

US Universities Socio Cultural and Academic Support for International Students

Nadiya Smolikevych¹, Iryna Turchyn², Nataliya Mukan³, Ivanna Huziy⁴, Olena Nevmerzhytska⁵

¹PhD in Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor of Foreign Languages Department for Natural Sciences of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine. ²PhD in Pedagogical Sciences, acting Associate Professor at Foreign Languages Department, Lviv National Agrarian University, Ukraine. ³Doctor of Sciences in Pedagogy, Professor of the Department of Pedagogy and Innovative Education. ⁴Senior instructor of the Department of Pedagogy and Innovative Education, ^{3,4}Lviv Polytechnic National University, Ukraine. ⁵Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor, Professor of the General Pedagogy and Preschool Education Department, Drohobych Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University, Ukraine

Abstract

The paper presents the analysis and survey results of international students' adaptation problems while studying and living on US university campuses on the basis of the elaborated survey. It also explores their main studying problems. Core student competences necessary for successful adaptation and studying in US universities were outlined. The ranking of US universities in the world and main educational tasks caused by globalization processes have been highlighted. Strategies of the university support for foreigners' overcoming sociocultural and academic challenges have been substantiated. University staff's key competences and role in creating the favourable educational environment have been given, too. Taking into account the national experience, the rationality of implementing the US progressive ideas and experience in providing international students with all necessary support to facilitate their adaptation to studying process and a good opportunity to acquire up-to-date international knowledge and practical skills in university education has been justified for other countries.

Keywords: International students, adaptation problems, sociocultural support, academic support, US universities.

1. Introduction

Among the primary goals of current higher education is to create conditions for effective adjustment to a new sociocultural and academic environment of mobile youth who intend to study in various programs at universities abroad (particularly in the United States). It had been extremely relevant by 2020, but we hope that, in the nearest future, this issue will continue to be actual for higher education establishments to discuss globally when studying process is held mostly on campuses again. Overcoming adjustment barriers to an unfamiliar environment is a necessary prerequisite for participants of education process not only to perform educational tasks but also to gain skills in interpersonal and multicultural interaction while studying or working in diverse groups.

Therefore, the US University's crucial educational objective in a global context was and maintains to be to educate the intellectual elite with multicultural collaboration skills able to adapt easily to a diverse environment and ready for lifelong learning, so that they can be more competitive than other candidates in the international labor market.

Due to its multidimensionality, adaptation is a subject of study of several human sciences – philosophy, sociology, social psychology, pedagogy, etc. It is a process and result of establishing relationships between the individual and the social, cultural, and academic environment. So, in the paper, the adaptation problems are considered from the point of view of individual adjustment to a new culture and studying setting.

The analysis of the scientists' works has shown that international students' adaptation to US universities taking into account the relevance of academic mobility has received some coverage in scientific-pedagogical sources, but there has not been comprehensive, thorough research on the identified problem yet. Thus, it is necessary to do some extra research and make conclusions on this issue. It is important in times of intensive development of international education, increasing the number of mobile youth willing to study abroad and when there is the need of improving teachers and advisors' work with international students to facilitate their educational process and provide its effectiveness.

The research aims to reveal the peculiarities of support for international students' adaptation in US universities and outline the possibilities of implementation of the US progressive ideas and experience in this field by other colleges and universities.

According to the aim of the study, the objective of this paper is to present an overview of organizational-managerial and educational-methodological support of university staff for international students' successful adaptation to living and studying in US universities.

To do it has been explored fundamental factors influencing the development of US higher education in the context of the international educational environment, which are the following: scientific and technological progress, global student mobility, and internationalization of higher education. Major characteristics of US current higher education have also been specified like humanization, democratization, diversification, integration, and internationalization, including popular philosophies of humanism, postmodernism, constructivism, and positivism.

Having analyzed challenges of US universities in the global educational context caused by the process of internationalization of education, we can define the main ones, for example, enhancement of international cooperation in the field of education and science, promotion of successful campaigns to recruit mobile talented youth from abroad for studying in order to develop multicultural education (on campuses or online).

The survey of US universities global performance among other world highly rated educational establishments showed that they got top places in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings due to key indications as highly qualified teaching, studying outcomes, scientific activity and research, publication rate (citation rate), international outlook, and so on. Considering the ranking of 2015, 2018, and 2019 years, US universities have the largest share among the best universities in the world and continue keeping the top place (see Table 1).

Table 1. US Universities World University Rankings

№	Total number of the best universities in the world	Number of US universities in the ranking		
		2015	2018	2019
1	10	8	7	7
2	50	27	26	23
3	100	43	43	40
4	200	62	62	61
5	400	110	110	103
6	500	125	138	121
7	800	153	157	158

The data confirm (Table 1) that American higher education is premium, prestigious, valuable, and valid in the world. As a result, US universities attract plenty of foreigners to study there.

