

STUDENT EXCHANGE: CULTURAL IDENTITY OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING STUDENTS

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Abstract: The student exchange program provides opportunities for students to meet each other and recognize the culture of the foreign regions that host them in an atmosphere of tolerance and multiculturalism. This article aims to analyze the level of cultural identity possessed by Guidance and Counseling students returning from a student exchange program. This study uses a quantitative approach using a descriptive survey method. The research sample consisted of 30 Guidance and Counseling students with cultural differences who participated in student exchange programs at the National and International levels with a minimum length of stay of 6 months. The instrument used was a questionnaire about the cultural identity of origin which was adapted from *The Utrecht-Management of Identity Commitments Scale* (The U-MICS). The results of the study were analyzed using the average formula and the help of the SPSS program. The results showed that 63.3% of BK students' cultural identity was in the high category.

Keywords: Cultural Identity, Guidance and Counseling Students, Multiculturalism, Cultural Differences, The Student Exchange

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of student exchange both at the National and International levels in universities is not a new thing in various countries, including Indonesia. (Naully & Fransisca, 2015). Students who take part in student and youth exchange programs are allowed to meet each other and recognize the culture of the foreign regions that host them in an atmosphere of tolerance and multiculturalism (Haj-yehia & Erez, 2018). Students interact with various groups, live as part of a group, study in groups, and spend free

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time in groups (Quintana, 2007). When a person is required to meet someone who has a different cultural background, he will surely experience anxiety or uncertainty when interacting (Jasmarnisa & Ersya, 2019). However, when a person is required to meet other people with different cultural backgrounds, he or she will understand more about cultures other than their own (Normadaniyah, Sanusi, 2019).

Based on Erikson's theory of ego development, individuals in late adolescence and early adulthood have the characteristics of a desire to explore a culture that is greater than at other stages of development (Kranz & Goedderz, 2020). The development of one's ego identity occurs in one's interactions with others in a social context that is also related to ethnicity or culture. (Amin et al., 2020). Thus, spending extended periods outside their home region will challenge the sense of cultural identity among adolescents. As shown by previous research (Chiang et al., 2018), the challenge of a sense of cultural identity when returning to the area of origin, when asked to readjust to the culture of origin is that a person experiences an identity crisis in the aspects of consideration and commitment to his or her cultural identity (Karjalainen, 2020).

The term identity is closely related to the concept of self, but identity usually contains a sense of attachment that the individual has to the identity itself (Naully & Fransisca, 2015). Identity is a matter of similarities and what distinguishes each individual from other individuals. Identity is divided into three forms, namely cultural identity, social identity, and self-identity (Hapeta et al., 2018). 1) Cultural identity is a characteristic that arises because a person is a member of a particular ethnic group which includes learning about acceptance of tradition, innate nature, language, religion, and descent from a culture. 2) Social identity can be defined as how a person knows himself and others such as gender, age, social class, religion, and race. 3) Self-identity is the essence of all personalities that remain the same living inside a person even though the conditions around him are no longer the same as himself (Haryanti, 2017).

Cultural identity as part of identity is not just a self-concept that includes one's knowledge of membership in a social group but also relates to the values and emotional feelings attached to that membership. (III et al., 2017). Cultural identity is part of a person's self-image and self-perception. This cultural identity is formed when someone tries to answer the question "who am I?" in a broader context. Cultural identity is the cognitive perception

that individuals have of themselves about the surrounding community (Haj-yehia & Erez, 2018).

The formation of cultural identity begins in the basic form in childhood, namely the competence of social categorization and differentiation between groups. Individuals are mostly not aware of their cultural identity until they start to interact with their peers with different cultural backgrounds and realize that their home culture is the only one (Ashmore et al., 2004). The theory of identity formation is rooted in the theory of Erikson and Maria who developed the construction of identity as the interaction continued between the commitment, the exploration depth, and consideration of the commitment (Crocetti et al., 2010). Commitment refers to the enduring choices that individuals have made regarding the mental domains they developed and the confidence they gain from those choices. In-depth exploration represents the extent to which individuals think actively about the commitments they have made. Commitment reconsideration refers to the comparison of current commitments with possible alternative commitments (Crocetti et al., 2015).

