



# **Studying the Social Needs of the International Students in hostel for Egyptian Universities**

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## **Studying the Social Needs of the International Students in hostel for Egyptian Universities**

### **ABSTRACT:**

As the number of international students across the country has grown over the past decade and continues to grow, it is more important than ever to understand their needs, particularly in terms of hospitality. The purpose of the study was to determine the concerns of international students, perceptions of social needs while studying in Egypt. The study utilized an online survey questionnaire distributed and shared to a random sample of international students enrolled in Egyptian public universities. The survey included an introduction to the researchers with a brief explanation of the purpose of the study, Demographic variables, and the social needs. With analysis of the data gathered online from respondents, the researchers gained a clearer understanding of international students' concerns, perceptions regarding their social needs. The most notable findings were as follows: In general, international students determined high levels of the importance of social needs used in the study. However, there were a significant differences in respondents' ratings of perceived importance of the social needs based on their geographical region of origin. In contrast, differences were not significant among international students based on these demographic variables: gender, marital status, age, and current degree program. Based on the study findings, some recommendations were suggested to stakeholders to provide international students with their perceptions of the social needs and thus increase the universities' abilities to retain those students. There were also some recommendations for further research.

**Key words:** International students, Internationalization, Hospitality, Academic Hospitality

### **المستخلص :**

نظراً للنمو المتزايد في عدد الطلاب الوافدين القادمين للدراسة في مصر على مدار العقد الأخير، أصبح من الضروري أكثر من أي وقت مضى فهم احتياجات وتصورات

هؤلاء الطلاب، لا سيما فيما يتعلق باحتياجاتهم الاجتماعية. لذلك، كان الغرض من الدراسة هو التعرف على اهتمامات الطلاب الوافدين وتصوراتهم للإحتياجات الاجتماعية الخاصة بهم أثناء الدراسة في مصر. لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة تم إجراء استبانة عبر الإنترنت و توزيعها على عينة عشوائية من الطلاب الوافدين المسجلين في الجامعات الحكومية المصرية. اشتملت الاستبانة على مقدمة للباحث مع شرح موجز للغرض من الدراسة، والمتغيرات الديموغرافية للمستجيبين، بالإضافة إلى الإحتياجات الاجتماعية المستخدمة. أوضحت النتائج من خلال تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها عبر الإنترنت من المستجيبين ما يلي: بشكل عام، حدد الطلاب الوافدين (المستجيبين) مستويات عالية من الأهمية للإحتياجات الاجتماعية المستخدمة في الدراسة. مع ذلك، كانت هناك اختلافات واضحة في تصنيفات المستجيبين للأهمية المتصورة للإحتياجات الاجتماعية على أساس المنطقة الجغرافية الأصلية. في المقابل، لم تكن الفروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين الطلاب الوافدين بناءً على هذه المتغيرات الديموغرافية: الحالة الاجتماعية، العمر، الجنس، وبرنامج الدراسة الحالي. بناءً على النتائج المتحصل عليها من خلال الدراسة، تم اقتراح بعض التوصيات للسادة المسؤولين في الوزارات والجهات المعنية والجامعات من أجل تقديم الإحتياجات الاجتماعية المناسبة لاهتمامات الطلاب الوافدين وطبقاً لتصوراتهم، وبالتالي زيادة قدرة الجامعات والمجتمع الأكاديمي المصري ككل على جذب هؤلاء الطلاب والاحتفاظ بهم؛ كما كانت هناك أيضاً بعض التوصيات لمزيد من الأبحاث المستقبلية في هذا الشأن.

## **Introduction**

The adaptation to a new culture creates challenges for students and institutions. Institutions must address cultural issues and translate them into services, programs, and policies to maximize academic success for international students. Many benefits accrue to those involved in the recruitment of international students. For international students, there are opportunities to further develop their education while learning more about other cultures and countries of origin. For the host country, the presence of international students encourages cross-cultural interactions both within and outside of the academic environment. Programs such as host family visiting and acting as a resource person within the community, allow community members to learn more about another country's culture and customs. This invites both groups to think beyond the boundaries of their home countries to further develop and enhance their global understandings. To maximize gain from such initiatives, Universities across the country are challenged to explore the needs of international students. Identifying these needs will enable the institution to develop programs and services to meet students' needs. With such information, international students can determine if the institution is compatible with their academic and social expectations. Students who find this 'fit' may be more inclined to remain at the institution for the duration of their studies. In doing so, the institution has created an effective recipe for retention, he also confirmed that once the needs are identified, the universities can then develop appropriate retention strategies. **(Parsons, 2000).**

