



ICFSE 2024

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
FUTURE & SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FUTURE AND SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION 2024

*EMPOWERING TOMORROW:
FOSTERING THE FUTURE BEYOND BOUNDARIES*



16th & 17th July 2024



Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS),
International Islamic University Malaysia,
IIUM Gambang Campus, Pahang.

Organised by;



In collaboration with;



ALBUKHARY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY





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Theme:
Empowering Tomorrow: Fostering the Future Beyond Boundaries

Date:
16th to 17th July 2024

Editors:
Ts. ChM. Dr. Noor Saadiah binti Mohd Ali
Dr. Nazirah binti Mat Russ
Muhammad Ridhwan bin Saleh
Norhazwanie binti Jatin
Abdul Hadi bin Abdul Rahim

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CENTRE FOR FOUNDATION STUDIES,
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FOREWORD

Chairman of ICFSE2024

Tn. Hj. Hasanul Basri Bin Abdullah

“

The theme for ICFSE 2024 encapsulates our mission to transcend traditional limitations and envision a future filled with endless possibilities especially in the ever challenging education sector.

”



In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent and the Most Merciful. May peace, and blessings of Allah be upon you. Ahlan wasahlan and welcome to all participants and collaborators to ICFSE 2024.

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that we extend a warm welcome to each of you to the second edition of our esteemed conference, now elevated to an international level through our collaboration with Universitas Lambung Mangkurat (ULM), Indonesia.

Following the remarkable success of our inaugural event in 2022, we are excited to reconvene and embark on another journey of knowledge sharing in three main categories of research namely teaching & learning, innovation and management & administration.

The theme for ICFSE 2024, “Empowering Tomorrow: Fostering the Future Beyond Boundaries,” encapsulates our mission to transcend traditional limitations and envision a future filled with endless possibilities especially in the ever challenging education sector. In an era where the pace of change is unprecedented, our programme aims to empower academics, researchers, organisations, as well as students to harness the power of innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability.

We aspire for ICFSE 2024 to be a catalyst for impactful research and a hub for innovation in multi-disciplinary teaching and learning. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our collaborators and sponsors, whose support and dedication have been instrumental in making this conference possible.

The participation of Universiti Islam Selangor (UIS) as well as Albukhary International University (AIU) have enriched our program and enhanced the overall experience for all participants.

Lastly, we would like to congratulate the organising committee for their hard work and commitment in bringing this event to life despite of our packed academic calendar. May Allah bless your efforts by making this conference not only matches but surpasses the standards set by our first edition. Thank you for being part of this extraordinary experience. Together, let us pave the way for a sustainable and more innovative future.

Best regards,

Tn. Hj. Hasanul Basri Bin Abdullah
Chairman, ICFSE 2024
Dean, CFS IIUM

Through a diverse array of paper presentations in various fields of study, we aim to inspire all participants to think boldly and contribute to shaping a future that is both sustainable and dynamic.

FOREWORD

Programme Director of ICFSE2024
Ts. ChM. Dr. Noor Saadiah Binti Mohd Ali

“

This year, our theme “Empowering Tomorrow: Fostering the Future Beyond Boundaries,” captures the essence of our collective mission towards sustainable education, gathering passionate educators, innovative thinkers, and visionary leaders globally. Our goal is simple yet profound: to break down barriers and explore new, transformative ways of learning.

”



In the name of Allah swt., the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful, and with blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). We express our gratitude to Allah swt. for His abundant blessings that have contributed to the success of the International Conference on Future and Sustainable Education (ICFSE) for 2024.

It is my great pleasure to welcome each of you to ICFSE 2024. This year, our theme “Empowering Tomorrow: Fostering the Future Beyond Boundaries,” captures the essence of our collective mission towards the sustainable education and gather all passionate educators, innovative thinkers, and visionary leaders from around the world. Our goal is simple yet profound: to break down barriers and explore new, transformative ways of learning.

Looking back, our previous conference of CFSE 2022, we were honoured to have 62 dedicated and passionate presenters.

It was a remarkable gathering that laid the foundation for innovative discussions and collaborative efforts in various field.

