

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

Understanding the adjustment experiences of international students has important implications for designing and implementing guidance and counseling programs that will ensure their smooth transition. This study provides significant information regarding the patterns of international students' self-adjustment using Schneider's normal adjustment indicators. At the beginning of studying in *Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia*, especially for the first three (3) months, most international students tend to face excessive emotions such as confusion, embarrassment, frustrations, and sadness. These excessive emotions tend to resurface when international students are faced with new semesters, new lecturers, and new academic demands. They also make use of psychological mechanisms such as compensation, projection, denial, reaction formation, and sublimation and exhibited self-directed ability. Most international students are unable to make use of past experiences and they show unrealistic and subjective attitudes which is a clear sign of abnormal adjustment.

This study shows that International students face self-adjustment problems such as language barriers, isolation from classmates, cultural differences, unpunctuality, financial problems, and technical problems. These problems led to academic stress, inability to build a good rapport with domestic students, confusion, passive participation in class activities, health problems and lack of trust which hinders their smooth adjustment at UPI. International students cope with these adjustment problems by seeking help from other international students, classmates, lecturers, seniors, supervisors. They also cope with their problems by improving their language skills,

relating with other international students, denial of the problem, entertainment (watching movies, listening to music and sports), and prayers.

This study also shows that international students from Asia and America exhibited normal adjustments on many normal adjustment indicators. This could be traced to their level of maturity (age), previous experience in studying in Indonesia, and being in the same line of major since undergraduate degree. The international student from America was the only participant who didn't show any sign of excessive emotions which is a clear sign of normal adjustment. This helped in his adjustment at UPI. The international students from Asia only showed abnormal adjustment in only two indicators which shows that he is coping well in Indonesia. International students from Europe and Africa exhibited normal adjustments on few normal adjustment indicators. The least adjusted participant is the participant from Africa, this is due to her inability to communicate in both English and Indonesian language. Her inability to adjust led to lots of excessive emotions and health problems.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 Recommendation for Faculty Members

It is recommended that the orientation done at the faculty level should be both in Indonesian and English, especially if international students are present. This can affect the adjustment of these students because a positive or negative experience during orientation could affect their attitude about learning. Specific academic demands of the faculty should be discussed in detail. Academic advisors that are allocated to international students should be lecturers that understand English and are willing to build a good rapport with the students. Lecturers should be informed about international students' language difficulties so that they ensure that the international students in their classes understand their lectures by speaking basic Indonesian language if they are unable to communicate in the English language.

Lecturers have the opportunity to monitor the international students in their classes since most international students would not want to miss classes, lecturers can notice if those students need help and refer them to UPTBK. Lecturers can also contribute to international students' smooth adjustment if they can reflect on their teaching, and alter the delivery of instruction according to the needs of the students' profiles. Faculty awareness and interest in the culture and the news about the country of international students in their class could be helpful in understanding and helping international students.

5.2.2 Recommendation for the Staff at the International Office

Before the arrival of international students, OIER should inform students about the importance of learning the Indonesian language especially international students from non-English speaking countries. This will help international students to learn the Indonesian language before coming to Indonesia. Also, Staff at OIER know that they will be working with international students, they need to improve their English language to be able to understand international students better. There is a document on the guidelines for writing scientific works in UPI but it's in Indonesian language, it would be good if international students have access to this document in English before they commence their studies. The International student association should be more active and more engaging. Activities of the organization should involve sharing information with international students to help freshmen understand what they should expect from learning in UPI. Also, opportunities should be given to senior international students to share their adjustment experiences so the new intakes can learn from them.

5.2.3 Recommendation for Counselors at UPTBK

Counselors need to collaborate with other personnel like the staff at the international office and faculty members to be able to help in the adjustment process of international students. Counselors should work with the international office to be

able to get information on enrolled international students and new intakes. UPTBK should develop an orientation program in collaboration with the international office and faculty members where freshmen international students would be informed on the educational system in Indonesia. Most times the educational system of the host country is usually different from what international students are used to in their countries. They should be informed about the academic demands of UPI and how they should prepare for it, requirements for graduations, examination style, courses, academic writing style, APA referencing, thesis, proposals, and general information on what to expect in the classroom. Academic demands of the university should be explained in detail, even if the counselor thinks it's basic because international students may not be familiar with these academic demands. These explanations would help them to be calmer, reduce psychological problems (such as anxiety, stress, confusion etc.) and be more confident in taking their program.

A comprehensive handbook should also be developed that provides a detailed explanation of both undergraduate and graduate school academic requirements this would go a long way in helping international students especially those who might miss the orientation for unforeseen reasons. This orientation program would also help international students to know where the counseling office is located and they would be able to go there for individual or group counseling. An ongoing orientation is also recommended for all international students especially before the commencement of each semester. During this orientation, students would be able to discuss their adjustment challenges and specific information would be given to them based on their semesters. There are a lot of activities that go on in the university that international students are not aware of, counselors should look for ways to inform students about such activities. This would help bring domestic and international students together thereby, enhancing relationships that will help in the adjustment process. This would also create a sense of belonging in the hearts of the international students.

UPTBK could establish a peer mentoring program that can work as an information clearinghouse where students can meet instructors and peers, especially the senior international students. This could help students get specific information and assistance from someone that can relate to their experience. This would also help international students to set their priorities, build lasting relationships among international students, and help form a clear picture of what to expect in studying at UPI. Existing counseling programs at UPTBK should be revised to cater for the needs of both domestic and international students.

5.2.4 Recommendation for Students (both Domestic and International)

Indonesian students should be willing to help international students with adjustment problems within and outside the classroom. They should try to build a good relationship with international students and be open to learning new things from them. They should expect international students to behave in a way that is different from their culture, hence they should try to understand and accommodate them.

International students should try to learn about Indonesia, the city where their university is located, and the institution as much as they can before arrival. They should take the time to learn about Indonesian cultures before arrivals to minimize culture shock and keep learning about them after arrival. This would go a long way to help their adjustment process. International students should learn to open up to relevant authorities if they have adjustment issues. They should also engage in activities organized by the international students' organization where they can meet peers to share their problems with and seek help from. International students should obtain knowledge about how to learn in an Indonesian setting and endeavor to be socially integrated with the class. International students should participate in the activities organized by the International Office to build social networks and improve their language skills.

5.2.5 Recommendation for University Administrators

The university community should be enlightened about the presence of international students so they can be well postured to receive them. They should be trained on how to respect, understand, and accommodate international students. Lecturers should be trained to be affable and to encourage students to use the counseling resources in UPI. Administrators should establish ongoing policies and strategies to frequently obtain and evaluate international students' vantage point regarding needed programs, coordinate and better amalgamate the efforts by counselors and staff at the international office, to satisfy international students' needs for adjustment.

5.2.6 Recommendation for Further Research

An extensive study should be carried out on adjustment problems and coping styles of international students in Indonesia focusing on their experiences outside the academic setting. Further research should be done on guidance and counseling programs used in Indonesian universities to cater for the needs of international students. Multiple data collection techniques should be used when researching on the self-adjustment of international students to have robust information on their adjustment issues. Also, more research should be done on the self-adjustment of international students from Europe and Africa because they show a high level of abnormal adjustment as revealed in this study.