**Ian Michael et al. (2003)**, in a study aimed to examine why international students opt for their chosen study destination as well as investigating their behavior as tourists while studying, suggested that students chose the destination for study through word-of-mouth from friends. Students are also more likely to find out about tourist destinations from other friends by word of mouth than from traditional travel sources. Therefore, great care must be taken to fulfill the needs

of international students to the fullest, especially as word-of-mouth was identified as the strongest means of obtaining information for students.

According to the study "Service quality in higher education: The role of student expectations" conducted by **Voss et al. (2007)**, attracting new students is substantially more expensive than retaining students who are currently enrolled at a higher education institution. This implies that to retain the number of international students studying at the institution, it is critical to meet, if not exceed, their expectations for their study experience. The study also indicated that student expectations are often unrealistic, so it is up to the staff working in the departments of higher education institutions to handle the creation of realistic expectations in advance to achieve customer satisfaction. If expectations are met and exceeded, it may result in a good outcome, such as an increase in the number of students kept in the higher education institution, as well as ensuring that there is a high level of favorable feedback from current students.

In order to appeal to a greater number of international students and maintain their educational reputations in the global economy, colleges and universities require a comprehension of international students' quality of life issues beyond the merely academic perspective. Quality of life measures an individual's overall satisfaction with his or her living experience. In other words, a high quality of life indicates that the living experience of an individual meets or exceeds his or her expectations. In contrast, a poor quality of life occurs when actual life experiences do not meet with an individual's expectations. Despite the influence of quality of life on multi-faceted aspects of the international student's experience while studying abroad (**Luo, 2015**).

As reported by **International Student Affairs (2021)**, the number of international students coming to Egypt to study has increased in the past decade. Over the past five years, Egypt has paid great attention to developing a system for attracting and Recruiting

international students, with the aim of raising their number in different universities to 20,000 annually. In the 2019-20 academic year, Egypt saw an increase in international student enrollment of about 12,500 students. The number of International students in Egyptian universities reached 16,000 students in the academic year 2020/2021, an increase of 25% over the previous year.

**International Student Affairs** also indicated that international students pay as much as \$4,000 to \$8,000 in annual tuition fees for attending public universities in Egypt depending on the degree program. The highest tuition are for those what the Ministry of Higher Education calls the ‘top colleges’ such as, Medical faculties, Engineering, and specific disciplines taught in the English language. Although, this is a considerable amount of money, probably unavailable to most of students from the region, Middle East and Africa, it is still far less than the average tuition of private universities in Egypt (\$15,000- \$38,000).

In this regard, the researchers believed that one of the most important factors for attracting more international students was to achieve a distinguished hospitality experience for those students during their stay in Egypt, as they are considered the first nominee for Egypt as an educational destination to other students in their home countries.

So, this study was used to determine the concerns of international students, perceptions of social needs. Therefore, these needs can be met in a manner that achieves satisfaction for those students while also benefiting the Egyptian academic community and the Egyptian community.

### **Problem Statement**

International students are becoming an integral part of the student population in higher education in many countries. Countries attract those students for a variety of purposes, including, but not limited to, generating revenue, promoting multiculturalism, and contributing to scientific research, discovery, and innovation.

However, in the majority of host countries, foreign students do not have the same rights as domestic students, and their needs and protection are inadequate (Marginson et al., 2010).

So, Egyptian universities must have a better awareness of international students' concerns and perceptions of social needs, to help them seamlessly adapt to life in Egypt and thus be successful in their transition to academic life.

Unfortunately, there has been little empirical research on overseas students' perceptions of nonacademic services, particularly in terms of hospitality. This study fills that gap by determining international students' concerns, perceptions of social needs at Egyptian universities using a customized questionnaire. The researchers will provide institutions and the Office of International Student Affairs with perceived social needs of international students based on the findings of this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

International students may experience a significant amount of stress when they decide to attend college at an institution that is thousands of miles away from home and has a different language, culture, and educational system. It's critical that the university helps these students adjust to new life, and culture while also providing them with valuable experiences.