Multicultural competence is very important to be mastered by Guidance and Counseling (BK) students because it is related to what they see, understand what they see and how to express it. BK students will be prepared as prospective counselors who in the field will meet counselees who come from different cultural backgrounds. Lack of understanding of cultural identity, and how it can affect various aspects of life can be a source of conflict and obstacles in interpersonal relationships (multicultural counseling process) (Permatasari et al., 2016). Therefore, the existence of a student exchange program offers BK students many opportunities for cross-cultural encounters. This program can assist in the process of forming a student's cultural identity as a prospective multicultural counselor.

This research reveals the formation of cultural identity owned by BK students who return from student exchange programs both nationally and internationally. The research focus is on home culture, where they have to readjust to the macro and micro levels.

METHOD

Respondents in this study were Guidance and Counseling students with characteristics; male and female, returning from a student exchange program both domestically and abroad with a minimum duration of 6 months. The number of respondents was 30 students consisting of 9 men and 21 women.

Respondents who have participated in foreign student exchanges consist of 8 people and 22 people within the country. The students came from various universities; Bung Hatta University (1), Medan State University (2), Padang State University (13), Jakarta State University (2), Syiah Kuala University (2), Yogyakarta State University (5), Surabaya State University (3), University Indonesian Education (1) and Ganesha University of Education (1).

To get accurate data, the instrument home cultural identity *U-MICS* Crocetti (Dimitrova et al., 2015; Kranz & Goedderz, 2020) was developed which is managed using an online form using an answer scale ranging from 1 (very inappropriate) to 5 (very suitable). The instrument aspect is about: 1) Commitment, 2) In-depth exploration, 3) Reconsideration of commitment (Crocetti et al., 2015).

This study uses a descriptive survey method. Research involves using self-reports to clarify the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of the target group (Creswell, 2012; Houser, 2020). The research steps carried out include: the researcher communicates through the online media *Whatsapp* to the research target to obtain the instrument. The instruments were distributed by the researchers and some others asked for the help of friends to distribute the instruments to parties according to the criteria to help carry out the research. The results of the study were analyzed using the average formula and the help of the SPSS program.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

The research findings on the cultural identity of BK students are the result of the administration of cultural identity instruments that have been processed and show that in general the average cultural identity score of BK students can be seen as a whole in three aspects in Table 1.

Tabel 1
Student Cultural Identity Guidance and Counseling

No	Aspect Home Cultural Identity	Level			
		Very High	High	Medium	Low
		%	%	%	%
1	Commitment	73,3	16,7	3,3	6,7
2	In-depth exploration	16,7	63,3	16,7	3,3
3	Reconsideration of commitment	10	50	33,3	6,7
4	Overall	23,3	63,3	13,3	0,0

Based on Table 1 above, it is known that the level of the cultural identity of BK students seen in the aspect of commitment is in the very high category of 73.3%, high 16.7%, moderate 3.3%, and low 6.7%. From the results of this study, it is known that BK students who take part in the student exchange program are very committed to the cultural values of their origin. Adolescents who have achieved a strong commitment show a well-structured self-concept. Furthermore, commitment is associated with cultural identity, indicating that BK students who participate in student exchange programs feel closer to the values of their home culture.

In the aspect of in-depth exploration, it is known that the level of deep exploration of BK students towards cultural values is in the very high category of 16.7%, high 63.3%, moderate 16.7%, and low 3.3%. From this research, it is known that BK students who return from the student exchange program can explore in-depth their home culture. Individuals seeking new information about their old commitments are often characterized by an intellectual curiosity in dealing with identity issues. (Crocetti et al., 2010).