In total, 1, 100, 000 foreigners studied in US universities in 2018-2019, it is the fourth year when this country receives more than 1 million international students. We should also note that their share isn't big and makes up mostly from 5.5 to 12 % (in some states) of all US students (IIE, 2019).

The investigation of theoretical material and scholars' scientific and practical experience on this problem helped to fully understand the necessity of ensuring the international students' adaptation to the academic environment, facilitating their adjustment to the sociocultural activity and the requirements of American higher educational system by implementing appropriate pedagogical practice with its organizational-managerial and educational-methodical basics and, in addition, intensifying international collaboration between universities. So, it is of vital importance to study and summarize the best international experience on this issue.

2. Conceptual framework

Numerous studies have been published that explored different views on international higher education. Scholars (e.g. Deardorff 2014, Junor and Usher 2008 and Smolikevych 2018) focused on academic mobility problems and perspectives.

Scientists Grant (2003), Sleeter (2003), etc. researched the university functioning and campus services. Abrahao (2011), Arredondo and Arciniega (2001), Baohua and Wright (2016), Daniels and Ivey (2007), Sue and Sue (2008), and others investigated foreign students' adaptation to a new cultural and educational environment considering cultural, linguistic, interpersonal communication, and multicultural competences. Researchers (e.g. Ellis 2007, Gudykunst (2003), Lantolf and Thorne 2006) paid attention to the necessity of acquiring communication skills and knowledge about various cultures. The students' main challenges for successful adaptation were the subject of study of Lin (2012), Moule (2012), Smolikevych (2020), Turchyn (2020) and others. Banks and Banks (2010), Spencer-Rodgers (2010) highlighted the cultural aspect of the adaptation process in their works. Young and Janosik (2007), Smolikevych (2018) investigated adaptation theory and its methodological fundamentals.

Cushner and Brennan (2007), Smolikevych (2019), and Turchyn (2018) studied the teacher's core competences in a multicultural university environment and provided several recommendations for teacher staff's while working with international students.

3. Methodology

Following our research aim, we have used some appropriate theoretical methods, such as

- historical and comparative ones for studying normative documents and laws on education, educational and scientific literature;
- analysis and synthesis for investigating pedagogical theories, concepts, and principles on the organization and facilitating the studying process for students abroad;
- induction and deduction methods for summing up and interpretation of the research material, clarifying the students' adjustment problems at higher education institutions;
- analytical and logical methods, which allowed exploring fundamentals of providing university services at a high level and compliance of organizational and pedagogical US universities support for successful undergoing foreign students' adaptation process with the new academic environment;
- statistical methods for checking the obtained information by comparing data from scientific and other sources;
- the method of systematization and generalization for judgments and conclusions;
- empirical methods, which were used for conducting questionnaires on international students' core living and studying problems to gather and evaluate the data gained with the help of modern IT technologies, and discuss the problem about possibilities of implementing the advanced practice of US universities in other educational establishments.

We also applied a qualitative approach to investigate core international students' adaptation problems in US universities (Table 2).

4.The peculiarities of internationalstudents' adaptation to a new university environment

As the educational environment is becoming increasingly diversified nowadays, adaptation to it is the fundamental basis of existing and functioning effectively. Among the aspects of a single process of adaptation there are physiological, psychological, sociocultural, and academic. In this scientific work, we paid our attention to sociocultural and academic adaptation.

We can state that sociocultural adaptation is very significant for international students' successful studying. We consider this term as the ability of a particular person to adjust to a new cultural and social surrounding by changing the culture, rules of behavior, habits, gestures, perception, communication etiquette, and so on. Furthermore, the scale of these changes depends on the level of habitat differences and can vary from small lifestyle modifications to the transformation of the entire cultural and behavioral system with its psychological and ideological components. In addition, it should also be noticed that participants can break cultural biases while learning and different interactions are perfect for studying process (Ramis, 2018).

Taking into account the diversity of cultures, the Brazilian educator P. Freire emphasized freedom and mutual respect, which are crucial in overcoming the problem of the superiority of one culture over another. The equality of all people, regardless of differences in cultural or linguistic contexts, was significant for him. Freire's concept of "unity in diversity" says that one of the major tasks for participants in educational process is to be acquainted with cultures, especially for teachers as they are mediators in the very process. Moreover, different cultures must coexist equally, considering the fact that it is important in multiculturalism (Turchyn, 2018).

Among the above-listed adaptation aspects, academic adaptation is the most important for students. Mainly, it is an adaptation to the host country educational system, its organization and requirements, and also to the academic foreign language. Academic adaptation provides the ability to focus on the future specialty and work both independently and in a group (Baohua and Wright, 2016).

