units formulated connotations into categories and cluster of themes via a dendrogram (Teknomo, 2017); (5) producing a simulacrum for the visual representation of the findings; (6) Usage of themes to triangulation and member checking procedures to ensure validity of all claims and its data (McWilliam et al., 2009).

FINDINGS



This phenomenological study interprets the lived experiences of Filipino students in the State of Qatar, specifically those who have experienced transferring to different schools each year relative to the central question: "How do continual transfer students adapt to their new learning environment?" Furthermore, the study focuses on the specific question: "What are the skills continual transfer students needed to acquire to be able to adapt in their new learning environment?". Certainly, having to study in a different school yearly involves facing adversity. It pushes you to go past your limits. As a student continue to transfer schools, challenges arise, which could inculcate invaluable lessons, no teacher would be able to teach you.

Figure 5 shows the simulacrum focused on four major themes: **developing personality, nurturing relationships, sustaining environment, and understanding curriculum**. These themes highlight the

skills it takes for a student to overcome the difficulties in continual transferring and, more so, acquire invaluable life-guiding principles which one needs to take on the trials life has to offer.

Developing Personality

The only thing certain in this world is uncertainty. This is why humans have evolved to cope with the changes in their environment. However, being a continual transfer student, these changes tend to happen more often than it should. Each person has a unique personality which plays a vital role on his or her overall behavior and attitude in life. It is important as having a good personality meant having what it takes to progress as a being. For one to develop a personality, first he or she must be open to experience. Exposing yourself to people meant welcoming new possibilities. The students claimed:

"I was really hesitant at first, because I was bias on wanting to stay. I wanted to stay for my friends, and my neighborhood, but I thought bigger and better for my future." (P6)

"I don't usually fit in; I just find people that have the same interest as me so that we always have something to talk about." (P5)

"I just accepted and prepared myself to adapt with a new school environment like I always do." (P5)

"There is nothing much you can do; you want the best for yourself and the best for others. You don't want waste money and time so it's easy to accept." (P1)

to

Figure 5. Simulacrum

Common Adaptation Skills

Students have different views in life, yet these views tend to change due to the

continual transfer. They experienced different challenges that will determine what personality they will be able to form. Being exposed to these changes gives us the opportunity to grow and appreciate the different circumstances handed to us. They affirmed with these replies:

"I became more appreciative about every opportunities and challenges." (P4)

"Make the most out of every opportunity, challenges, and hardships. See the good in every situation." (P4)

"Constant changes had a positive impact because of the exposure to many things." (P3)

"It challenges you in a way that you get to know your capabilities better." (P4)

Constant changes also open our mind to a new perspective and develop our own unique personality. It makes us realize that there is more than what we know we are capable of. We unlock certain aspects of ourselves that we did not know exist. Through change there is growth and their growth were shown with these responses:

"Being exposed to different personalities helped me understand the world better." (P3)

"I'm sociable and extroverted now compared to who I was before." (P1)

"Back then I was independent. Now, I must learn how to work together with people." (P4)

"I'm friendlier, I know how to approach people better I'm more studious and more developed as a person." (P1)

Nurturing Relationships

Relationships will always be a part of human life and as students we need to communicate in order for us to grow. Communication is imparting or exchanging of information; hence students need this skill to survive transferring of schools. A student has a certain group of friends which they are comfortable with and when placed in an unfamiliar setting they tend to lose their sociable side. Various students claimed:

"I was really sociable; I used to talk to a lot of people. I loved socializing. I was really friendly." (P6)

"There used to be a solid group of friends that until now I still keep in touch with." (P3)

Moreover, students felt overwhelmed as they encounter new people. With transferring comes challenges and for students it is hard for them to change specially when they do not conform to the society's standards. Students feeling different kinds of emotions as they continue to strive for acquiescence. Students expressed their troubles with these responses:

"When I arrived at La Salle, it is the same for every school it was awkward. You are dragged into new environment. It's hard to not feel awkward unless you are really sociable. It is really overwhelming." (P1)