This year, we are excited to share that our reach has expanded significantly, with 116 participants joining us from both local and international institutions. The increased number of participants this year is a testament to the importance of our shared goals and the impact of our previous conferences.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the speakers, panelists, and participants for their contributions and dedication. Your presence and active engagement are what make this conference a success. A special thank you to our organising committee, sponsors, and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to make this event possible.

As we come together to discuss and explore new horizons, I am reminded of the insightful statement; “Research is creating new knowledge. You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great”.

This philosophy perfectly captures the essence of our work and this conference.

Every small step we take in research and education moves us closer to greatness, and it is through these efforts that we achieve significant progress in our field.

We wish all ICFSE 2024 participants an enjoyable gathering in Centre for Foundation Studies, Gambang Campus. Let us be inspired by the innovative approaches presented and commit to fostering the future of education beyond all boundaries.

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing all of you next year at the conference. InshaAllah.

”

“Research is creating new knowledge. You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great”.

”

Best regards,

Ts. ChM. Dr. Noor Saadiah Mohd Ali
Programme Director of ICFSE 2024



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THE IMPACT OF ACADEMIC ADVISING INITIATIVES FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESSES AMONG STUDENTS AT THE CENTRE FOR FOUNDATION STUDIES, IIUM

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Abstract. Students who enter their pre-University era such as foundation studies may find it difficult to adjust to their new lifestyle and environment. Added with possibly newer teaching-learning styles and approaches, it is pertinent to address this issue in view to ensure conducive teaching and learning experience at the foundation level before they head into their Undergraduate studies. It is proven in past studies that one of the figures who can help adjust to their new life is the academic advisors. This study seeks to gauge the role that academic advisors can play, as well as the impact of their initiatives in supporting the students' teaching and learning processes during their time at the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS), IIUM. This study employs a qualitative approach, whereby a survey to the students is conducted, as well as several focused group discussions with groups of students who went through academic advising initiatives. The respondents were chosen through a purposive-sampling method. For the results, it is found that academic advising initiatives, if done properly and exposed clearly to students, will have positive impacts on their experience in foundation studies. To conclude, this study can act as a platform to further enhance academic advising in institutions, especially ones where students have to adjust their lives such as in foundation studies centres.

Keywords. Academic Advising, Foundation, Teaching, Learning, Management

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia greatly emphasizes academic achievements in both schools and higher education institutions, as the people believe that the future generation will lead the country. As a result, students' achievements have become a big priority in Malaysia, especially in universities. In Malaysia, young teenagers attend universities after achieving excellent results in their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) and would then enrol into the Pre-University studies. One of them includes Foundation Studies (*Asasi*). This preparatory program equips them with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in undergraduate studies, acting as a bridge between their SPM certification and the degree level. With such status, foundation studies become a place of transition, whereby these students, who are young teenagers who have never experienced university life before, must learn to be independent as they begin making life decisions without the usual familial support. Such transitional situations may lead to them making the wrong decisions and struggling to handle the pressure [1]. Not only that, the said transitions may come together with pre-existing challenges that they carry from their previous phase of life. These challenges may prove a major hindrance for these students to proceed through their new phase, and that may end up becoming a stumbling block for their growth and successes. The challenges may come in the form of status as a first-generation student, such as being the eldest child, or the very first member of their family to enter university. This may pose challenges such as lack of parental guidance as well as monetary support, or even having to balance expectations and responsibilities to both their studies and family members [2]. A challenge that is growing in popularity due to its surge in cases: distrust [3] and mental health issues. Issues involving depression, anxiety, adjustment difficulties and bipolar disorders can interfere with daily academic, personal and social activities [4]. This also highlights the impact of post-pandemic education on the younger generation, which has become a continuous problem.

Therefore, in light of the stated problems and challenges, the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS) at the International Islamic University Malaysia has mandated each department to have an Academic Advisor (AA) to support students in their programs. Academic advisors provide guidance, assist in course selection, and help



students navigate the university system. They also help students develop solutions to their academic concerns and support them in defining their educational career plans.