According to the studied data, we can infer that the structure of international students' adaptation to the American university environment comprises the subjective component (a student value attitude to educational activity, his or her learning ability and social interacting, specifics of interpersonal communication in a foreign language environment, communication models, main challenges of studying abroad), theoretical and methodological one (justified use of appropriate forms, methods, and teaching aids), the content component (communication culture and foreign language communicative, sociocultural, intercultural, and strategic competences), as well as organizational and managerial component (specifics of the organization and functioning of the global educational environment, university setting, orientation programs, language institutes and schools.) (Smolikeych, 2018; Young and Janosik 2007).

5.Student competences for successful adaptation and studying at US universities

Competence is interpreted here as a quality of personality that is a set of knowledge, skills, and experience indicating a degree of mastering specific types of activities (Katane et al., 2006). It has been found out that for the successful adaptation to studying in a university abroad the foreigner needs to form or develop several competences. They are the following: foreign language communicative competence, sociocultural competence, multicultural competence, strategic competence, etc. The ability to overcome culture shock and stress, the ability to adapt to a new environment are important personal characteristics in adaptation process, too (Smolikeych, 2018).

Cultivating foreign language communicative competence in students is closely associated with sociocultural, multicultural, and strategic competences. In the paper, we consider foreign-language communicative competence as a competence to communicate in a foreign language, use it in different spheres of life to interact with other people, and be active in a foreign communicative setting. It is tightly interconnected with socio-linguistic and cultural aspects of the language. Interactive educational methods, like simulation and role-play activities using information technologies are effective for promoting foreigners' communicative competence (Sabri, 2018). Sociocultural competence is the

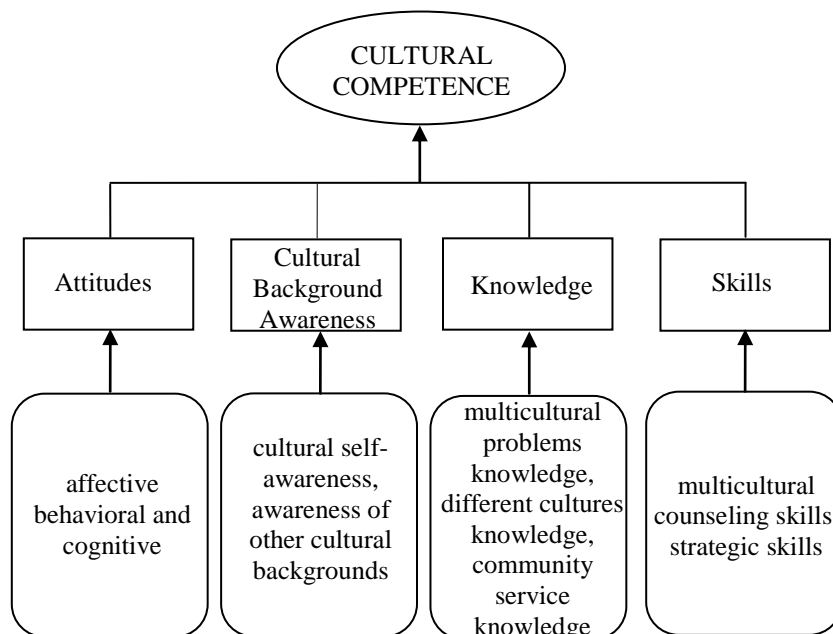
acquisition of a wide range of sociocultural understanding of customs, laws and culture of the society, ability to use verbal and nonverbal behavior norms, as well as individual and group patterns in relationships. It helps gain a positive attitude to the culture of a host country, master a foreign language, value both cultures, improve the ability to communicate effectively with representatives of different cultures (Ellis, 2007; Lantolf, & Thorne, 2006).

The formation of students' sociocultural competence involves awareness of culture models concerning communication etiquette and everyday behavior patterns of native speakers. In the context of international students' adaptation to the American university environment, considerable attention should be drawn to their perceptions and interpretations of culture models, academic and everyday communicative behavior patterns, and etiquette rules while communicating with native speakers (American students) on campus, at various events, and extracurricular meetings, etc.) (Moule, 2012; Smolikevych, 2018).

It is important to note that the United States is a multinational and multicultural country. Representatives of different cultures may misunderstand linguistic symbols communicating with native speakers. Therefore, formation of students' multicultural competence is especially essential.