"It felt overwhelming since you are surrounded with new people. I got kind of scared since, there are a lot of new things to be cautious about in the society." (P6)

"It was difficult to fit in because not many shared common interests and were raised in the Philippines." (P3)

"I do not try to change myself to fit into certain groups. The attention that was brought up to me was too overwhelming, and it came to the point that I felt suffocated as the new student." (P2)

Students faced atrophy as they struggled to adjust to the norms of the society. Trusting themselves was hard for they were unsure of what is right and wrong. Coping up with the people around them was a challenge and

they affirmed with these replies:

"It was not easy for me to cope up because I transferred late, and it was very stressful. I always cry because of the pressure, but I try to deal with it by talking to people, and sleep whenever I get tired and deal with it whenever I like." (P2)

"I felt pressured and insecure and it turned me into a people pleaser somehow." (P4)

"The lack of connection really affected me since, you don't really have that social connection with anyone, you are isolated. That affected my personal relationship with other people. I only, trust those who I've been with really long time and that I know, I would stay connected to." (P6)

"I coped up through the help of my relationship with my classmates and teachers." (P4)

Regardless of all the misery, students continue to adapt and with this they are grateful for the people that continue to aid them through all the ups and downs they encounter. Appreciating the people around them showed how much they wanted to change and how they absorbed the views of their new environment. Continual transfer students tend to breakdown, but they will always be thankful for everything they face and to the people they meet. They declared:

"I was pretty sociable entering high school. When I transferred to home school, I became less sociable due to the lack of people around me. Now, I appreciate all the people I have met." (P4)

"It could be tough, but there will always be people who are willing to help. Explore life, and associate with whomever you can. Do not give up." (P2)

Amongst everything they have experienced, the amount of knowledge they got from this is exceptionally abundant. They have justified that students are able to adapt regardless of the situation. Their journey as continual transfer students prove that with hardships come learnings and all the experience was worth it as they show their gratitude in these responses:

"I really learned how to value each other even if it's for a short time and the boundaries of each other. I've learned how to respect myself and to respect everyone else around me." (P6)

"Asking teachers and friends was a way to cope up to the new academic curriculum." P3

"With the help of the teachers was one way." (P5)

"They should really connect with people that are closer to them like family. Having that personal connection with your family is really important in dealing with the isolated times. Learn how to focus on yourself, and use that isolation to your advantage, keep improving yourself." (P6)

Sustaining Environment

Undeniably, continual transfer students go through a process of sustaining in their new environment. Adaptation skills required in flourishing this progression is through resilience and flexibility of an individual. Before everything else, the student first faces a specific reason for transferring, showing the first hurdle a continual transferee would usually encounter. Several students stated:

"My father was working abroad, so I needed to go with him. I was really young at that time and no one would take care of me." (P6)

"The biggest reason of the transfers is because of having to move." (P3)

"The general reason is because of my dad's work. I just need to follow where he goes." (P6)

"First, my school did not have a secondary education. Next, my dad wanted us to stay together. After, we just wanted to try homeschool. Lastly, Philippines does not provide home school for senior high." (P4)

Additionally, the following reasons mentioned above give a hint of displaying resilience of the continual transfer students towards the transfer situation. These students had to develop themselves in the acceptance of changes and challenges of having to move. They indicated:

"There was nothing that could be done but to deal with it." (P3)

"I was considerate and understanding." (P4)

"I did nothing, and it was neutral." (P2)

"I just had to accept it although it was hard leaving the places and people I love." (P4)

"I did not really have the choice. I did not want to be a burden, so I had to do what should be done for myself and for my parents." (P6)

"I would say no because the reason is easy to accept and to understand. I would not do anything different." (P1)

"I could always tell them I wanted to stay, but I do not want to be a burden to my parents." (P6)

The skill of resilience does make up a part of the whole process of sustaining in an environment, despite that it begins with a little more effort and struggle before reaching its success. There were circumstances continual

transfer students expressed hardship with their situation at the beginning of transitioning to new schools. Students expressed:

"It felt overwhelming since you are surrounded with new people. I got kind of scared since, there are a lot of new things to be cautious about in the society." (P6)

"PISQ was really bad because of constant stress. La Salle was twice the stress, it has a different environment there's this weight on you that doubles the stress. PSD, I didn't have major subjects so it wasn't as stressful as it was in La Salle. CNAQ is the easiest and less stressful school, it is more welcoming than the previous schools." (P1)

"It was difficult to fit in because not many shared common interests and were raised in the Philippines. (P3)

"When I arrived at La Salle, it is the same for every school it was awkward. You are dragged into new environment. It's hard to not feel awkward unless you are really sociable. It is really overwhelming. (P1)

"In certain points, I have been mentally and emotionally low when I transferred here. It's like I was alone and I felt like there was no one. I tend to try to keep it to myself and try to be happy, but people think that nothing is wrong. (P2)

Amidst all the struggles, it is clearer that the students do face several problems at the beginning of attempting to be resilient to their new surroundings. This resilience is then overcome by flexibility of the student towards their environment. This stage is where the transferees develop the ability to adapt to different circumstances. They affirmed:

"It made me adaptive and resourceful in a way. It was hard at first since I didn't develop my own personality but it made me grow and adapt to any situation. (P5)

"Being flexible, wherein I can always adapt to a new situation and somehow get along with the new environment. (P5)

"Yes, it affected me both positively and negatively. Negative in a way that I didn't develop my own personality, and did not build a lot of strong relationships. While positively in a way that it made me adaptable and flexible to situations that I might encounter. (P5)

"Mentally and emotionally wise I'm fine, for now. I think that desperation like loneliness and not having a personal connection could lead to depression. I learned how to cope up with that loneliness and used it for my own time instead. (P6)

Understanding Curriculum

The curriculum is the entirety of learning experiences provided to students so that they can acquire general skills and knowledge at a variety of learning standards. Continual transfer students undergo the progression of understanding of the curriculum. Hence, with the adaptation of the students, they will experience enculturation and grit. The difference in the curriculum in each school made it more difficult for the students. They stated:

"The Arabic and Filipino curriculum was very different, and it was easy for me to get high grades in my previous Arabic school because the exams there were being done one or two subjects per day. Unlike here in PSD, they require too much school works, and I was not used to it. (P2)"

"The struggles I faced was the practical activities, and more hands-on activities and projects. I wasn't really ready to be bombarded with the amount activities, and the new subjects itself. (P6)"

"The grading system of my previous schools were different here in PSD. It was more pressuring because I have to do more school works in here, and sometimes you cannot rely on people around you, but in terms of academic, PSD was more advanced. (P2)"

"PISQ to La Salle it was a bit hard to adjust academically, in PISQ you can be carefree but, in La Salle, you have to give your best. Going to PSD it was easy to adjust academically because I didn't have those subjects that were the hardest. Only problem was in PSD I was an irregular student and going through different classrooms. When I went to CNAQ you had to give your best but less stress. (P1)"

However, regardless of the difficulties of the students, they were able to overcome or gradually make towards the learning of the school system. The respondents stated:

"I adjust by friends. I copy what everyone does. I would ask everyone's opinion and by experiencing it first-hand. (P6)"

"It was through my classmates and teachers; it was mostly through them that I coped up with everything. I was able to catch up with all the academic requirement and all the study habits they do techniques. (P6)"

Among all of the difficulties of adapting to the curriculum, the continual transfer students utilized themselves to strive harder and excel in their academics. They became more determined and perceived the awe

towards learning. They claimed:

"If I had learned the language or just memorized it despite, I don't understand much. (P2)"

"I adjusted by being observant and accepting the new environment. (P4)"

"It challenged me academically and socially. (P4)"

"In PISQ, I was carefree but I as I continued transferring schools I have focused on my studies. (P1)"

"Make the most out of every opportunity. (P4)"