The purpose of the study was to determine the concerns of international students, perceptions of social needs while studying in Egypt.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Internationalization of higher education.**

Initially, higher education's purpose was to develop human resources and contribute to national progress. Higher education, on the other hand, has become more international as a result of the great number of international students on campuses, which has a positive impact on worldwide economies. Not only has the number of international students doubled to 5 million between 2010 and 2020,

but we've also seen a surge in franchise operations, equivalency programs, branch campuses, and online higher education provision. For talented overseas students and scholars, there is tremendous competition (**De Wit, 2020**).

Internationalization is defined by **De Wit, (2020)** as "the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of post-secondary education in order to improve the quality of education and research for all students and staff while also making a meaningful contribution to society". This definition provided a normative direction for the process by emphasizing that it does not proceed by itself but requires clear intentions, that internationalization is not an aim in and of itself but must be directed toward improving quality, that it should not be of interest to a small elite group of mobile students and scholars but should be directed to all students and scholars, and that it should make a significant contribution to society.

**De Wit** further says that internationalization is viewed as a competitive tradable product, a vital source of revenue for institutions of higher learning in the face of reductions in public funding.

According to **Roga et al. (2015)**, "Internationalization" is becoming one of the top concerns of universities not just in Europe, but also across the world. Most higher education institutions include internationalization as part of their objectives, which helps to establish English-language study programs, guest lecturer involvement, and other activities targeted at recruiting international students. Foreign students are a valuable addition to the institutions where they study.

Internationalization of higher education, according to **Powar (2012)**, allows access to new academic and research opportunities that may not be available in one's home country. It provides students with more alternatives and opportunities to try new things. Furthermore, interactions with academics, industry experts, and recruiters lead into greater networking and professional association prospects. As a result, cross-border education provides students with the opportunity to



improve their employment prospects and achieve professional success. The advantages of international exposure in education and professional experience extend beyond students, as significant as they are. Internationalization benefits higher education institutions as well. More income is generated, academic and research intellectual information is cross-fertilized, and the brand is strengthened. The benefits to nation-states are numerous as well. It enhances political-diplomatic links between nations, creates goodwill, and increases foreign people's familiarity and understanding.

The current graduate labor market is dominated by internationalization of higher education. Internationalization as a whole is predicated on the added value it provides. In today's worldwide society, the benefits of internationalization are numerous and cannot be understated. Higher education institutions must keep up with academic, research, and recruitment advances in other nations, as well as interact worldwide. Transnational networks and exchanges are required across the board as a result of globalization, and higher education institutions are no exception (**Yeravdekar & Tiwari, 2014**).

#### **International Students' Mobility.**

Although the main flow of international students has been from developing countries to developed countries, there have been some noticeable changes in the last decade (**Lee & Kim, 2010; Kondakci, 2011**). For example, according to recent data by (**Jon, Lee, & Byun, 2014**), almost half of all international students from Sub-Saharan African countries studied in regional countries, namely South Africa. Indeed, several non-Anglophone middle-income developing countries have become popular educational destinations for overseas students from poorer developing countries (**Kondakci, 2011**).

According to **OECD (2021)**, international student mobility has garnered more governmental attention in recent years, since studying abroad has become a crucial differentiating experience for young adults enrolled in postsecondary education. Studying abroad gives you

the chance to receive a high-quality education, learn skills that aren't taught at home, and become closer to work markets that pay more for your degree. In today's more international work markets, studying abroad is also considered as a means to increase employability. Different incentives include a desire to learn more about other cultures and improve one's language skills, particularly in English. As globalization and technological advancements provide more options for individuals to travel and study abroad, higher education is becoming increasingly internationalized. Over the last two decades, international student mobility has been steadily increasing. Globally, 6.1 million tertiary students crossed borders to study in 2019, more than double the number in 2007. Between 1998 and 2019, the number of international and foreign tertiary students increased by an average of 5.5 percent per year. The majority of international students come from developing countries, accounting for 67 percent of all international students in the OECD area. 3 percent of those are from low-income nations, 26% from lower middle-income countries, and 38% from higher middle-income countries.