Having studied American scientists' thoughts about multiculturalism (e.g. Arredondo and Arciniega, 2001; Banks & Banks, 2010; Daniels and Ivey, 2007; Minami, 2009, Spencer-Rodgers, 2010, Sue and Sue, 2013), the analysis has shown that they refer it to racial, ethnic and cultural diversity focusing on Asian, African, Latino, and Native American groups. The authors have developed progressive ideas since American society itself is multicultural. They think multicultural competence to be very important in counseling diverse groups or individuals of different ethnic backgrounds and consider it as a four componential model (Figure 1). It comprises three-dimensional attitudes (affective, behavioral, and cognitive) towards racial, ethnic, or other minorities; self-awareness of one's cultural background (personal beliefs, values, biases, etc.) (Sue 2008; Lin et al, 2012), and awareness of other people as individual cultural beings because person's cultural background affects interpersonal relationships that include consideration of help-seeking behaviours, expectations, thoughts or problem solutions (Arredondo and Arciniega, 2001); knowledge about the three aspects: dominant multicultural problems in the community where the advisor works, different cultures, and specific community services or support system for a particular minority in need, which can enhance the effectiveness of counseling; and skills involving core two sub-components: multicultural counseling skills to be culturally competent working with a person with different worldview (Daniels and Ivey 2007) and strategic skills to apply appropriate systematic intervention strategies and collaboration with the community to achieve the planned goals (Sue and Sue, 2013, Minami, 2009).

Figure 1. Multicultural competence components



A wide range of scientific literature refers multicultural competence to a person's ability to adapt or act effectively within various cultural contexts, which requires understanding different cultural viewpoints and avoiding conflicts of misunderstanding and intolerance. It is of vital importance in the process of adaptation of international students to the American university setting. Individualism or collectivism in the cultural background has a great effect on the intercultural or multicultural communication ability of foreigners, too. Thus, individual personality, socialization, values, willingness, and motivation are the main factors influencing the way, time and level of acquired intercultural competence (Gudykunst, 2003).

Tafarodia and Smith (2001) consider individualism-collectivism as an assessment of student ability to adapt to a new living and studying environment on the example of students from Malaysia and Great Britain studying at the same institution. They argue that students of individualistic cultural orientation are more exposed to the stress caused by negative moments in life, and they feel less beneficial effects of favourable events.

Irving (2010), Delanoy and Walkman (2006) prove the knowledge about the culture of a host country and communicative culture of native speakers enables international students to communicate successfully. Forming the communicative culture in the context of adaptation to a new multicultural university environment is directly related to the interpersonal communication ability and communicative behaviour of their participants (Cultural studies, 2006).

According to Mariani (1994), strategic competence is a perfect mastery of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies, which are used to compensate for possible failures mostly caused by lack of foreign language communicative competence of interlocutors to increase communication efficiency. Strategic competence allows international students to cope with unexpected problems connected with the staying and studying abroad.

All things considered, the creation of a favourable environment will allow respecting the dignity of all people in spite of their culture background. Moreover, a sensitive microclimate must be developed both during classes and during extracurricular activities. One should respect cultural diversity of the university community (Nunev, 2019).

6. The role of university staff in international students' adaptation

In general, a university staff's obligations should involve forming and cultivating appropriate language communication, sociocultural, multicultural and strategic skills of international students to contribute to improving the quality of interpersonal communication, facilitating their faster and more effective adaptation, and increasing study results (Konrad, 2020).

It is important to analyze campus-consulting services by international student advisers which are very effective while studying on campuses, not remotely. One has found out that students need more help from their advisors, counselors, or tutors during the initial period of adaptation to a new environment when they experience first obstacles in their attempts to adapt, which undoubtedly affects learning outcomes, their feelings, and their mental health (Abrahao, 2011).

Therefore, the university primary task is to create favourable conditions for successful adaptation to a new sociocultural and academic environment, and, consequently, effective learning. That is why institutions developed a computerized system for interviewing foreign students to learn about their needs, help reduce stress, and accelerate their adaptation process which was common in US university practice before the necessary transition to online education in 2020.

Having studied the practical experience of some US universities with a large number of international students on campus (Dallas Baptist University, DBU, Texas; Kent State University, KSU, Kent, Ohio; Texas Tech University, TTU, Texas; University of California, Berkeley, UC Berkeley, California; University of Florida, UF, Florida; University of Illinois at Chicago, UIC; Princeton University, Princeton, NJ), in the implementation of orientation programs by university advisors to help freshmen adapt to a new sociocultural and academic environment, we summarized their main objectives, namely: 1) to inform students about the infrastructure of the university, its regulations and services, including counseling, police, health care, psychological and legal services, etc.; 2) to discuss general problems of the initial period of staying in the USA (culture shock, lack of experience of multicultural