DISCUSSION

Adaptation in adolescence requires negotiating the social, emotional, and cognitive demands of completing high school. The developmental task includes satisfying basic academic requirements and also complying with school attendance, discipline, and social policies. Success or failure in school has serious individual as well as social consequences. Economic (e.g., high unemployment rates, lost income and tax revenues, increased need for social services) and educational consequences (e.g., inability of individuals to obtain additional training or adapt to changing work environments) of school failure have been well documented (Rumberger, 1987; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1991). Failure to adjust in the high school context also may be seen as a symptom of more basic developmental and educational difficulties (e.g., the inability to maintain participation in academic and social relationships, behavior problems such as delinquency). School failure may be part of a developmental cycle of achievement and behavioral problems that become coalesced early in a child's school adaptation (Cairns, Cairns, & Neckerman, 1989). In middle childhood, competence with peers, externalizing behavior, and emotional health/self-esteem predicted later school adjustment. When these middle childhood predictors were considered in combination, however, only externalizing behavior and emotional health significantly predicted later adjustment. Socioeconomic status and middle childhood academic achievement were correlated with high school adjustment as expected, but indicators of externalizing behavior and emotional health/self-esteem were equally or more powerfully correlated with later school adjustment, even with SES and middle-childhood academic achievement controlled. Thus, although SES has been found to be significantly correlated with academic achievement and adjustment (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Felner et al., 1995; Pungello et al., 1996; Schorr, 1988; Stroup & Robins, 1972), more specific influences improve the prediction. This evidence that variables from multiple earlier developmental periods are implicated in adolescent functioning further underscores the importance of a developmental perspective on phenomena commonly attributed to adolescence.

School experiences clearly are relevant, as well. Both preadolescent and adolescent social and academic experiences may be related to adolescents' participation in extracurricular activities, a probable correlate of high school adjustment (e.g., Eccles & Barber, 1998, this issue; Jacobsen & Hofmann, 1997; Mahoney & Cairns, 1997; Vallerand et al., 1997). Moreover, behavioral problems, lack of early school success, and low levels of academic motivation are powerful predictors not only in the present report but also in other articles in this special issue (Garber & Little, 1998; Eccles and Barber, 1998).

Given the evidence that continuity in school performance and adjustment increases over time (i.e., achievement at one age increasingly predicts achievement at a later age; Lloyd, 1978; Stroup & Robins, 1972), it is particularly important to understand proximal as well as distal factors that initiate children on this pernicious pathway. The current study adds up to our understanding of this process by identifying social and emotional influences early in the child's life (e.g., at the beginning of middle childhood and in the home even prior to the child's entering school) that significantly influence later high school adjustment. These initial findings raise the further possibility that longitudinal investigations may identify mediating and moderating factors or linkages between developmental influences and educational environments and factors related to change in trajectories (i.e., processes that enable early "disadvantaged" youth to remain engaged in learning and school).

Developing Personality

Extraversion

One's personality is affected in the environment they have grown up in. Constant changes may affect how an individual sees the world, and this has a significant impact on their identity. Transfer students experience a variety of academic, social, and institutional challenges when they transition to a different institution (Laanan, 1996;

Townsend et al. 2006; as cited by Fematt, 2017). The characteristics of a transfer student can depend on the social and academic background of the student, their prior academic performance. (Lee & Frank, 1990; as cited by Thompson, 2018). Socialization skills, as well as academic achievements, can differ each time they transfer schools or universities.

Moreover, in higher education, a sense of belonging is the perceived social support on campus, a sense of belonging has a statistically significant effect on learning and development outcomes (Strayhorn, 2012; as cited by Thompson, 2018). Due to consistency transfers, these students gained confidence and are now more open and extroverted than when they started switching schools. As stated by Lester et al. (2013), socially, transfer student social adjustment is positively influenced constant interaction and experiences with faculty and peers, yet another example of how transfers find social belonging through academic means.

