

## Self-Adjustment Dynamic In Sojourner College Students

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### ARTICLE INFO

*Article history:*

Received 1 July 2020  
Received in revised form  
10 October 2020  
Accepted 27 October 2020  
Available online 31  
December 2020

*Keywords:*

*college students, self  
adjustment, sojourner  
students*

### ABSTRACT

Studying in a university outside hometown is one of the common way for high school graduates to get access to a better quality of higher education. These new students settle down in new surroundings much different from their respective homes. They adapt to adjust to the new situation. This research aims to understand dynamics of self-adjustment of the students during their study in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta (Special Province of Yogyakarta). The method used in the research was qualitative phenomenology. The writer found that there were five factors that play roles in the adjustment, which are: (1) support; (2) obstacle; (3) character; (4) intrapersonal; and (5) interpersonal.

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## 1. Introduction

Indonesia will get a bonus for the population of productive age as much as 70% in 2020-2030 (Kiryanto, 2017) . The government's way of optimizing the bonus for the population of productive age is by organizing higher education to remind the community's competitiveness. According to the Kementerian Riset dan Pendidikan Tinggi (2017), the number of universities in Indonesia reached 4474 including academies, polytechnics, colleges, institutes and universities (2017). As many as 139 of them are in DI Yogyakarta. The number of students studying in DI Yogyakarta reaches 239,484 student, and are came from all over Indonesia's area (Kementrian Riset dan Pendidikan Tinggi, 2017).

The phenomenon of wander students was related to their purposes in getting a better access to education. Another goal was to gain knowledge and expertise, obtaining job, get a higher status, and to fulfill the expectations of their community (Sakamoto, 2006). To achieve these objectives, wander student faced number of challenges, including the academic (Thawabieh & Al Qaisy, 2012) and include language and cultural norms (Tseng & Newton, 2002).

To overcome these challenges, students need to make adjustments. Adjustment is an individual's attempt to deal with internal desires, frustrations and conflicts in order to be in harmony with personal and environmental demands (Schneider, 1964). Good self-adjustment can provide benefits for individuals such as increased appreciation of their area of origin, reduced ethnocentrism, intolerance, stereotypes , increased cognitive complexity, self-awareness, self-esteem, self-confidence and creativity (Church, 1982) . However, not all of the sojourner students could do it well just by themselves.

This happened to a group of students living in the P environment in DI Yogyakarta. Due to some problems made by a group of sojourner students, the natives felt annoyed and frustrated. They felt disturbed and reject sojourner student, who came form the same area of the troublemaker students. Natives then push all the sojourner student to move to another area of living, outside their neighborhood area of living.

Based on these explanations, this study conducted to determine the dynamics of adjustment of the sojourner students. In addition, this study aims to determine the factors of adjustment of sojourner students.

Adjustment is a process that involves the individual's mental and response processes to balance the inner demands imposed by the environment on the individual (Semiun, 2006). Adjustment involves three constant factors that influence each other, namely the interaction of individuals with herself, individual interaction with others, and interaction of the individual with his world (Acocella, J. R. & Calhoun, 1990). Aspects of the adjustment according to Semiun (2006) and Schneider (1964), are an adjustment with regard to yourself, respect to others, and respect to an interest and growth of the individual. Schneider (1964) explained that there are five factors that influence individual adjustment, namely physical conditions, intellectual development and maturity, psychological factors, individual environmental conditions including family, home and school, and culture.

In their first year, sojourner students face an academic obstacles related to syllabus of lectures and the textbook (Sharma, 2012). Another obstacle was from cultural barriers (Church, 1982), related to differences in norms and values prevailing in society. If students are unable to identify the norms and values of the community, the feeling of alienation would arised (Emami, et al., 2011). Sojourner student experience separation from their families, so they have to make more decisions independently (Sharma, 2012). Barriers that cannot be managed properly can lead to stress. Stress among sojourner students has a negative impact on the health and emotional stability of these students (Brown, 2008). Unhealthy self-condition affects sojourner students in their academic process. Negative impacts can be avoided by providing support to sojourner students, one of which is their parents. Parental social support is positively related to sojourner student adjustment (Gunandar, 2017). Apart from support from parents, support from friendship is also known to be positively related to the adjustment of sojourner students (Lestari, 2017).

## 2. Methods

This study used qualitative research methods. Moleong (2005) explains that qualitative research is a method that intends to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects in a holistic manner by means of descriptions of a scientific relationship context. The approach used in this research is the phenomenological approach. Moustakas (1973) explains that phenomenology aims to describe experience not to analyze or explain. Researchers want to explore the experiences experienced by sojourner students in making adjustments.