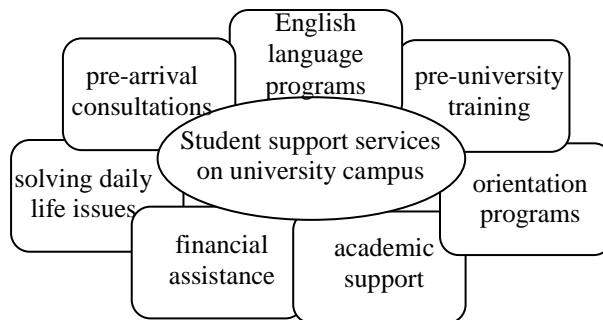
communication, domestic problems etc.) and give recommendations how to cope with them successfully; 3) to acquaint students with university staff and state their duties; 4) to organize sessions, seminars on sociocultural activities (sport and culture events, IT resources, student and community organizations, clubs, on-campus employment, volunteering work) and academic adaptation support (seminars on the American higher education system and prerequisites for academic success); 5) to conduct sightseeing tours, acquainting with the city culture and infrastructure. There were also online orientation programs, individual and orientation programs for parents for obtaining information about activities of the university, its resources, and services (Smolikevych, 2018).

Thus, orientation programs are to provide international students with a unique opportunity to get the necessary information and resources to facilitate their adaptation process to the new American cultural and academic environment. Upon arrival at American universities students may participate in cultural orientation programs, too. There are also student organizations on campuses aimed at supporting cultural diversity and promoting multicultural understanding such as The Davis International Center, Phi Beta Delta, and The Rinker Center for International Programs, etc. They generally help students in overcoming adjustment problems by providing counseling services, international scholarships, online networking among students, acquaintance with students of different cultures, social and cultural activities on campus (Ball State University, 2020, Life at DBU, 2020, Princeton University, 2020). In addition to the large international centers, the Office of International Services (OIS) is a commonplace on the campuses of American universities that provides essential support in the adaptation process, and has a lot of experience in working with foreigners during their studies (UIC, 2020). It deals with not only education issues but also organization and holding social, cultural, sports, and other leisure events, as well as volunteering work. The office often gives employment assistance and is a necessary source of information in new cultural and academic life all students.

All university campuses have the position of academic advisor, whose work involves counseling on the academic policy of the university, educational programs, additional English language courses, pre-university training programs and drawing up an individual studying plan and schedule. The positive practice of universities is also to appoint senior students, compatriots of the freshmen, as their mentors in order to help them cope with the adaptation and studying problems, as they have already gained some experience in studying abroad. It fosters the creation of a social support network for students even in their homeland.

According to the results of the study of services, which are provided to foreigners in US universities, we can group them by content characteristics (Figure 2): consultations before arrival; English language courses and pre-university training; orientation programs; academic counseling; financial assistance and solving daily life issues.

Figure 2. Student support services on university campus



Students can get a consultation in the Office of International Students every day in person or by phone (during the working hours of the advisor or after arranging an appointment) or by e-mail or online consultation. It also should be noted that there are the standards and guidelines for academic counseling designed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and approved by the National Association of Academic Advising (NACADA), which are essential to the profession of an academic consultant. CAS standards and

instructions are designed to improve programs and services and measure program performance, staff development, etc. (CAS, 2012).

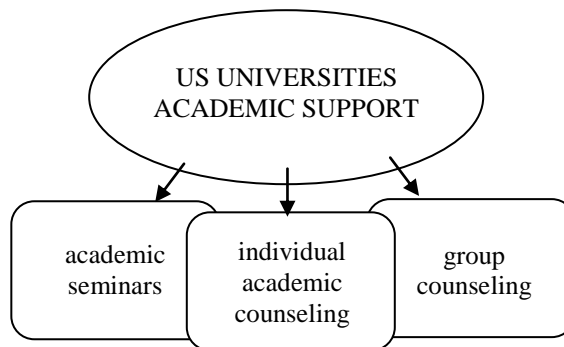
The office of Academic Support’s mission in American universities is to develop the study-consulting programs to help students improve academic skills, adapt to higher education policy and study requirements, realize and develop their potential, and so on. It has such main subdivisions, as The Writing Center, Math Question Center, and Language Resource Center for improving skills in academic writing, natural sciences, or English (Harvard University, 2020).Also, The Peer Tutoring Lab offers free individual consultations in chosen subjects (usually accounting, biology, business, chemistry, economics, finance, math, statistics, etc.).Students can get academic assistance for a small fee by using a system of referrals (registration on the relevant educational websites), too (American University, Washington, DC, 2020). All the above mentioned institutions had been effectively functioning by 2020.

Commonly, senior undergraduate or graduate students as tutors are involved in academic counseling because active communication with those who have already gained experience in the academic adaptation helps freshmen overcome challenges, lessen stress and anxiety, and contribute to successful learning (Johns Hopkins University, 2020).