According to **UNESCO** statistics for 2021, the number of students leaving their home country for higher education is top 7.5 million worldwide. Recent statistics show that international student mobility is on the rise.

### **The reality of international students in Egypt**

According to a survey by **Hamid (2010)**, many international students in Egyptian public universities came from nearby Arab nations, followed by Asian students and then Sub-Saharan African students. Research also revealed that the number of students from Arab nations has decreased in recent years, while that from Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia has climbed, particularly those from Malaysia, Indonesia, India and China. This could be due to increased cooperation and bilateral agreements between Egypt and these countries, especially in the disciplines of medicine, humanities, and engineering.

**Marei (2018)**, found that regional students acknowledge and value Egypt's major position in the area, which it has performed and continues to play. Egypt, in general, is a safe place to study, live in, and travel in, according to international students, especially when compared to other countries in the area. Egypt is regarded as a safe haven for international students from the region. As Egypt's domestic political situation improves, more overseas students are likely to seek postsecondary education in Egypt. This is supported by the fact that, according to the Egyptian Survey Authority (ESA), there were 70,000 international students in Egypt in 2017, compared to only 40,000 in 2011.

**Marei** further revealed that degree-seeking foreign students (non-regional international graduate students and regional students) in Egyptian universities firmly believe that earning a degree from Egypt is significantly superior to earning a degree from home. This notion was held by each culture for different reasons. Graduate students from outside the area were certain that their degree and unique educational experiences in Egypt will make them more competitive for higher-level positions not just in their home countries, but also internationally. For them, studying disciplines such as Egyptology, Islamic Architecture, Middle Eastern Political Science, or the Arabic language in Egypt provide them with an once-in-a-lifetime chance, a genuine and practical experience superior to that of that of graduate students who earn these degrees from other countries. Similarly, international students from the area recognized that an Egyptian degree is preferable to one from any other country in the region.

These students, on the other hand, did not see Egypt as a viable option for furthering their study, while attending graduate school remained a possibility. This contradicts previous research by **(Lee & Schoole, 2015)**, which found that students from less developed countries preferred to stay in the host country for job or further education. The following are some possible causes for the disparity:

- a) International students' ambitions exceed what Egyptian universities can provide them with,
- b) Egyptian universities are not perceived as producing graduates with the necessary skills for the current labor market,
- c) Many international students may believe that a graduate degree from one of the core nations is superior to one from Egypt,
- d) The Egyptian labor market is devoid of job opportunities. This is a reason for concern since Egypt is likely to lose talented local and foreign students.

**Marei (2018)**, suggested that the Egyptian government address this issue, stating that Egyptian universities need to improve their educational quality and spend more in higher education resources. Furthermore, the Egyptian labor market and institutions might aim to recruit international students and become more inclusive. The extent to which the Egyptian government and the Ministry of Higher Education recognize Egypt's geopolitical and historical significance, which may make it a top educational and professional destination, is uncertain. His study illuminates certain urgent issues that must be addressed in order to demonstrate Egypt's worth and potential as a regional educational powerhouse.

COVID-19 has been an unwelcome visitor since 2020, and it, like all unwelcome visitors, has stayed too long. Its disruption of international education has effectively stopped international student mobility (**Singh, 2021**).

Many international students, **Singh (2021)**, demonstrated, have been stranded in their home nations, unable to go and pursue international education in the places they desire. Or, because of the pandemic, they have experienced economic and social hardship in their host countries. Despite the pandemic, international student mobility remains popular. These students are primarily interested in studying abroad to improve their employability, gain international experience, and develop personal and professional skills.

However, despite the difficult circumstances imposed on the world by the Corona pandemic, Egypt's Ministry of higher education was able to increase the number of international students by 25% during the previous period, highlighting Egypt's interest in providing a distinguished educational service while also establishing living conditions and good treatment for international students. Observing that the new student is acting as an ambassador for Egypt in his home nation (MoHE, 2020).

As reported by **International Student Affairs (2021)**, most Egyptian universities have a percentage of international students. The number of international students in Egyptian public universities reached 16 thousand students in the academic year 2020/2021, an increase of 25% over the previous year, and this number increased in the second term by about 2% due to the opening of the door for applying for some programs in different colleges, from various Arab, Asian, and African countries. The first country in the number of arrivals we have is "the State of Kuwait, 3,000 students, followed by Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Sudan, India, Malaysia, Guinea, Comoros, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Kazakhstan".