According to [5], academic advisors are a group of people who can help students navigate through their academic journey. This process will influence students in career decision-making and aspirations for students' education [6]. The effectiveness and efficiency of academic advising should be measured by looking at the extent to which students' needs are met and the continuity of the quality of their educational experience throughout their studies [7]. Service quality can be measured by the perception of customer satisfaction, customer expectations, and attitudes [8]. At the university level, student satisfaction with the services provided will impact the success of quality education. Therefore, knowledgeable, professional, and competent academic advisors play a crucial role in producing quality students through guidance and education. This highlights the importance of academic advisors in ensuring the sustainability of quality education at the university level.

Based on the challenges outlined in the previous section, academic advising is surely a critical component in higher education. This is because academic advising can significantly support student learning, retention, and overall success [2], [9], [10]. These past studies underscore the importance of academic advisors in providing mentorship, guidance, and structured counselling services in supporting students through their educational journey, especially in foundation programmes [11]. According to [3], academic advising is a shared responsibility between advisors and students where information exchanges take place in view of supporting the latter in reaching their various goals, especially educational and career ones. Advisors act as mentors and partners, aiding students in self-development and goal setting, ultimately contributing to their academic achievements and learning motivation [12].

Not only that, academic advisors act as crucial partners in promoting academic integrity, collaborating with campus programs, and integrating honest discussions early on, benefiting foundation level students in higher education institutions [13]. By helping students navigate challenges, academic advisors create a supportive environment that enhances student retention efforts and fosters a sense of belonging within the university. This comprehensive support system is essential in addressing the diverse challenges that students face thus ensuring their persistence toward graduation [14]. Additionally, academic advising helps identify behavioural factors influencing students' attitudes towards learning and then provides strategies to motivate students to perform better in their studies [15]. The effectiveness of academic advising systems in higher education institutions has been highlighted, emphasizing the positive impact on student performance and satisfaction, leading to improved academic outcomes [16], [17].

Looking further into the impact of academic advising and its driven initiatives, academic advisors not only provide individualized support but also contribute to creating a supportive and success-oriented environment for students, ultimately enhancing their overall learning experience and success in higher education [18]-[20]. Furthermore, research has shown that students who actively engage with their academic advisors are more likely to explore various academic and career opportunities, leading to a greater sense of direction and purpose in their educational journey [21]. From here, it can be seen that previous literature also highlighted the importance of choosing the right strategy for academic advising. For example, with the suitable strategies such as a developmental approach to academic advising [22], students can develop the necessary skills to survive in their tertiary education such as social, language, ideological and mental competencies [23].

Within the Malaysian context, academic advising in Malaysian higher-education institutions significantly improves student satisfaction, knowledge retention and academic success due to effective organisational cultures [10]. Part of the initiatives taken by educational leaders involve the selection of academic advisors. Appointing approachable personnel as academic advisors may see significantly positive academic facilitation, whereby advisors who initiate socialising-based activities such as spending time together and going for a walk can improve trust and bring students closer. This will lead to better understanding between students and academic advisors in facilitating them with their teaching and learning processes [24]. From here, it is proven that proper management equates to proper academic advising experience, which in turn will prove to be worthwhile for student experience in their foundation studies [25].

From the previous literature, several gaps can be identified that can lead to the advancements in this research. Firstly, past studies did well in highlighting the challenges faced by students as well as conceptualising the idea of academic advising and the figure of an academic advisor. Nevertheless, they showed tendencies to study the impact of academic advising in their respective localities, opening rooms to add on literature surveying the impact of academic advising in Malaysian higher education, especially the foundation level. Next, a gap can be seen where the majority of the studies on this topic revolves around the impact of academic advising as an act, job or

responsibility, but not much has been done on the impact of approaches and initiatives driven by academic advising. Lastly, providing a commentary on the overall touch of previous research, the majority of the literature surrounding academic advising in Malaysia touched on initiatives on a superficial level. Thus, an addition to the corpus regarding the initiatives in depth should be conducted to further assess the nuance of academic advising in the country.

In lieu of the context and literature review, this pioneer study seems to be pertinent in opening up new avenues in the study of academic advising, not only in Malaysia, but also specifically at the foundation level. Thus, this study will take on the following research question and objective:

Research Questions:

- What are the roles of academic advisors in ensuring facilitation of foundation students?
- What are the impacts of academic advising towards foundation students in Malaysia Higher-Education Institutions?
- What are the impacts of academic advising initiatives towards foundation students in Malaysia Higher-Education Institutions?