In addition, the analysis of participants’ expectationsabout academic counseling on campuses has been made in the paper. It shows that the academic advisor expects that the international studentwill attend scheduled consultations during the semester, express values and academic goals or problems clearly, participate actively in conversations and decision-making; update onlinestudying plans, prepare actual questions to decide, follow referrals or other recommendations online, be responsible for planning academicgoals and their implementation.At the same time, the student’s aim is to get informed about higher education policy and study requirements, organization of studying process; online campus resources to ensure successful learning, assistance in setting realistic academic goals and developing an individual schedule, and so on (Community Colleges of Spokane, 2020).

After exploring the issue on US universities academic support, it should be stated that it offers three types of academic advisory services (Figure 3): 1) academic seminars on “Time Management”, “Learning Strategies and Scheduling”, “Effective academic reading and writing”, “How to improve communication skills”, “Preparation for tests”, “Speaking to the audience”, etc.; 2) individual academic counseling (free personal help with studies by one of the student tutors) (Brown University, 2020); academic counseling in groups (formal and informal study groups) (American University, Washington, DC, 2020; Smolikeych, 2018).

Figure 3. US universities academic support



The academic advisor’s key services on campusesinclude both conducting for students with problems in studying,which provide gaining someacademic credits, and traditional university counseling without anycredits. Lecturers also provide free academic counseling to students enrolled in the courses they teach (Smolikeych, 2018).

It is interesting to note thatfavorable conditions for facilitating international students’ adaptation to studying requirements in US universities are created in accordance with the principles of student-centered learning, activity,

US Universities Socio Cultural and Academic Support for International Students

creative independence, systematic work, consistency, cooperation and unity of education, science and practice (Konrad, 2020; Smolikevych, 2019).

Having explored the US university experience in supporting international students, the conclusion can be made that its mission is to provide necessary facilities and services and a favorable academic environment for successful adaptation and studying process so that every student can realize and develop their personal and professional potential. Thus, university staff's work focuses on students' expectations and needs while planning, designing, and offering educational services and other related with them support so as to ensure adjustment to a new environment, successful learning and career through the achievement of learning goals and development of multicultural skills in order to be competitive in the global labor market.

It is obvious that orientation programs (on US university campuses and online) provide students with a unique and vital opportunity to obtain necessary information, use a lot of available services and facilities to facilitate their adaptation process to new American sociocultural and academic environment. Counseling and tutoring programs have been successfully worked out in order to promote foreigners' academic achievements.

The university is obliged to ensure socio-cultural and academic adaptation of the youth from abroad providing them with student offices services and various resources including online counseling.

We have investigated substantial obstacles for successful overcoming the adaptation problems, which university staff should be familiar with, namely, an insufficient level of the academic English language and communication skills, lack of multicultural awareness and interpersonal relationships, incapability of cooperating in a global environment (Cushner and Brennan 2007; Smolikevych, Turchyn & Horokhivska, 2020).

To justify our theoretical findings, a survey has been developed and conducted. It concerns international students' sociocultural and academic adaptation problems, their prerequisites, and university setting support. In the survey, which is a valuable tool in sociocultural and academic adaptation research, Information Technologies (email and social network) were used. After that, the data were collected, analyzed and summarized.

The survey form contains open-ended and close-ended questions regarding various aspects of students' adaptation and academic problems. In addition, questions about the respondent's age, length of studying English and chosen speciality. Close-ended questions (multiple choice questions) are useful to gather necessary data within a limited range of options. Open-ended questions are good to study respondents own views.

Totally 50 international students of various cultural backgrounds took part in it (men and women from Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, and China who pursue different academic goals as chemistry, business, biology, engineering and music education and experienced an average of 5–6 years of studying English in their home country). The survey results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. International students' key sociocultural and academic adaptation problems in US universities

№	Adaptation and studying problems	50 respondents - international students (%)	US staff's comments
1	<i>What are your major problems in sociocultural adaptation?</i>		The two factors such as English language level (intercultural / multicultural communication skills) and the similarities or differences of cultures (own and host) also have a significant impact on the perception of American culture and the
	– lack of the English language and communication skills	68	
	– lack of awareness of different cultures values and community rules and regulations	64	
	– lack of multicultural awareness	62	
	– inadequate skills in interpersonal and multicultural communication	60	
	– cultural shock	48	

