

**DIETARY INTAKES AND FOOD PATTERNS OF
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN A PRIVATE
UNIVERSITY IN MALAYSIA**

**OKONKWO MAUREEN EMMANUELLA
1001333911**

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ABSTRACT

International students in Malaysia experience transitions from their own cultures to a new, different culture that has a unique impact on their physical, mental, nutritional and psychological health status. This research was aimed at finding out the dietary intakes and food pattern of international students in a private Malaysian university. A total hundred international students studying for their diploma or bachelor degree were included. The aim was to find out their dietary intakes and food pattern before and after migration. The findings showed that out of 100 students 77% ate their traditional foods regularly before coming to Malaysia, but after arriving in Malaysia, it dropped to 32%. Before coming to Malaysia, 33% cooked their food but after arriving Malaysia, only 26% cooked their food. Regarding taking breakfast, 37% of the international students always ate breakfast before they came to Malaysia, it was dropped to 2%. After arriving in Malaysia, 72% experienced a change in their food pattern, had an increase in vegetables intake but decrease in fruits, bread, meat, beans, dairy, fats and oil with a highest preference of chicken curry, a local Malaysian food 43%. The change in their dietary may be due to the unavailability of their traditional foods while the decrease in eating of breakfast may also be due to lack of time as they often had early morning lectures. The change in food pattern may also be due to cost while the preference for chicken curry could be because of its availability and low cost compared to others. More research on the effect of dietary intakes and food patterns on the academic performance of international students were recommended.

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