Nonetheless, this is not always the case. During the transfer, according to Gasper et al., 2009, while trying to catch up on schoolwork and building social relationships in a new school, mobile students may struggle academically and feel stressed. According to Keller & Decoteau (2000), some mobile students experience downshifting, a psycho-physiological response to a perceived threat or unpleasant experience which impedes or diminishes learning after a move. This is where activities help the student develop his or her personality. According to Srinivasan et al., (2014), student teachers are given the opportunity to build and enhance all the aspects of their levels of personality. When the psychological traits of character are achieved within the student, one is more likely to be motivated to succeed, cooperate, and take on new challenges.

Openness

Being active in social activities allows students to be more open about themselves; this will enable them to assume social responsibilities that support them to become active, creative, and autonomous persons (Vîlceanu et al., 2018). Social activities allow the transfer of students to gain and understand themselves; therefore, expanding their personality, it is essential that students find value in making interactions with people that are different from themselves (Schommer-Aikins et al., 2015). Allowing diversity in the student lives led to growth, and according to Bowman et al., (2014), students who exhibit an openness to diversity and challenge “welcome challenges to their beliefs and values and are open to interacting with and learning from others who are different from themselves.

The personality of a student can make a difference in their learning, and how they learn, with this personality, becomes vital to build language learning, which also includes the linguistic, affective, situational, motivational, and demographical factors (Capellan et al., 2017). Being able to develop an individual’s personality not only gives them a better future but is only an indicator of a successful transfer. According to Li & Zizzi (2018), the presence of friendship is associated with goal stability, higher self-esteem, and improved adjustment.

Despite all the challenges, students can overcome and are able to form a better personality. According to O’Connor (2018), adaptation to a new college and culture cycle begins with the endings, to the early encounters, then leads to becoming frustrated, then to the critical stage, later recovery through adaptation, subsequently resulting in a successful transition, and repeats all over again.

Nurturing Relationships

A student put into a new setting will always find a companion to help them adjust to the said environment. As mentioned by Nuñez et al. (2017), transfer students struggle with finding access to institutional agents to help them navigate the new setting, the increased academic demands and large classes of the new institution, and difficulties making friends in a large population consisting mostly of students who began college at the same institution. Students must adjust to new expectations, school climate, teaching style, and peer interaction (McCoy, 2014). Student relationships are vital for students’ academic, emotional, social development, professional and as well as personal development. (Forkosh-Baruch et al., 2018).

Communication

Students need to develop relationships with teachers, students, or any person in the new setting. As said by Gündüz & Alakbarov (2019), these students need to adjust to a new environment, socialize independently, communicate and cooperate with strangers, and cope with new environmental pressures and impressions. Being

liked and accepted by friends and other peers is said to be a strong need that adolescents require (Siwach & Devi, 2014). Teachers, closest to their students, can build these relationships effortlessly. As Cook et al. (2018) stated, the majority of the students were observed to have spent most of their time with their teachers compared to other adults outside of their families. Communication with teachers helps relieve stress and, most importantly, marks the beginning of new relationships formed in the new setting. Declared by Forkosh-Baruch et al. (2018), teachers were interested in broadening communication channels with students in order to empower learning and interpersonal relationship.

More on McCoy's (2014) study, he stated that social acceptance, with its emotional intensity, can heighten emotional distress, which has the potential to create negative outputs on student behavior and academic performance. Teachers as companions are stepping stones, but students still need to socialize. Positive teacher-student relationships help in the development of the students' emotional aspect and safety that is used to reduce risks with regards to academics as well as enhance the students' academic pursuit (Cook et al., 2018).

These students need to adjust to a new environment, socialize independently, communicate and cooperate with strangers, and cope with new environmental pressures and impressions (Gündüz & Alakbarov, 2019). According to recent studies, factors such as language barriers, cultural differences, and perceived discrimination are related to international students' challenges in adapting to a host society (Collins et al., 2017). Li & Zizzi (2018) suggested that social interaction with local students brought acculturative benefits, including less homesickness and loneliness, improved language and social communication, and positive adaptation and feelings of cross-cultural experiences.