	– lack of strategic competence	42	unfamiliar environment by international students.
2	<i>What are your major problems in academic adaptation</i>		Academic adaptation and successful studying is determined by the main criteria such as proper level of academic English, meeting courses requirements, orientation to the future profession, the ability to work independently and in a group, good business relationships with teachers and students, etc.
	– lack of academic English knowledge	72	
	– incapability to participate in diverse studying groups	62	
	– inadequate level of preparedness to university requirements	58	
	– mismatch between teaching and learning styles	56	
	– difficulties in writing compositions and speaking in public	52	
	– low level of motivation and professional orientation	38	

The major findings of the survey have showed that the most international students' problems are lack of English knowledge (68%), lack of multicultural awareness and communication competence (62–60%), and inadequate level of preparedness to university requirements (58%). At the first stage of their staying at university setting they find the most important support from orientation, preparatory, academic and cultural programs and social support from family and friends; the most necessary skills for them to acquire are multicultural and English communication skills.

7. Discussion

Considering key problems in international students' studying at university as the adaptation to a new sociocultural and academic environment, non-appropriate level of academic English command, difficulty in establishing relations with advisers and teachers, mismatch with the education systems, universities methods of teaching, and testing at home and abroad, US universities provide the following helpful services, on campuses and online, like preparatory courses, courses of the foreign language as a language of instruction, international educational programs; high-quality educational programs with a multicultural component; improvement of mentoring programs and programs of advisers for international students (organization of the academic mentoring by senior students in formal or informal groups or groups created on social networks); organization of a flexible educational process taking into account students' needs as much as possible (the ability to choose courses and set an individual schedule of classes); teachers' on-going professional development for work with diverse multicultural groups; logistical support of the educational process on the basis of integration of scientific innovations, etc.

According to the US experience in providing international students with the help in overcoming their adjustment problems it should be mentioned considerable attention to such services as arranging mentoring in groups on social networks (before arrival and while studying); university orientation programs on campuses and online, activities of various student organizations and associations; cooperation with employers to improve students practical skills for their socialization and specialization.

8. Conclusion

Having studied the experience of the USA in providing favourable conditions of studying on campuses, mostly, we can state that support for international students' successful adaptation to a new academic environment includes students' knowledge and perception of cultural models; knowledge and usage of effective communication models, following the norms of verbal and non-verbal behavior; forming and cultivating foreigners' communication skills and appropriate competences; an effective organization of the structural units of the university environment, which

involves the reasonable implementation of appropriate forms, methods, and teaching tools; advanced online and on campus services (Smolikeych, Turchyn&Horokhivska, 2020).

We prove that teaching staff and student advisers should develop subject matter competence, be aware of ethno-pedagogical features of diversity groups, be able to work with multinational groups and provide international students with proper psychological, social, cultural, and professional support for their achieving the stated educational goals.

The results of this study shows that the university staff must create a supportive learning environment on campus or online focusing on non-native speakers' expectations and needs through the planning, developing, and implementing academic and other related with it services to help international students achieve studying goals and improve multicultural communicative skills and ability to work in a diverse teams so that they can become a competitive professional in the global labour market.

The university staff and teachers' main competences and strategies concerning facilitation of international students' academic achievements can be the topic for our further investigation.

We believe that extrapolation and implementation of constructive ideas of US universities support for international students' adaptation taking into account the national experience will contribute to increasing attractiveness of other universities among the youth abroad as well as the prestige of the universities.

The paper claims that non-natives need to be aware of their responsibility for overcoming adjustment problems. And, on the other hand, the higher education institution is responsible for facilitating students' adaptation process by providing appropriate facilities and services not only on campuses but also online in order to support their psychological and socio-cultural well-being and academic success.

References

- [1]. Abrahao, Andre de Araujo. (2011). Adjustment Issues of International Students Enrolled in American Colleges and Universities: A Review of the Literature. *Higher Education Studies*. Vol. 1, No. 1.
- [2]. American University, Washington, DC. (2020). Academic support and access center. <https://www.american.edu/ocl/asac/academic-support-resources.cfm>
- [3]. Arredondo, P, Arciniega, M. (2001). Strategies and techniques for counselor training based on the multicultural counseling competencies. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development*, 29, 263-273.
- [4]. Ball State University. (2020). Rinker Center for international programs. Retrieved from <https://www.bsu.edu/academics/centersandinstitutes/rinker> (Accessed on May 14, 2020).
- [5]. Banks, J., & Banks, C. (2010). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (7th ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.
- [6]. Baohua, Yu, Wright, E. (2016). Socio-cultural adaptation, academic adaptation and satisfaction of international higher degree research students in Australia. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 22 (1), 49–64.
- [7]. CAS: Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. (2012). *CAS professional standards for higher education* (8th ed.). Washington, DC.
- [8]. Community Colleges of Spokane. (2020). Consulting. <https://sfcc.spokane.edu/For-Our-Students/Getting-Help/Counseling/>
- [9]. *Cultural studies in the EFL classroom* (2006) / Ed. W. Delanoy & L. Volkmann. – Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.
- [10]. Cushner, K., & Brennan, S. (Eds.). (2007). *Intercultural student teaching: A bridge to global competence*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littleton Education.
- [11]. Daniels, T., Ivey, A. (2007). *Microcounseling: making skills training work in a multicultural world*. Springfield: Charles C Thomas Publisher, LTD.
- [12]. Ellis, N. (2007). *The associative-cognitive CREED*. In van Patten, B., Williams, J. (Eds). *Theories in Second Language Acquisition: an Introduction*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 77–95.

