

**SOCIO-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS IN MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITIES
IN THE NORTHERN REGION OF PENINSULAR MALAYSIA**

By

ELCI DITA UTAMI

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ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan dua pemboleh ubah bebas iaitu lokus kawalan dan sokongan sosial terhadap penyesuaian sosio-budaya dalam kalangan pelajar antarabangsa di universiti awam di Wilayah Utara Semenanjung Malaysia. Secara keseluruhan, seramai 120 orang pelajar antarabangsa di Universiti Malaysia di Wilayah Utara Semenanjung Malaysia telah terlibat dalam kajian ini. Analisis regresi telah digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis kajian. Keputusan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa lokus kawalan luaran mempunyai kesan yang signifikan dan positif terhadap usaha bersifat peribadi, rasa berkaitan budaya, dan empati budaya. Selain itu, didapati bahawa lokus kawalan dalaman mempunyai pengaruh yang tinggi dan negatif kepada empati budaya. Di samping itu, sokongan sosial dari keluarga dan lain-lain yang ketara memberi kesan penting dan buruk kepada rasa berkaitan budaya. Akhir sekali, sokongan sosial daripada rakan-rakan bukan peramal yang signifikan bagi semua dimensi dalam pelarasan sosio-budaya. Implikasi, batasan kajian, serta cadangan penyelidikan akan datang juga dibincangkan.

ABSTRACT

The present study aims to examine the influence of locus of control and social support on socio-cultural adjustment among international student in public universitites in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. A total of 120 international students in Malaysian Universities in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia participated in the study. Regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis. The results showed that the external locus of control had a significant and positive impact on impersonal endeavour, cultural relatedness and cultural empathy. Moreover, it was found that internal locus of control had a significant and negative influence on cultural empathy. Further, social support from family and significant others had a significant and negative impact on cultural relatedness. Lastly, social support from friends was not a significant predictor of all dimension in socio-cultural adjustment. Practical and theoritical implication, limitations of the study and recommendations for future research were also highlighted.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia
LOC	Locus of Control

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of study, the problem statement, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study and also the operational definition of the key terms used in this study.

1.1 Background of study

In the previous years, travelling to places further away from the area of origin is rarely done because it is difficult and limited access to transportation. Along with the advent of the era of globalization which is characterized by the development of technology and rapid transportation, things started to change (Sumer, 2009). The rapid development of technology and transportation have ultimately led to a lot of people from one country to visit other countries. Individuals who are traveling to another country for a specific purpose within a period tentatively called sojourner (Church, 1982). Sojourners travelled to another country with a variety of different interests, such as in the field of economic, social, political, military, education, and so forth. One area that is currently experiencing rapid growth is education. In this 21st century, internationalization of higher education is an essential issue which drives the high degree of enthusiasm by many students. The demand for higher education makes education turned into the key for each entryway,

only those who are educated have a tendency to succeed in life compare to the uneducated. A lot of people argue that the opportunities and the future are in the hands of individuals who are educated. Subsequently many knowledge seekers spend much time and wealth to pursue higher education in foreign countries that are totally contrast from their own regarding of culture, language and way of living. For the developed countries such as USA, UK, Canada, Japan and France, the internationalization of higher education is not something new. They have been practiced for a long period. But according to Mazzarol & Soutar (2002), many students from developing countries seems to have strong interest and significant stand up in the quantity of students to study abroad as there are limited approach to education in their home country. Almost in every country there are international students who come from other countries and live there to study. Anyhow, not all countries have similar amount of foreign students. There are many factors that cause to have many foreign students in a particular country and less in another country because different country provides different quality of knowledge. According to Richardson & McKenna (2001), due to internationalization of higher education, the academic institutions such as colleges and universities become international enterprises where students who come from diverse countries across the world get together to gain knowledge and skills. The hosts countries that provide education service are likewise have economic and social benefit from the international students in their countries. International students in the respective countries contribute more economic benefits and create plenty of jobs for the local people through their tuition fees and living expenses like housing, health insurance and transportation.