Informants in this study were selected based on certain criteria tailored to the objectives of the study. Informants in this study were four people students of S1 of universities in Yogyakarta . The four informants were sojourner students from various regions in Indonesia. The informant with the initials SN, KN, ZZ and R. SN informants came from Flores, KN came from P.Rote , ZZ came from Payakumbuh, West Sumatra and R came from Ambon, Maluku. Three students, namely SN, KN and ZZ are female and R is male.

The method used in this research is interviews. An interview is a conversation between two parties, namely the interviewer who asks the question and the interviewer who answers the question (Moleong, 2005). The interview that is used is a semi-structured type of interview. The data analysis method used in this research is the IPA (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) approach. Science is an approach that examines how individuals understand the main experiences in life (Smith et al., 2009).

## 3. Findings and Discussion

Based on the results of the study, it was found that two forms of adjustment carried out by sojourner students, namely intrapersonal and interpersonal. Interpersonal adjustment is related to the relationship between students and others. The form of interpersonal adjustment in informants is to maintain closeness with other people. Sojourner students maintain close relationships with the friends around them. When they feel bored, sojourner students and their boarding house friends go for a walk. Another form of interpersonal adjustment is building trust. Informants ZZ and SN tried to build trust from each other's parents. ZZ tries to build parental trust by sharing the benefits of engaging in prohibited activities. SN tried to explain to his father that he came to Yogyakarta to study and sent his college grades home as proof. The informants in this study tried to adapt themselves to the community around their place of residence by carrying out joint activities. Sojourner students participate in community activities such as making chants during a citizen carnival. Sojourner students also greet and chat with residents they meet. This causes the community to know and accept sojourner students.

The other form is intrapersonal adjustment. Intrapersonal self-adjustment means a form of adjustment for sojourner students with regard to themselves. The form of personal adjustment of sojourner students is learning and character changes. The form of learning carried out by sojourner students is learning Javanese. Even though it was wrong when practicing it, people around the students did not blame the sojourner students and thought it was funny. This increases the confidence of sojourner students. The next step for learning is knowing the communication patterns of the people in Yogyakarta. Sojourner students realize that there are words that have different meanings from those in their area of origin. For example the use of the word 'anjing', in the area where the informant R calls someone as 'anjing' means that the person is great and powerful. It is different in Yogyakarta, using the word 'anjing' to call another person is considered impolite. R who knows about this difference meaning of word does not use the word to address someone else. Other learning conducted by sojourner students is the use of technology. SN informants studied the use of computers and social media during college. SN technological knowledge obtained from school but not enough so. SN had difficulties while working on the college assignment.

Another form of intrapersonal adjustment is a change in character. Informant R realized that he had to be independent to wake up early because no parents would wake him up in the morning. The informant felt insecure because he thought his friends at the campus were cool and smart people. Informants feel afraid to hang out with their friends. However, the informants' friends accepted the informants well, so that the informants felt more confident about interacting with their friends. The compliments of the informant's friends also made the informant believe that he was the same as the others.

Sojourner students in making adjustments face several obstacles, namely academic, cultural, homesickness, discrimination, other people's expectations and financial problems. Cultural barriers experienced by sojourner students are related to communication norms. Informants ZZ Yogyakarta communication norms are different from their home regions. ZZ tries to be careful not to hurt other people's feelings when interacting. ZZ believes that people in Yogyakarta do not express their opinions or criticize them directly. It is different from ZZ and people in their hometown who are used to expressing their opinions. This made ZZ feel difficult and had been involved in conflicts with his friends because he was considered as riotous. SN encountered obstacles when studying at the campus because the lecturers used Javanese when teaching in their classroom.

Sojourner student faced an academic obstacles. Informants R, KN and SN come from eastern regions, which the quality of education in their home regions is not the same as other students. Informants find it difficult to follow courses at campus because of the types of material they obtained on the school was greatly different. ZZ's informants also had difficulty with the lessons because they did not match their interests. This has an effect on the informant's IP which is not as expected.

Informants SN and KN experienced financial constraints. KN and SN informants rely on scholarship money to make ends meet. However, the scholarship money received was not sufficient to meet the needs, so the informants had to save money. Informant R also experienced financial difficulties related to how to manage money. Informant R is often tempted to buy things so that the monthly money runs out prematurely.

