

**Paper 32 - Allied Health**

**CULTURAL BARRIERS, COST, AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS AS DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES UTILIZATION AMONG INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

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**ABSTRACT**

International students encounter more health challenges and difficulties during their college life but often unable to utilize health care services due to various reasons. Some of these reasons were financial constraints, geographical barriers, and other personal problems. Hence, this study was conducted to determine if cultural barriers, cost of health care services, and physical environment significantly influence the healthcare services utilization of international students. This correlational study was conducted among 202 international students with ages that ranged from 14 – 36 years old. Majority (63.9%) of these students are from Korea, Indonesia, America, Angola, Papua New Guinea, only 78% used English as their primary language, majority (77.2) stayed in the Philippines for four years or below. The results of the study revealed that more than half (59.9%) of the international students avail the health care services particularly the laboratory services (60.9%) once in six months. Two significant factors of the health care services utilization among foreign student were identified in this study: the cultural barriers in terms of language and physical environment in terms of availability of these health care services. International students with less language barriers and with available health care services are more likely to utilize the health care services. Students from America had availed the health care services more often than students from Korea and PNG and students from other countries. The utilization of the health care services among international students were statistically comparable by age, gender, years of stay, and monthly allowance.

**Keywords:** Cultural barriers, cost, and physical environment, health care services utilization