

CHINESE MUSLIM INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS'
PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENTS IN MALAYSIA

BY

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ABSTRACT

International students are growing in numbers in Malaysian college and university campuses since the commercialization of education at the tertiary level introduced in the 1990's. More significantly, there is an increase in Muslim students' populations from different parts of the world in Malaysia. As an example, there is a substantial increase of Muslim students from the People Republic of China (RPC) in Malaysian campuses who regard Malaysia as a peaceful and developing Muslim country. This exploratory phenomenological study using qualitative data analysis to explore the thoughts and experiences of Muslim students from the RPC Chinese at different universities in Malaysia. Six Muslim students from RPC were interviewed in this study. Based on the data obtained from the interviews, the findings were categorized into several themes. Most Muslim students from the RPC found difficulty in adjusting with the new environment such as Malaysia especially climate, food and infrastructures available. Students also found that language was a barrier for interactions and communications with locals. At the individual level, students suffered from loneliness and homesickness was common especially among new students in Malaysia. Students also found that their financial management was a challenge. The study also found several coping strategies adopted by students in their pursuit of knowledge in Malaysia. Fortunately, the students felt easy to adjust in Malaysia as their plights were supported by university management, faculty members, local students, and friends. In general, the students concluded that Malaysia is a peaceful and beautiful country with kindness, toleration, and helpfulness of her people. Finally, the students recommended that services and facilities should be improved for all international students in Malaysia.

خلاصة البحث

يتزايد عدد الطلبة الأجانب في الكليات والجامعات الماليزية منذ تسويق التعليم العالي في ماليزيا في التسعينيات. والأهم من ذلك ، توجد زيادة ملحوظة في عدد الطلبة المسلمين من مختلف أنحاء العالم في ماليزيا. على سبيل المثال، الزيادة الكبيرة في عدد الطلبة المسلمين من جمهورية الصين الشعبية (RPC) في الجامعات الماليزية الذين يعتبرون ماليزيا دولة إسلامية مسالمة ومتطورة. تهدف هذه الدراسة الفينومينولوجية (الظاهراتية) الاستكشافية النوعية إلى استكشاف أفكار وتجارب الطلبة المسلمين من جمهورية الصين الشعبية في جامعات مختلفة في ماليزيا، حيث تمت مقابلة ستة من هؤلاء الطلبة. وبناءً على البيانات التي تم الحصول عليها من هذه المقابلات، تم تصنيف النتائج إلى عدة مواضيع وأفكار رئيسية. وجدت الدراسة أن معظم الطلبة المسلمين من جمهورية الصين الشعبية واجهوا صعوبة في التكيف مع البيئة الجديدة وخاصة المناخ والأكل والبنى التحتية المتوفرة. وشكّلت اللغة عائقاً أمام تفاعلاتهم وتواصلهم مع السكان المحليين. وعلى المستوى الفردي، عانى الطلبة من الشعور بالوحدة، وكان الشعور بالحنين إلى الوطن شائعاً خاصة بين الطلبة الجُدد في ماليزيا. ووجدت الدراسة أن إدارة الطلبة المالية كانت بمثابة تحدّ لهم. كما أشارت الدراسة إلى العديد من إستراتيجيات التكيّف التي تبناها الطلبة لمساعدتهم في سعيهم للحصول على المعرفة في ماليزيا. ولحسن الحظ ، شعر الطلبة بسهولة التكيّف في ماليزيا بسبب دعمهم من قِبَل إدارة الجامعة وأعضاء هيئة التدريس والطلبة المحليين والأصدقاء في مواجهة صعوباتهم. بشكل عام ، يَخْلُص الطلبة إلى أنّ ماليزيا هي بلد مسالم وجميل مع تمُّتعها باللُّطف والتسامح وتعاون ودعم شعبها. أخيراً، أوصى الطلبة بتحسين الخدمات و البنى التحتية لجميع الطلبة الأجانب في ماليزيا.

APPROVAL PAGE

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at the IIUM or other institutions.

Sainula Tuerxun

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*This dissertation is dedicated to my parents for laying the foundation of what I turned
out to be in life.*

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All glory is due to Allah, the Almighty whose Grace and Mercies have been with me throughout the duration of my program. During this period of time I have lost many of my beloved family members while trusting in Allah and enduring all these challenges. I could not imagine that I would ever complete this study, but *al-hamdulillah*, I have managed this task and I strongly believe that nothing is impossible if Allah wills it.

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