According to **UNESCO statistics for 2021**, the number of students leaving their home country for higher education is 7.5 million worldwide. Recent statistics show that international student mobility is on the rise.

### **Academic Hospitality in Institutions of Higher Education**

In his widely recognized article 'The Academy and Hospitality', **John B. Bennett (2000)**, invented the term 'academic hospitality.' Bennett defines academic hospitality as a "key virtue" inside the academy that entails "extending oneself to welcome the other by giving and receiving intellectual resources and insights." Expanding on the idea of 'intellectual' hospitality, He goes on to say that academic hospitality extends much beyond respectful and civic actions of welcoming and accommodation. Rather, academic hospitality involves openness and reciprocity towards others by way

of giving and receiving, and by developing meaningful conversations with knowledge that are perceived as 'other' or opposite to one's own beliefs, ethics, and values.

Academic hospitality has several forms, according to **Phipps and Barnett (2007)**, as follows:

- The 'give and gain' that occurs when academics travel (to conferences, on field trips, etc.) is a material type of academic hospitality'
- Academic hospitality in its epistemological form refers to the practice of being open to new ideas in academic scholarship
- Physical and practical difficulties are addressed in the language form
- The touristic form combines both the physical and symbolic aspects of academic travel. When academics travel, they are usually a part of conference programs or itineraries organized by their hosts, which may include tourist attractions that are often themed for relevance. Material variables that have a significant impact on academic hospitality, such as travel arrangements and hotel accommodations, are included in touristic forms.

For Social activities, hundreds of special interests, multicultural, community, and social clubs and activities are available at many universities and colleges. Students can also take use of off-campus social activities such as shopping malls, theme parks, and movie theaters. Many Asian international students, on the other hand, like to host parties at their homes on weekends or holidays, often making traditional cuisine from their home countries to commemorate their cultures' festivals (**Gu & Maley, 2008**).

As reported by the University of Georgia's Office of International Education (2014), **Yi Luo (2015)**, confirmed that two-thirds of international students travel while pursuing higher education in the United States, a pattern that is also typical among international students at other American universities. International students have shown a desire to visit natural attractions such as national parks as

well as metropolitan cities with a diverse range of shopping opportunities.

As higher education environments become more characterized by new technologies and digitization, the concept of 'virtual hospitality' can be considered as particularly essential in light of international students' transition experiences, according to (Ploner, 2018). Also, in his study, all of the students interviewed came across as competent and knowledgeable users of virtual learning platforms, social media, and other technologies that helped them transfer, succeed, and grow in a foreign higher education context. Although some students see digital technology as a useful tool for solving problems on their own, it would be naive to believe that the mere availability and accessibility of online information can replace more traditional forms of (academic) hospitality like face-to-face interactions and other corporeal gestures of welcome. During their transition, students stressed the value of human interaction and participation, such as being actively contacted by academic and support professionals, mingling with classmates, and appreciating the presence (and patience) of lecturers in resolving lingering concerns.

### **Methodology**

The study was descriptive, employing an online questionnaire addressed to international students in Egyptian public universities.

### **Survey Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was designed for undergraduate and graduate students, exploring the same topics concerned with social needs. The researchers created an online two-language survey form, in English for non-Arabic speaking foreign students and in Arabic for students from Arab countries.

The first part of the questionnaire included an introduction to the researchers and a brief explanation of the purpose of the study. The demographic information of the participants was collected in the second section of the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to

provide personal information regarding gender, age, current degree program, country of origin...etc.

In the last section, ten social items were utilized to find out the importance of each item using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = very not important to 5= very important

- **Validity and internal consistency of the questionnaire.**

To ensure the survey's validity, it was presented to a panel of arbitrators consisted of faculty members who were asked to express their opinion about the tool's suitability for achieving the research's objectives, the clarity and comprehensiveness of its phrases, and the extent of belonging the phrases to its specified dimension. Based on their feedback, the survey was modified.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was verified by calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient between the score of each item and the total score for the dimension to which the item belongs, using (SPSS).

- **Reliability of the questionnaire.**

A pilot study was applied to a sample of 30 individuals. The reliability coefficient was calculated by the Cronbach alpha coefficient, using (SPSS) V26.