The four informants in this study were living separately from their families, as their first time experience. Informants KN, ZZ and R experienced homesickness Informants ZZ and KN cried when researchers interviewed informants about parents. Informant ZZ experienced quite influential homesickness in his college. When experiencing homesickness, the ZZ informant postponed all of his work including doing class assignments. As the result, ZZ's course work was done by having scores just in moderate level. It were not an optimal achievement.

Another obstacle experienced by sojourner students is other people's expectations. The informants came to study in Yogyakarta with the hopes of their parents, family and society. Sojourner students are used as role models for others in order to match the achievements of sojourner students. However, this expectation becomes a burden for sojourner students because they feel they are not appropriate and are afraid of failing to meet these expectations. Informant R experienced discrimination when looking for boarding houses. R was rejected by the boarding house owner after the boarding house owner knew R came from the eastern area. R understands the behavior of the boarding house owner because according to him, boarding children who come from his area sometimes make a fuss and run away before paying the boarding money

Sojourner students get support from those around them in facing obstacles encountered while traveling. This support comes from parents, family, friends and lecturer. The parents of informants in this study provided support in material and moral forms. Sojourner students also received support from their families. KN and SN informants received support from their brothers for financial support and motivation.

Informant R get motivation and financial support from the uncle and aunt, because they were enthusiastic about going to college.

Support from friends was obtained by the four informants while traveling. Help from friends bring a calm form. Friends gave them a place to stay, lent me lecture books and practicum tools. Friends comfort sojourner students when they feel sad, and become places for students to complain. The SN informants received support from the teacher while traveling. When the SN informant thought about quitting college and returning to his hometown, the SN teacher motivated SN to continue studying

Another factor that plays a role in student adjustment is the character of sojourner students. SN and KN informants have been independent since they were in school. SN is used to working to pay school fees and other school needs. Informant KN sells corn at school to get pocket money. Another character of the informant is courage. The four informants were brave to study outside the region. The four informants dared to study in Yogyakarta even though they had no relatives in Jogja and had never been to Jogja. The frugal character appears on the SN informant. SN tries to save money so that the scholarship money he gets is enough to pay for living for a month and pay for college needs.

Based on the findings, the responses given by the subjects in the study attempted to align their internal drives with environmental demands. The finding factors in this study are support factors, barriers, character, intrapersonal and interpersonal adjustment.

The form of interpersonal adjustment that students do is to maintain closeness with friends. Overseas students actively initiate close relationships with others. Students receive support from their peers during the adjustment period. This is supported by Rufaida (2017) who explains that social support obtained from peers has an effective role in the adjustment of overseas students. Even though they have a close relationship, overseas students prefer relatives or group friends from their hometown to tell their problems than friends from overseas areas. Overseas students and their friends communicate via telephone or social media.

Establishing relationships and interacting with local residents is a form of student adjustment to the environment in which they live. The interaction that exists with the local community increases the intimacy of sojourner students with the local community. Feelings of alienation can be lost because of the student's sense of connection with sojourner areas (Rosenthal et al., 2007). A sense of being related to the area or local connectedness can help resilience and prevent depression in students who leave (Cheung & Yue, 2013). Building parental trust is a form of adjustment for interpersonal sojourner students. The trust given by parents is a form of support for sojourner students. Family support has an important role to play in improving the well-being of sojourner students (Cho & Haslam, 2010). The trust that sojourner students get from their parents makes students feel calm when carrying out their daily activities while traveling.

Sojourner students also formed an intrapersonal adjustment, i.e adjustments with regard to himself. The first form of intrapersonal adjustment is learning. Researchers found that a form of adjustment for sojourner students was learning to master technology. Being aware of community communication patterns is a form of self-learning adjustment for sojourner students in this study. Awareness of communication patterns shows the existence of cultural empathy among sojourner students. Cultural empathy is one of the predictors of student adjustment (Kağnıcı, 2012). Another form of self-adjustment learning is that the informant learns about the local language. Overseas students in this study tried to learn Javanese in order to communicate with the community. This is supported by the research of (Yussof & Chelliah, 2011) which explains that local language skills are positively related to self-adjustment.

The form of self-adjustment made by sojourner students is character change. One that influences a person's behavior is the environment around him. The new environment without families slowly requires sojourner students to independently take care of all their needs. Sojourner students must find ways to solve the problems they are facing. Self-confidence is a form of subsequent character change. Students have increased confidence in the praise and support they get when interacting with others. This is supported by Hutteman et al. (2015) suggest that students who wander have increased self-esteem than students who don't.

The adjustment of sojourner students does not always run smoothly. In this study, researchers found four obstacles that occurred in sojourner students. The four obstacles are academic, cultural, discrimination, financial, homesick, and pressure from others. This is supported by research conducted by Tseng & Newton (2002) which states that there are four obstacles faced by sojourner students, namely life in general, academic adjustment, socio-cultural adjustment, and psychological adjustment.