Research Objectives:

- To investigate the roles of academic advisors in ensuring facilitation of foundation students
- To study the impacts of academic advising towards foundation students in Malaysia Higher-Education Institutions.
- To study the impacts of academic advising initiatives towards foundation students in Malaysia Higher-Education Institutions.

The next section will present the sampling, instruments, data collection, and data analysis methodology employed for this paper.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a cross-sectional qualitative approach on students of the following programmes at the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) as its population: English for International Communication (ENCOM), Malay for International Communication (MACOM), Arabic for International Communication (ARCOM), Tourism Management (TMGT), and Legal Studies (LAWS).

The instruments used for data collection include interviews via Focus-Group Discussions (FGD) and a questionnaire survey, adopted from [10], spread across all five programmes within the population. The data collection was conducted through a non-probability sampling technique i.e. purposive sampling, as the survey was blasted to any potential available respondents among the five programmes. However, there is an element of concern on the reception of students towards the qualitative survey which may lead to lack of responses or arbitrary answers. Thus, to circumvent the shortcomings of a survey as a research instrument such as incomplete or insufficient responses, ten students from each programme agreed to participate in interviews of a Focus-Group Discussion format (a total of 50 respondents). This is because surveys can provide an early idea on the findings while the Focus-Group Discussions can help in retrieving more rigorous data within a short time. With these instruments, the amount of sample can reach the suggested 20% figure from the total population [26].

For both instruments i.e. FGD and questionnaire survey, five qualitative questions were asked to the respondents. The first question asked to the respondents is related to the availability of Academic Advisor. The question was asked to study whether the availability of the Academic Advisor has any positive impacts towards students' development and what would be the impacts of the AA's availability to the students. The second question is related to the impacts of the academic advising initiatives. During the session, the answers to the second question started with the mention of what is the academic advising initiative(s) that has been the most impactful to each respondent. The answers given were related to the impacts of that academic advising initiatives towards students. The third question is related to whether or not the academic advising initiatives have been clearly exposed to the students. This is to study whether the students are aware of the existence of the academic advising initiatives conducted by the department or the Academic Advisor and whether the initiatives were clearly exposed to them. The fourth question was on suggestions for future improvements. The students were asked what would be the suggested programmes or initiatives that might be conducted by the department or the Academic Advisor to improve the students' academic achievements, experience, and student development. This question is essential as it helps the Academic Advisor to consider the future improvements by looking at the suggestions from the perspective of the students themselves. The fifth question is related to the students' perception on the need of the

role called ‘Academic Advisor’ within the higher education level. This question was asked to study the students’ opinions on whether or not the role of an Academic Advisor is needed, especially at the foundation level. All questions were open-ended, which required the respondents to provide their opinions.

After collecting the data, a thematic analysis based on [10]’s four prongs framework is conducted as the method of data analysis. Prior to the analysis, the chosen themes were deliberated among the researchers to ensure consistency and reliability of the researchers’ perspectives. Then, the responses from both the survey and FGD are coded or themed into the said four prongs i.e., Academic development, Personal Development, Career Development, and Social development. Then, the findings will be tallied with the research questions that the study would like to answer. The overall framework used for analysing the data can be seen as follows:

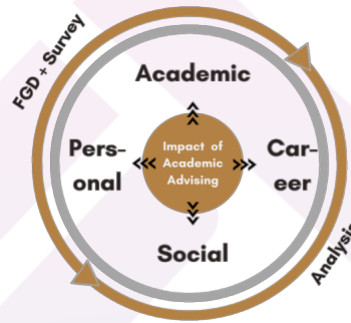


Figure 1: The Research Framework

The following sections will demonstrate the findings of this study, as well as providing an overall discussion based on the results obtained from the data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted, and a questionnaire survey was spread to gather the students’ responses regarding the role of academic advisors and impacts of academic advising initiatives on their journey as foundation students in Centre for Foundation Studies, International Islamic University of Malaysia (CFS IIUM). From there, a thematic analysis based on [10]’s four prongs were conducted to help answer the research questions. In the analysis, the students are labelled as such:

Programme Indicator	Description	Examples
ES	English for International Communication students	ES3
AS	Arabic for International Communication students	AS6
MS	Malay for International Communication students	MS9
TS	Tourism Management students	TS10
LS	Law students	LS36
SS	Students from the Survey	SS57

In both the Focus-Group Discussions and survey, the respondents provided a variety of responses that directly or indirectly relate to the concept of academic development. [10] classified ‘academic development’ as a concept or a process in which an institution’s management strives to enhance and calibrate its students’ academic performances through various methods and approaches, and this includes academic advising. Not only that, academic development also refers to the integration of effective practices that can cater to diverse student needs and experiences.