- **Sampling Design**

The target population includes all international students, both undergraduate and graduate, in Egyptian public universities. As reported by International Student Affairs, the overall population of international students in Egyptian universities is around <sup>^</sup>1,000 in the academic year 2021/2022AD, representing more than 80 different nationalities studying in Egypt.

All participants in the study were international students enrolled in Egyptian public universities in the academic year. Participants included both undergraduate and graduate students.

The researchers used the Steven K. Thompson equation to determine the sample size from the following formula:



$$n = \frac{N \times p(1 - p)}{[[N - 1 \times (d^2 \div z^2)] + p(1 - p)]}$$

Where **n** is the sample size, **N** is population size, **z** is determined by the confidence level, which can be found in the standard table at 95% (1.96), **d** is the error proportion (0.05), and **p** refers to probability (parameter) and is set to (50%) (Thompson, 2012).

In the previous equation, if the community size is around 86,000, as reported by the Central Administration for International Student Affairs, then the sample size is '383'.

## Results and analysis of data

### Demographic Description of the Sample

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to provide a summary of the sample. The variables consisted of gender, age, marital status, home country, and Degree program. It could be explained as follows:

- Four hundred and three respondents provided usable data. Of this number, (70.7%) were male and (29.3%) were female.
- The results show that more than half of the respondents (61.8%) were between the ages of 20 and 30 years old. Of the rest, (34.2%) were under 20 years old, and (4.0%) were older than 30 years old.
- Of the 403 respondents who took part in the study, (96.5%) were single and (3.5%) were married.
- Respondents were enrolled at many Egyptian universities identified as public or private. Most of the respondents (73.4%) indicated that they were attending public universities and (26.6%) indicated that they were attending private universities.
- Regarding the degree program, (94.5%) of the respondents indicated that they were registered in a bachelor's degree. Of the rest, (4.0%) were registered with a master's degree and (1.5%) were registered with a doctorate degree.
- Regarding the respondents' region of origin, 61.6% of the respondents were from Asia, distributed as follows: (11.7%) from Central and Southern Asia, and (49.9%) from Western Asia.

While 38.4% came from Africa, it was distributed as follows: (13.6%) from North Africa, (9.9%) from East Africa, (9.7%) from West Africa, and (5.2%) from Central Africa.

### **Research Questions and Statistical Analyses:**

The overarching research question addressed concerns of international students, perceptions of social needs during their study in Egyptian universities. The results and analysis are organized in terms of the two numbered research questions.

Research Question 1 addressed the importance ratings given by international students for the social items employed. A descriptive statistical analysis of the ratings on a five-point Likert scale from very not important to very important was performed using SPSS v26 for the 10 survey items for each dimension.

The mean of the social factor was (4.23). Indicating that the international students determined high level of importance for all the selected social needs.

The following is an analysis of perceived social needs, ranked from highest to lowest:

As shown in table 1, The item “Making it easier for international students' families and relatives to visit Egypt.” had the highest mean rating at 4.75 (SD=.432) followed by “Existence of a comprehensive and advanced system, unified at the level of Egyptian universities, to provide appropriate health care for international students.” at 4.66 (SD=.509). while “Providing international nurseries that provide social, health and educational care services for children of international students in Egyptian universities” had the lowest rating at 3.72(SD=.744).

**Table 1.** International students' perceptions of the importance of Social needs.

Statements		5-Point Likert scale					Mean	SD	R
		1	2	3	4	5			
Providing a brochure with details about malls and shopping areas that can be visited in Egypt for international students.	Freq.	1	3	13	265	121	4.25	.570	6
	%	0.2	0.7	3.2	65.8	30.0			
Providing international students with awareness and mentorship programs to familiarize them with Egyptian society and their new academic environment.	Freq.	0	0	18	260	125	4.27	.534	4
	%	0	0	4.5	64.5	31.0			
Making it easier for international students' families and relatives to visit Egypt.	Freq.	0	0	0	100	303	4.75	.432	1
	%	0	0	0	24.8	75.2			
Attending various events and sports competitions on campus to connect with other students and the university officials.	Freq.	0	0	16	269	118	4.25	.519	5
	%	0	0	4.0	66.7	29.3			
Holding free Arabic language courses for non-Arabic speaking foreign students.	Freq.	0	0	64	245	94	4.07	.622	8
	%	0	0	15.9	60.8	23.3			
Providing information about internal off-campus travel as well as Egyptian tourist destinations to international students.	Freq.	0	0	35	240	128	4.23	.593	7
	%	0	0	8.7	59.6	31.8			
Providing a well-equipped gym with qualified trainers within	Freq.	0	0	138	193	72	3.84	.704	9