- [13]. Gudykunst, W. B. (2003). *Cross-Cultural and Intercultural Communication*. Sage publication LTD.
- [14]. IIE. (2019). *International students.Enrollment.IIE. The 2019 Open Doors Report*.
<https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/Enrollment>
- [15]. Harvard University. (2020). *Campus Services and Resources*.<https://diversity.college.harvard.edu/>
- [16]. Irving, J. A. (2010). *Educating Global Leaders: Exploring Intercultural Competence in Leadership Education*.*Journal of International Business and Cultural Studies*.www.aabri.com/manuscripts/09392.pdf
- [17]. Katane, I. et al. (2006). Teacher competence and further education as priorities for sustainable development of rural school in Latvia.*Journal of Teacher Education and Training*, 6, 41–59.
- [18]. Konrad, S. (2020). Interpersonal orientation, subjective well-being and academic achievement of students.*Sodobna Pedagogika*, 71 (137), issue 2, 112-131.
- [19]. Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the sociogenesis of second language development*. New York: Oxford University Press, 197–217.
- [20]. Life at DBU. (2020). <http://www4.dbu.edu/international/live/student-services>
- [21]. Lin, Y., Chen, A., & Song, Y. (2012). Does your intelligence help to survive in a foreign jungle? The effects of cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence on cross-cultural adjustment.*International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36 (4), 541–552.
- [22]. Mariani, L. (1994). *Developing Strategic Competence: Towards Autonomy in Oral Interaction. Perspectives, a Journal of TESOL Italy*.XX, 1.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263854083_Developing_strategic_competence_Towards_autonomy_in_oral_interaction
- [23]. Minami, M. (2009). Role of Attitude in Multicultural Counselling Competency.*World Cultural Psychiatry Research Review*, 4(1), 39-46.
- [24]. Moule, J. (2012). *Cultural competence: A primer for educators*, 2nd. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- [25]. Princeton University. (2018). Davis International Center.<https://davisic.princeton.edu>
- [26]. Ramis, M. (2018). Contributions of Freire’s Theory to Dialogic Education.*Social and Education History*, 7(3), 277-299.
- [27]. Sabri, T. A. (2018). *Communicative Competence in English as a Foreign Language: Its Meaning and the Pedagogical Considerations for its Development*. Munich, GRIN Verlag.
<https://www.grin.com/document/432042>
- [28]. Smolikeych, N. (2018).*The organizational and pedagogical provision of foreign students’ adaptation in US universities*..[Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences dissertation].Lviv National Polytechnic University.
<https://lpnu.ua/spetsrady/k-3505224/smolikeych-nadiia-romanivna>
- [29]. Smolikeych, N. (2019). The teacher’s main competencies in modern higher education.*European humanities studies: state and society*. 3(1), 30–42.
- [30]. Smolikeych, N., Turchyn, I., Horokhivska, T. (2020). Foreign students’ adaptation challenges in the US Universities. *Human studies. Series of Pedagogy*.10 (42), 76–86.
- [31]. Spencer-Rodgers, J., Williams, M. J., & Peng, K. (2010). Cultural Differences in Expectations of Change and Tolerance for Contradiction: A Decade of Empirical Research. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 14 (3), 296–312.
- [32]. Sue D. W., Sue D. (2013). *Counselling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice* (6th ed.). New York, NY: John Wiley.
- [33]. Tafarodia, R. W. & Smith, A. J. (2001). Individualism–collectivism and depressive sensitivity to life events: the case of Malaysian sojourners. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 25, 73–88.
- [34]. Turchyn, I. (2018).*Paulo Freire’s educational activity and pedagogical views*.[Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences dissertation].Lviv National Polytechnic University.
<https://lpnu.ua/index.php/spetsrady/k-3505224/turchyn-iryna-mykhailivna>
- [35]. UIC. (2020). Office of International Services.<https://www.ois.uic.edu/>
- [36]. Young, D. G., &Janosik, S. M. (2007). Using CAS standards to measure learning outcomes of student affair preparation programs. *NASPA Journal*, 44 (2), 341–366.