Based on the responses received from the respondents, among the biggest impact of academic advising initiatives conducted in CFS IIUM was to provide a clear direction on the start of their foundation studies. One of the responses highlighting this impact is as follows:

“The consultation session helped me a lot, as it was effective in helping at the start of my foundation studies as a second intake student in CFS, as in, helping me to know what to do, where to be, what to expect etc.”

(ES9)

Another response that helped strengthen the claim for the said impact include:

“Whenever I consult the AA (online or F2F), there would always be a clear answer on what needs to be done as a student here in CFS and in the course too...”

(ES3)

A more detailed response explaining how academic advising initiatives and the presence of an advisory figure can provide clarity on their academic journey can be seen here:

Since foundation studies is a new world for school leavers like us were, we may stray away from what is right, and sometimes we may feel ‘lost’ because of the different systems there are in schools and universities. Therefore, there is a need for a ‘mediator’ figure and a ‘mediation’ act to tie us to the new system that we’re heading into.

(ES10)

Another angle, which referred to the need for an initiative towards early briefings of the programmes, one of the initiatives conducted, is as follows:

There is definitely a need to conduct a department briefing early on. This is so that students can see clearly what they are going to learn in CFS and know who their HoD, AA and other staff are. Even better if we can combine it with Kulliyah [faculty] briefing so that no student would want to change courses.

(AS3)

In the introductory section of this paper, it has been made clear that transitions from one phase of life to another, in this case, transitioning from school to university, can prove to be difficult [1]. Students may find themselves in a constant state of cluelessness and a lack of direction over what they need to do, who they should consult, where they should go and a plethora of other questions that may linger within their minds. Thus, having a proper academic advising initiative that specifically addresses this matter, such as consultations, as per the responses, may aid in resolving lingering inquiries and providing a much-needed clarity for them, regardless of aspects.

Next, academic advising initiatives can also have a positive impact on students’ motivation to achieve academic excellence. Through specific initiatives such as awarding certificates to top achievers, mentor-mentee programs, academic tutoring and many more, students apparently attain motivation either to join the top echelons, or to maintain their place within the initiatives. Among the responses obtained that point to this include:

When there’s an appreciation ceremony for students who achieved Dean’s List or 4.00 CGPA, we as the non-recipients felt motivated looking at our friends’ successes. My only suggestion is to ensure that the certificates are given hard-copy for everyone. It will make us feel even more appreciated and motivated.

(AS5)

Another response which agreed to the above is as follows:

“Evening Session [conducted by my AA] positively-impacted me because whenever I see my peers receiving their certificates in front of other students, I feel much more motivated.”

(TS10)

In fact, one of the respondents connected to his/her own experience when discussing the impact of academic advising initiatives on their academic motivation:

“The initiatives indeed helped motivate me to try harder. Even if right now I’m so close yet so far (3.49 CGPA), I still have some fire left to try for the final semester.”

(ES9)

From here, it is clear that academic advising initiatives can have a positive impact on students’ motivation, especially on achieving academic success. [27] supported this notion by highlighting that such initiatives can demonstrate institutional support, guidance and encouragement towards the students, in which the young ones can observe and appreciate. Through this, it is undeniable that what the students need may be more than just good grades, but also the sense that they are supported and appreciated by the ones who matter the most to them, including their very own institutions.

Lastly, from the responses, it can be seen that academic initiatives help in academic development by providing guidance and advice on their actions and practices throughout their foundation studies. This is evident through the following response:

“[Through the initiatives such as consultations,] AA will show where I’m lacking so that I can improve in the future.”