**Table 1.** International students' perceptions of the importance of Social needs.

Statements		5-Point Likert scale					Mean	SD	R
		1	2	3	4	5			
the university housing at an additional cost.	%	0	0	34.2	47.9	17.9			
Existence of social clubs for international students and their families at Egyptian universities, which provide all social, entertainment, and electronic services and are available throughout the year.	Freq.	0	0	17	188	198	4.45	.577	3
	%	0	0	4.2	46.7	49.1			
Existence of a comprehensive and advanced system, unified at the level of Egyptian universities, to provide appropriate health care for international students.	Freq.	0	0	15	146	242	4.56	.567	2
	%	0	0	3.7	36.2	60.0			
Providing international nurseries that provide social, health and educational care services for children of international students in Egyptian universities	Freq.	0	0	182	150	71	3.72	.744	10
	%	0	0	45.2	37.2	17.6			
<b>General Social Dimension</b>						<b>4.23</b>	<b>.353</b>		

N.B: SD, "standard deviation", R, "Ranking", 5= "Very Important", 4="Important", 3="Somewhat Important", 2="Not Important", 1="Very Not Important"

Research Question 2 sought to understand whether differences exist in international students' perceptions of social needs based on their (a) gender, (b) geographical region of origin, (c) marital status, (d) age, and (e) degree program.

"ANOVA" and "T test" were performed, to determine statistically significant differences based on selected demographic variables as shown in Table 2.

For the geographical region category, the main effects of it on the dependent variables revealed that differences were strongly significant for social needs perceptions among international students from all regions of origin because its p-value (.042) < .05. Indicating that western Asia' respondents gave the highest ratings of the perceived importance of the social needs, followed by North Africa' respondents, while respondents from Central Africa ranked last.

Regarding the gender category, the main effects of it on the dependent variables revealed that the differences were not significant for perceptions of social needs of both male and female respondents because its p-value (.092) > .05.

In terms of the marital status category, the main effects of it on the dependent variables revealed that the differences were not significant for perceptions of social needs because its p-value (.300) > .05.

Regarding the age category, the main effects of it on the dependent variables revealed that the differences were not significant for perceptions of social needs because its p-value (.537) > .05.

Concerning the degree program category, the main effects of it on dependent variables revealed that the differences were not significant for perceptions of social needs, because its p-value (.566) > .05.

**Table 2.** The statistically significant differences based on selected demographic variables.

Demographic Variables		Social needs			
		Mean	SD	P-value	Sig.
Gender	Male	4.220	.332	.092	N. S
	Female	4.285	.396		
Region of origin	Central and South Asia	4.202	.326	.042	H. S
	West Asia	4.282	.379		

Demographic Variables		Social needs			
	North Africa	4.263	.313		
	East Africa	4.140	.253		
	West Africa	4.220	.299		
	Central Africa	4.076	.434		
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	4.236	.358	<b>.300</b>	<b>N. S</b>
	Married	4.335	.154		
<b>Age</b>	Less than 20	4.263	.351	<b>.537</b>	<b>N. S</b>
	From 20 to 30	4.224	.362		
	More than 30	4.275	.180		
<b>Degree program</b>	Bachelor's	4.236	.360	<b>.566</b>	<b>N. S</b>
	Master	4.331	.170		
	Doctoral	4.216	.183		

Significant at  $P \leq 0.05$ , N. S= Non Significant, H. S= High Significant.

### **Conclusion**

With the continual growth in the number of international students studying at Egyptian universities in recent years, it has become more important than ever to understand these students' requirements and needs in order fulfill it in a manner that contributes to their satisfaction, retention, and to attract more of them.

So, this study was conducted in an attempt by the researchers to determine the most important social needs of international students during their study in Egypt.

The study was limited to a public universities in Egypt with an enrollment of approximately 86,000 international student (Undergraduate and postgraduate) at the time of the study during the academic year 2021/202. Students represented nearly 80 different countries according to international student affairs.