Gratitude

Arguably, one of the most problematic parts of life transitions is the disruption of social relationships, especially early in the life course (Langenkamp, 2016). As Siwach & Devi (2014) stated, any type of stress relating to the college applications can have an effect on the way a student learns and behaves, proving with more pieces of evidence that higher competition could lead to greater negative effects on a student. While transfer students socialize with other people, it may strengthen or weaken the way they continue adjusting to the new setting. Mentioned by Holton (2015), the diverse ways in which the participants established, imagined, and managed their student habitus during the initial stages of their degrees were crucial in cementing their position among their peers.

Finally, Li & Zizzi's, (2018) research proposes that the multicultural friendship developed and strengthened by engaging in these physical activities. With all the different activities in school, it is certain that a transfer student can socialize and to find friends. The establishment of relationships should be maintained through positive interactions that should be practiced repeatedly (Cook et al., 2018). Relationships play a crucial part in the transition the transfer student must make, and as a result, friendship, adjustment to college, strong communication with lecturers, and self-confidence were the most important variables affecting international students' social adjustment (Gündüz & Alakbarov, 2019).

Sustaining Environment

The student transfer process is an overwhelming experience due to a load of information and unfamiliarity with the said environment (Lazarowicz, 2015). As mentioned by Whang et al. (2017), one struggle transfer students face is the lack of acknowledgment with their academic and personal experiences proving the need for support to these students in their new surroundings. The whole child model addressed five tenets that emphasized the physical and emotional needs of students in their school environment, in which under it mentioned the importance of having a healthy school environment for the development of an adolescent (Lewallen et al., 2015).

Flexibility

Multiple previous pieces of research propose the high risk of school dropout and disengagement of students who frequently transfer between several schools (Gasper, DeLuca, & Estacion, 2012; Rumberger & Larson, 1998; as cited by Langenkamp, 2016). The risks are likely due to the unsuccessful adjustment of the following transferees and the schools' lack of improvement in the transfer program. Some campus administrators seem to assume transfer students can successfully fit in an institution without assistance, thinking they are already used to it (Townsend, 2008). Though it is the other way around, several kinds of literature have stated that transfer

students still need to be supervised as they again do feel anxious because of the unfamiliar campus and environment. (Roberts & Nell McNeese, 2010; Townsend, 2008, as cited in Fematt, 2017). Schools should then seek in implementing and measuring their involvement that is aimed towards redesigning the school climate while considering grounding these efforts in a multidimensional conceptualization of what climate students value, which includes the basics, engagement, and safety (Gase et al., 2017).

Resilience

Accordingly, Townsend and Wilson's (2006) study, as cited in O'Connors's (2018) article called "Supporting the unique needs of international; transfer students," found out that transferees were still frustrated in their current institution due to the inefficient support from the sending institution. Transfer students even do need faculty interaction in order to successfully participate actively in their current institution (Miller, 2013; Zilvinskis & Dumford, 2018). This further meant that the environment adjustment of students highly depends on the intervention and support of faculty members in their transfer process (Tobolowsky & Cox, 2012; as cited by O'Connor, 2018). Other than just faculty involvement, family engagement is crucial for a successful transition, and this also means school staff shall exert effort in working together to support and improve the learning, health, and development of the student (Lewallen et al., 2015).

A vital part of the improvement of the well-being of students is the school climate (Gase et al., 2017). The term 'school climate' has been used in numerous aspects, one where it makes use of the word as a way to describe the insights of a school community members with regards to the school environment (Zullig et al., 2014). Several studies discovered common domains of school climate and also took into consideration the complexity of these domains (Ramelow, Currie, & Felder-Puig, 2015). In some studies that were cited by Hatzichristou et al. (2018), there are significant dimensions of a positive school climate all similarly includes (Cohen et al., 2009; Zullig, Koopman, Patton, & Ubbes 2010): (a) safety in school help in promoting the academic status and resilience of the student (Gietz & McIntosh, 2014); (b) interpersonal relationships that comprises of shared understandings, positive relationships with peers and teachers, all contributing to better academic and psychological adjustment of transfer students (Doll, Brehm, & Zucker, 2014); (c) perceptions of the student towards the learning process, the engagement, and satisfaction of the student (Finnan, Schnepel, & Anderson, 2003); (d) Dimensions of school engagement, behavioral, emotional, and cognitive, all being used in the learning process (Lam et al., 2016); (e) the school's physical environment related to better academic performance and sense of belongingness (McNeely, Nonnemaker & Blum, 2002). Overall, the adaptation to the school climate with the help of peer relations and support of the school environment is an essential factor for a successful transition of transfer students (Lester & Cross, 2015).