(MS1)

Another response that supports the above claim:

“When the AA called to have a one-to-one session last semester (I am a low achiever student), we discussed how to improve for Semesters 2 and 3. We discussed as well on the study skills...”

(LS1)

Initiatives that cover this type of grounds are also important as not all that glitters are golds. This means that, while celebrations and appreciation towards high-achieving students can increase motivation, the lower-achieving ones should never be neglected. Initiatives that aid students in need of academic improvements such as consultations, study skills workshops and personalised guidance can be of utter importance too. [28] stressed on the necessity of identifying low-achievers or at-risk students early on, and quickly remedying their issues to ensure that their academic experience will not falter. Thus, academic advising initiatives can prove to be of great impact in ensuring that, as per the old saying, no one is left behind.

Next, the second theme in [10] is related to personal development. Personal development refers to the positive progress of the students to maximise their potential and capabilities in their journey as a student and into a future career. The role of the academic advisor in giving advice to the students is not limited to ensuring that the students do not fail any subjects or passing all subjects with flying colours, but more importantly, the role of the academic advisor is to create a good relationship with the students so that they can develop their potential growth [29]. The academic advisor is also seen as a figure who helps the students become self-aware with the different interests that they may have and any varieties of talents within every distinctive individual, which can enable the students to decide wisely according to their personal and future life interests [30]. In other words, academic advising initiatives should be utilised not only as a means to upgrade the grades students should obtain, but also upgrading their personal life skills based on the potential that they have as an individual and making sure a good reflection in decision-making process. This development is also essential alongside their academic development since personal development enables the students to discover their potential and helps to grow their capabilities to the maximum.

Based on the FGD and survey conducted, among the answers obtained to indicate that the Academic Advisor and academic advising initiatives would give any form of impacts towards students’ personal development is:

Since foundation studies is a new world for school leavers like us were, we may stray away from what is right, and sometimes we may feel ‘lost’ because of the different systems there are in schools and universities. Therefore, there is a need for a ‘mediator’ figure and a ‘mediation’ act to tie us to the new system that we’re heading into.

ES10

From the above answer, we can see the student appreciates the role of academic advisor through the academic advising initiatives (as a mediator) in helping students to adjust with the new environment and medium of study. The students that come to the foundation centre are certainly students who just finished their secondary school. In school, the way the teachers teach and approach the students are different from the approaches to the university level students. This is where the role of academic advisor can be seen as significant to assist the students in adjusting to the new phase of life thus developing their personal development. This can happen since the students would require certain skills or information that may not be the same as the ones they already have prior to joining foundation studies, for example, cursory research skills. The respondent above agreed that without the help from the academic advisor they might feel lost. The academic advisor is perceived as a figure who can help the students during the transition period from secondary school to pre-university level of study. As highlighted by [31], the academic advisor is viewed as a consultant, expert, or collaborator from the perspective of the students. This is in line with the fact that the academic advisor did in fact help the students in developing their potential and personal development.

On that note, academic advising initiatives also provide the students with the soft and technical skills required to develop into a bright individual. This indicates that the students are able to grow and develop their skills needed in their life as students and also after graduation. The answer below indicates a suggestion for an initiative that would enable students to gain new skills:

To conduct classes specifically on improving the skills required for law students. Example, skills to prepare a good assignment, skills to convince people during debate and other skills.

LS3

Aside from academic and personal development, [10] also believed that astute academic advising initiatives can positively impact students' career development. According to [10], career development is the process of guiding students towards their professional aspirations and goals, which involves actions such as assisting students in exploring career options, developing relevant skills, and making informed decisions about their future career paths. This can take place because academic advising plays a significant role in supporting students' career development by providing resources, information, and guidance on internships, job opportunities, and further education. A disconnect in their career insights may deter the students from succeeding in their studies due to a lack of push-factor [32]. Thus, it is pertinent to expose them early on their prospects. In relation to foundation studies, even if their journey at the university level has just begun, students believe that with proper guidance, they will have a clear-cut idea on the future of their programmes as well as the career options they may have. Among the responses that support this idea is:

“[I] agree with TS2, I also didn't want TMGT in the first place. I want to know what kind of careers there are for us, what we can do ...”