The study utilized an online questionnaire model to determine international students' perceptions of the utilized social needs, how the students ranked the importance of that needs, and differences in

perceived importance of the social needs based on the demographic variables of the respondents.

Based on the responses collected via the online questionnaire, we found that international students had high ratings of the perceived importance of social employed items in the study. However, there are significant differences in respondents' ratings of the perceived importance of the social needs based on their geographical region of origin. In contrast, differences were not significant among international students based on these demographic variables: gender, marital status, age, and current degree program.

Also, based on the results obtained through the study, some recommendations have been proposed to the officials in the ministries, concerned authorities, and universities to provide the social needs that suit international students and according to their perceptions. And thus increase the ability of universities and the Egyptian academic community to retain these students and to attract more of them. There were also some recommendations for further research and for future research in this regard.

### **Recommendations**

#### **❖ Recommendations to stakeholders in the ministries and concerned authorities**

These are the most crucial recommendations that the researchers make to the relevant authorities and ministries to strengthen the role of community participation in achieving foreign students' satisfaction with the social needs offered to them while studying in Egypt.

##### ***a) Ministries of Culture, and Information***

- Providing international students with awareness and mentorship programs to familiarize them with Egyptian society and their new academic environment in coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education.
- Holding free Arabic language courses for non-Arabic speaking foreign students in coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education.

- Conducting advertising campaigns to urge decent dealing and mutual respect with international students studying in Egypt, and not to exploit them financially or in any way.
  - b) *Ministries of Interior, tourism, and Civil Aviation***
    - Making it easier for international students' families and relatives to visit Egypt, as well as providing exceptional discounts on their tickets.
    - Providing international students and their families with information about internal off-campus travel as well as Egyptian tourist destinations.
    - Organizing free tourist tours for international students and their families to visit tourist and recreational sites in Egypt in coordination with universities.
  - c) *Ministry of Youth and Sports***
    - Holding many sports competitions and various recreational trips throughout the year for international students in coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education.
    - Adopting talented expatriate students in any of the different types of sports, training them for free, and enabling them to participate in various tournaments in coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education.
- ❖ **Recommendations to stakeholders in Universities**
- The following recommendations are made concerning the perceived social needs of the international students.
- Existence of a comprehensive and advanced system, unified at the level of Egyptian universities, to provide appropriate health care for international students.
  - Existence of social clubs for international students and their families at Egyptian universities, which provide all social, entertainment, and electronic services and are available throughout the year.



- Involving international students in the university's various sports teams with Egyptian students, also in various events on campus to connect with other students and the university officials.
- Providing a well-equipped gym with qualified trainers within the university housing at an additional cost, for those who need it.
- Providing international nurseries that provide social, health and educational care services for children of international students in Egyptian universities, for those who need it.

### **Limitations and Further Research**

The present study has some primary limitations, as follows:

- First, the population of this study consisted of all international students at Egyptian public universities. This large study population limits the generalizability of the findings.
- Second, bias may exist in this study due to the prodigious percentage of Asian respondents (61.5%), although Asian international students currently comprise the vast majority of international students at nearly all Egyptian universities.
- Third, it should be noted that this study made the first attempt to understand the perceived social needs of international students in Egyptian universities, which was coupled with the scarcity of previous local studies in this regard.
- Fourth, despite the researchers' filing of official requests, some officials at some involved authorities and institutions have been quite adamant in refusing to provide the researchers with the necessary information or statistics.

Finally, it is advised that further research be conducted to investigate this topic. These recommendations ought to drive further research:

- a) Examine the needs of international students from a specific region such as Africa as needs may be country specific. This study was based on the student responses from various regions.

- b) Choose between male and female students to focus on. Each one has specific individual needs because there are different factors influence their experiences.
- c) Concentrate on international students at one Egyptian university and investigate their satisfaction with the quality of life and hospitality services provided to them so that you can make a positive and beneficial contribution to the university, allowing it to fulfill its international students' needs.

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### **Web**

<http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/international-or-internationally-mobile-students>

<https://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/internationalmobilityofthehighlyskilled.htm>

<http://portal.mohe.gov.eg/ar-eg/Pages/high-education-achievement1.aspx>

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