The first obstacle is the academic barrier. In this study, the causes of academic barriers were due to differences in interests, differences in course material with schools and coursework. Lots of college

assignments cause stressful sojourner students and experience weight loss. This is supported by Brown (2008) research that many college assignments are the sources of the student's stress.

The next obstacle is the cultural difference between the origin and the sojourner areas. Sojourner students experience the challenges of cultural differences between their native and northern regions. This finding is supported by Tseng & Newton (2002) who explain that cultural differences are one of the challenges faced by sojourner students. Cultural differences can be a source of stress and conflict for students if they are not considered.

The obstacle experienced by sojourner students is the feeling of homesickness. The first experience of living in a place far from the family causes students to experience homesickness. This is supported by Vingerhoets (in Vantilburg & Vingerhoets, 2005) which defines homesickness as a problem that occurs as a result of being separated from home. The strongest feeling of homesickness emerged with informant ZZ. This is influenced by the parenting style of parents who tend to be protective. This parenting style can be related to the culture of the ZZ ethnic group, namely the Minangkabau. Minangkabau people encourage men to migrate more than women. Women are the main decision makers in the family and the owners of high inheritance assets, namely land and houses (Naim, 1979). This big role requires Minang women to live in the hometown.

Another obstacle experienced by overseas students is discrimination. The form of discrimination was rejected by the boarding house owner. This is supported by the research of Sandhu & Asrabadi (1994) which explains that one of the obstacles received by overseas students is discrimination. The discrimination against easterners in Jogja is influenced by the stereotype that eastern people are considered troublemakers. However, there is an interesting finding, namely, of the three informants who came from the east, only R experienced discrimination related to boarding houses. Although the physical characteristics of R, SN and KN indicate that all three come from the east, informants SN and KN did not experience this. This difference in acceptance can be influenced by the gender of the informants R, SN and KN. SN and KN are female and R are male. This is supported by research by Apollo and Ancok (2003) which explains that the tendency of aggressiveness in men is higher than in women. The difference in the tendency of aggressiveness is what encourages people to accept female boarders more than boys.

Another obstacle is the burden of other people's expectations. People around students hope that students will succeed in lectures and become an example for others. However, this expectation is considered a burden by overseas students because they are afraid that they will not be able to meet the expectations of others. This is in accordance with the research of Donovan & Johnson (2005) which explains that pressure from others to succeed is one of the obstacles for students.

The obstacles experienced by sojourner students can be overcome with the support of those around the sojourner students. Supporting factors are the first factors that support student adjustment. There are four supporting factors that influence each other, namely the nuclear family, extended family, friends and teachers. The support provided by the family in this study was in the form of financial, motivation, advice and suggestions. This support makes it easier for students to carry out their activities and reduce the possibility of stress. It is supported by Mallinkrodt & Leong (1992) in his research that explains that family support has positively relationship on student stress

The four respondents said that they received support from friends. The presence of friends helps sojourner students to make adjustments. Friend is a source of social support to be a good mental source in managing distress and loneliness (Olivas, M. & Li, 2006); Reilly, Ryan & Hickey, 2005). The interesting thing that was found by researchers from this study was that although students had good relations with friends, sojourner students did not build deep friendships with friends abroad. Students prefer friends from high school in the same area to tell their problems. Even though they did not meet, sojourner students and friends communicated by telephone or social media.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that when students enter the sojourner places they will respond by making adjustments. Self-adjustment is influenced by supporting factors and the character of sojourner students. The obstacles experienced by students while traveling can be overcome by the interaction between these two factors. Without support, it will be difficult for sojourner students to make adjustments. Difficulty in making adjustments affects the academic achievement of sojourner students.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that in the adjustment of sojourner students there are five factors that influence each other, namely supporting factors, individual character, obstacles, character, intrapersonal and interpersonal abilities. The dominant inhibiting factors that arise are academic and cultural factors. Adjustments are made so that the behavior of students is in accordance

with the norms prevailing in society. It is hoped that with good interaction it can increase the attachment of sojourner students and not cause conflicts in the future. Forms of adjustment that can be done are interacting with the community on a daily basis and participating in community activities.

Sojourner students also make academic adjustments so that students are not left behind and can compete with their friends. Supporting factors possessed by sojourner students in this study came from family, extended family, friends, and teachers. The self-adjustment of sojourner students is also influenced by the character of the students, namely thrifty, brave and independent.

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