(TS10)

Another response that agrees with the above respondent would be:

“‘Ngeteh!’ [our consultation sessions] helped declutter and uncover my future plans through the constant discussions with AA.”

(ES8)

Aside from clarity, developments in terms of soft and technical skills can prove worthwhile for students' career development. [33] highlighted that with proper guidance and advising, as well as with the right initiatives, students can be more in tune with the changes in their prospective industries. In preparation for such outlook, students can utilise their time in university developing their own skills, as per the following respondent:

“AA should conduct classes specifically on improving the skills required for law students. Example, skills to prepare a good assignment, skills to convince people during debate and other skills.”

(LS3)

To simplify, academic advising initiatives can have positive impacts on students' career development, particularly through establishing clear direction and using various approaches to further develop their soft and technical skills.

This goes hand-in-hand with the concept of personal development, as students can work towards both aspects simultaneously. A good management from educational institutions can certainly produce well-rounded graduates through astute, specific approaches like academic advising.

The last theme according to [10] is related to social development. Social development in this context refers to the improvements of the students' well-being throughout their studies. As compared to the other themes, social development denotes the least outcome of academic advising initiatives. This is probable since the main focus and objective of academic advising matters are mostly related to students' academic achievements. Among the answers obtained from respondents that indicate the Academic Advisors and their academic advising initiatives contributed to students' social development is:

“Improving my social skills.”

(SS33)

From here, it is evident that interactions with an Academic Advisor, or participation in academic advising initiatives can directly or indirectly impact students' social development. From the above response, the respondent answered a question regarding the perceived impact of any academic advising initiatives that he or she has participated in, to which the response indicated that it has improved social skills. From observation, the pattern among the two departments showed initiatives related to networking and communication, thus, leading to an inference that the above response skews towards the said aspects. Another response that supports this idea is:

“Better in communication.”

(SS57)

From the responses, it can be concluded that the academic advising initiatives did give positive impacts. However, for social development of students from the two departments, it is not very significant in comparison with the other three themes. Nevertheless, half a loaf is better than no bread. Among others, the students managed to develop their communication and social skills which is one of the most essential skills required in their life as a graduate later on.

In short, the findings show that there is a great need for academic advising initiatives to be much more prominent due to its positive impacts on student development, particularly for academic and career aspects. This also highlights the power of astute educational leadership in higher education institutions, considering that within this research and also past literature, education leaders who are aware of the student aspects within their institutions can bring about positive changes, and thus empowering the communities involved with necessary skills, knowledge, sense and philosophy for the greater good. Good academic advising initiatives can indeed transform the way the younger generation perceive tertiary education, not only as a place to ply their trade, but also as a space for them to grow into the human beings they so deserve to become.

CONCLUSION

This research has thoroughly examined the impact of academic advising initiatives on foundation students at CFS IIUM. It has successfully answered the research questions, demonstrating that academic advising positively influences students' academic, personal, career, and social development. One significant outcome of this pioneer study is its potential to lead to future correlational research on educational leadership. It also provides valuable data for developing guidelines for academic advisors and may support the selection process of academic advisors at various educational levels. Overall, academic advising initiatives are impactful in fostering academic success, enhancing student growth and development, increasing student satisfaction, and improving retention rates at CFS IIUM. This is achieved through the expertise of advisors who assist students in adjusting to the higher education environment. Not only that, this study offers a novel exploration into the specific impacts of academic advising within the unique context of Malaysian foundation studies, particularly at the Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS), IIUM. While prior research has generally focused on academic advising, this study delves deeper into the role of these initiatives in enhancing academic, personal, career, and social development among foundation students, as aforementioned. The findings reveal that well-designed academic advising initiatives are essential for equipping students with the skills and confidence needed to navigate the complexities of a new territory that is the higher education. Additionally, the study emphasizes the broader implications of these initiatives, aligning



them with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.0 to promote quality education and equity. This research serves as a foundation for future inquiries into academic advising. It lays the groundwork for developing guidelines to improve the selection and training of academic advisors and explores the role of educational leadership in fostering effective advising systems. Ultimately, this study highlights the transformative potential of academic advising initiatives, encouraging institutions worldwide to rethink their strategies to create more inclusive and effective support systems for students.

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