Understanding Curriculum

Enculturation

The process of moving from one academic environment to another is never seamless, as stated by Grais, (2011). Classes have different curricula and are taught at different paces (Grais, 2011). The period of time it takes to adjust to the changes in the curriculum is a contributing factor in determining the progress of the student (Antoine and Ali, 2016). Mobile or transfer students are at a higher risk of failure and not graduating, compared with non-mobile students (Titus, 2007). This is undoubtedly not surprising since many of the transfer students do change not only high schools but also change school districts, countries, states, and even languages of instruction (Davis & Bauman, 2008).

Moreover, Doddington, Flutter, Bearne, and Demetriou (2001) found that reasons for this hiatus in performance were increased curricular demands in the new school, new ways of working, lack of parental involvement, and the teaching styles of less experienced teachers. Not all students, however, experience academic difficulty while transitioning. Some students sought avenues for coping with higher academic standards in their new educational environment by seeking support from friends and family (Townsend, 1993).

However, Galton, Gray, et al. (2003) found that the way the curriculum is taught impacts on academic achievement, and that schools are paying more attention to pedagogical strategies when students transfer to maintain student progress. Galton, Gray, et al. (1999) observed that students experience a decline in academic achievement immediately after they move to a new school. The transferring of schools should not be viewed as a single isolated event but rather as a dynamic, unique process for each student, the process begins well before the actual transfer occurs and continues indefinitely after the transfer (Grais, 2011).

The academic consequences of mobility can have an impact on the transfer of students on multiple dimensions. Before a transfer student even steps into the new school building, there are already extant differences

between schools that can influence their academics. Titus (2007) discusses the concerns regarding gaps in schools concerning scheduling, classes, school calendars, grading systems, class ranks, and curriculum. The transition is never seamless. For example, a student may finish a semester at one school and then transfer to the new school, which has already started the next semester. So the transfer student faces the challenges of entering a new school while potentially being behind academically in one or more classes. Once in the new school, there might be dramatic differences between the two environments. Warren-Sohlberg & Jason (1992) states that the discontinuities from the old and new school may impact on the student's adjustment.

Grit

Heinlein and Shinn (2000) and Wood et al. (1993) note that academically students who move frequently often have deficits in cognitive development and achievement. These students enter new schools with gaps in their knowledge base that, if not recognized early enough by staff, could lead to continuing problems. This difference in the curricular sequencing between school districts is noted in the Titus (2007) article and called "curricular inconsistency." This can impact a student's ability to progress academically. The more accepting the students were about the move, the more ready they were to embrace the social and/or academic challenges of the new school. The emotional impact of the transition was profoundly associated with the immediate and long term adaptations of the student to the new school. Therefore, the reasons for mobility do impact the student's academic and social experiences. In time, the students became aware of the other available school resources, supports, and extracurricular activities and gravitated to those that fit their needs and areas of interest. Common to the students' stories was the availability of extracurricular activities that helped them feel a stronger connection (Grais, 2011).

According to Grais (2011) study, a school wishing to help ensure the success of transfer students should provide a dedicated comprehensive transfer student curriculum. This curriculum should be established and in place, before transfer students arrive, best begins before school starts, and continues as needed. The curriculum is not fixed or static but must be capable of evolving to meet the particular and changing needs of each student.

Transfer students appear to have less difficulty with the transition if they are included in the decision and process of moving. Students articulated variable reasons for mobility, and these reasons did impact the students' academic and social experiences. The more accepting the students were about the move, the more ready they were to embrace the social or educational challenges of the new school (Grais, 2011).