Furthermore, on the aspect of *reconsideration of commitment*, it is known that BK students are in the very high category of 10%, high 50%, moderate 33.3%, and low at 6.7%. From the results of this study, it is known that BK students who return from the student exchange program can consider their commitment to the culture of their home region. Overall, the cultural identity of BK students who returned from the student exchange program was in the very high category of 23.3%, high 63.3%, moderate 13.3%. It can also be seen in the following histogram:

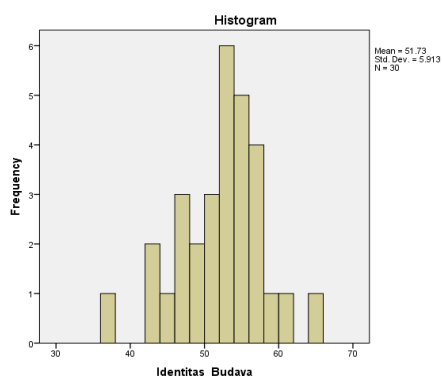


Figure 1. Bar diagram of the results of data processing on the Cultural Identity of Guidance and Counseling Students.

The results of the study stated that 63% of the cultural identity of BK students was in the high category. Most people are not aware of their cultural identity until they start interacting with their peers from different cultural backgrounds. They will learn to perceive themselves (or their culture) through the views of friends from other cultures (Kranz & Goedderz, 2020). This study proves that student exchange can contribute to the formation of student cultural identity. This is in line with the opinion (Sussman, 2000), an ongoing relationship with a new culture can result in strengthening the identity of the original (original) culture. The formation of cultural identity is a continuous interaction between commitment, in-depth exploration, and reconsideration of commitment (Crocetti et al., 2010).

Viewed from the aspect of commitment, BK students who return from the student exchange program 73.3% are in the very high category. From this research, it is known that 22 out of 30 BK students are highly committed to their home culture. They are committed that their original/indigenous cultural values: (1) give them comfort in living their life and future, (2) make them more confident/confident in themselves, (3) and optimistic in facing the future.

Judging from the aspect of in-depth exploration, BK students who returned from the student exchange program 63.3% were in the high category. From this research, it is known that 19 out of 30 students have a high desire to explore their original values/culture. Such exploration can be in the form of (1) seeking information about new or unknown origin cultures, (2) reflecting on any information received about the original culture, (3) and talking to other people about the values/original culture.

Judging from the aspect of reconsideration of commitment, BK students who returned from the student exchange program were 50% in the high category. This means that 15 out of 30 BK students have a high commitment to reconsideration of the values / culture of their origin by; (1) thinking about adopting other people's different cultures, (2) looking for other people's different cultural values, (3) finding out other people's opinions about the values of their original culture.

Guidance and counseling students are prepared to become multicultural counselors. The existence of this student exchange program will bring new knowledge that is very closely related to the background of cultural groups (Karjalainen, 2020). This knowledge will influence students to interact with other people. Students must be able to raise awareness of the culture or background that affects themselves and others in social interaction. Jackson

(Permatasari et al., 2016) suggests that to achieve multicultural awareness, one must first recognize oneself (have a cultural identity). Knowing yourself is not about how to build a relationship with a world that has cultural diversity, but rather about how to build an individual's own culture that is diverse with other worlds that are also diverse. Thus, BK students must recognize that within themselves, they have cultural diversity, so that they can develop an awareness that everyone has cultural diversity so that in multicultural counseling they find cultural differences between themselves and other people, then he as a counselor will view them as a fair thing.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of the study, it is known that: (1) 63% of BK students who return from student exchange programs are at a high level of cultural identity category, (2) Viewed from the aspect of commitment, BK students who return from student exchange programs are 73.3% are in the very high category, (3) Seen from the aspect of in-depth exploration, BK students who return from the student exchange program 63.3% are in the high category, (4) Judging from the aspect reconsideration of commitment, BK students returning from student exchange 50% is in the high category. Student exchanges can contribute to the formation of a student's cultural identity. Ongoing relationships with new cultures can result in strengthening the identity of the original (original) culture.

The results of this study can enrich the existing literature in the realm of academic writing for publication purposes. However, due to time constraints and the number of respondents who are only 30 people, the researcher recommends further researchers to increase the number of respondents, it is also expected to use research methods that can examine cultural identity more deeply such as interviews and observations as well as to conduct broader studies on cultural identity. students about multicultural counseling.

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