CONCLUSION

To fit in among peers is a crucial part of the adolescent stage (de Bruyn & van den Boom, 2005). Upon transferring, the building of relations with others is considered as an extremely important aspect in adjusting socially in a new school environment (Milner, 2004; as cited by Langenkamp, 2016). A new place would mean a new set of peers with different standards and norms, the unfamiliar social rules being introduced would greatly influence one's behavior in a new environment (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955; Sherif, 1936; as cited by McCormick, 2015). The student engages in social activities, which allow them to open up with peers in which they start having social responsibilities that help them in becoming a flexible person (Vîlceanu et al., 2018). In order to develop relationships, the student engages oneself in building a personality that would follow a particular trend in the current school (Prinstein & Dodge, 2008; as cited by McCormick, 2015).

Moreover, school transfers disrupt social relationships of student transferees, and it is considered one of the most problematic hurdles of frequent transferring, affecting most in the early life course (Langenkamp, 2016). The prosocial development of an adolescent creates a sense of belongingness, which is being promoted by having social ties (Crosnoe, 2000; as cited by Langenkamp, 2016). According to Forkosh-Baruch et al. (2018), relationships of students are as crucial for the students' academic, emotional, social, professional, and personal development. There were positive results that were founded upon the social interaction of these students with the local students, where it adjusts them socially in an environment (Li & Zizzi, 2018), that make them nurture their relationships.

The classes being taught in a new school varies in its structured curriculum (Grais, 2011). Frequent transfers have linked to the students' gaps in knowledge where if not recognized at an early time, it could lead to further consequences in academics (Heinlein & Shinn, 2000; Wood et al. 1993). The timeline of a student's adaptation to a changed curriculum can be used as a basis to determine student progress (Antoine and Ali, 2016). The teaching method of the curriculum impacts the students' academic level, wherein the schools land their focus

on strategies that will enable the maintenance of student progress (Galton, 2003). Furthermore, having friendships may have a direct or indirect impact on the academic achievement of the student (Bronkema & Bowman, 2019), while also being suggested as having a correlation with retention and persistence academically (Bronkema, 2014). Braxton et al.'s (2013; as cited by Bronkema & Bowman, 2019) student persistence theory is strongly linked to the social connections with peers and the social integration on campus. Therefore, success in academics is mainly affected by the social engagement of peers and individuals that results in the understanding of the curriculum (Langenkamp, 2016).

Apart from developing personality, nurturing relationships, and understanding curriculum, which all go hand in hand for a successful transition, another factor of adapting to be considered is sustaining in an environment. The school climate is regarded as a 'shared understanding of some aspect of the organizational context' (Ostroff et al., 2013: 643; as cited by Alqahtani, 2015). It is also the interaction between school culture, school organizational structure, and personal background of the student (Stewart, 2003; as cited by Sulak, 2016). The social and emotional learning environment itself can be referred to as the school climate that is determined by the perception of collaboration and academic expectations (CASEL (The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), 2003; as cited by Alqahtani, 2015). Additionally, the environmental adjustment of a student is influenced dramatically by the intervention of faculty members as a supporting factor for adapting in an environment (Tobolowsky & Cox, 2012; as cited by O'Connor, 2018).

As based on the simulacrum of this study, the proposed harmony in the adaptation skills of transfer students namely, develop personality, nurture relationships, sustain the environment, and understand the curriculum, all help in the transition process of these students. The success of continual transferees dramatically relies on the efforts done with regards to the collective adaptation skills, and frequent transfer students have considered all these factors of adaptation in terms of a positive transition towards a common goal of graduating despite the prosperity or adversity of being a transfer student.

However, the basis of the results was from responses of students with different school experiences, including the gap years of the transfer, number of transfers, school background, and gender. The limitation that should be considered in this study is the responses gathered starts with continual transferees from high school. Recommended would be a uniform analysis and interview of the leading focus group to achieve ideal results. It should be noted that the adaptation skills may vary at the individual student level due to the limitations and recommendations.

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