Initially, the dominant destination of foreign students is in the Americas, Europe, and Australia. But with the pace of education increasingly dynamic world, countries in Asia have also begun to develop the field of education up to par with the quality of education that is contained in the Americas, Europe, and Australia. The most desirable destination countries in Asia are China (45%), followed by Japan (15%), South Korea (12%), Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia (7%) (BBC News, 2009). Nevertheless, Malaysia is quick getting to be education center by attracting many students from Africa, Asia and middle-east. Holding 11th spot in the world's most preferred study destination list, Malaysia is one of the education destinations of many international students from across the world (ASIAN Correspondent, 2011). Malaysia recognize that education as a critical asset of the nation and has identified as one of the sectors for the further growth and environment. According to Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE), in 2013 there were more than 103,000 international students come to study in Malaysia to benefit from its world-class teaching techniques and even avail of its specially tailored programmes for foreign students. Malaysia has managed to risen the international student population above 90,000 or equivalent of around 2% of the total international student population in the world and aims to attract at least 200,000 of international student by the year 2020 (The Malaysian Insider, 2011). It is no wonder then that a 2010 US Newsweek World's Best Countries survey put Malaysia in the top 8 in its education category among upper middle-income countries. However, based on the statistical breakdown provided by the MOHE (2010), the top five countries from which the majority of students were derived in Malaysia were Iran, China, Indonesia, Yemen and Nigeria.

Table 1.1 International Student Enrollment in Malaysia, 2010

Place of Origin	Number of Students	Percent of Total
Iran	11,823	13.6%
China	10,214	11.8%
Indonesia	9,889	11.4%
Yemen	5,866	6.7%
Nigeria	5,817	6.7%
Libya	3,930	4.5%
Sudan	2,837	3.3%
Saudi Arabia	2,252	2.6%
Bangladesh	2,041	2.3%
Botswana	1,911	2.2%
All Others	30,343	34.9%

Source: MOHE as cited in Institute of International Education website

Apart from the fact that foreign students are gaining knowledge in overseas, they are also having a few difficulties with regard to cultural diversity. There are many complex challenges and difficulties facing by students travelling to other countries to obtain college degree or other educational courses, particularly if their home country culture is strikingly not the same as the host country culture. There are some countries that have a cultural background that is totally different from the existing culture in Malaysia. Foreign students who continue their education in countries with different cultural backgrounds will encounter problems of adjustment in the first six months of a move to the country of destination. Individuals will try to adapt even when faced with changes both within the individual themselves or their environment. All those diverse things are serious issues that students need to deal with in order to achieve their goals or

objectives.

According to Tseng (2002), there are four major categories of adjustment problems faced by international students namely general living, academic, socio-cultural, and personal psychological adjustment. General living adjustment includes adaptation to host country food, living environment, transportation, climate, and financial and health care systems. Effective learning skills to achieve academic success and personal psychological adjustment such as homesickness, loneliness, depression, and loss of identity are all examples of academic adjustment issues. This paper focuses on one of Tseng's categories which is socio-cultural adjustment (e.g., culture shock, culture fatigue, discrimination, new social/cultural customs, norms, regulations, and roles).

Many international students in Malaysia experience cultural adjustment challenges. The physical and psychological well-being of students, as well as their academic performance, can be impacted by these adjustment challenges (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001). According to Oberg (1960), these relatively short-term visitors to a new culture, who come for purposes other than permanent settlement, are prone to experience culture shock subsequent from the sudden loss of all familiar signs and symbols of everyday life, which occur with psychological stress and utilization of coping strategies to deal with the stresses encountered. A study led by Lin and Yi (1997) stated that numerous foreign students showed signs of depression, which resulted from low motivation and less concentration on social life and academic study. The blend of every one of those elements can result to the students a cultural shock which can influence their academic performance, and sometimes can lead them to fail their educational goals.

Many international students lose the common personality and much of the support that comes with proximity to family and peers (Pedersen, 1991). As a result, they often feel lonely as they struggle with the tasks of developing new relationships and rebuilding a support system (Hayes & Lin, 1994; Lewthwaite, 1997). In order to meet needs for their social support, many international students build the co-national in group community who provides new strong relationships and a sense of belonging to share familiar cultural values and practices. Hence, social support plays a crucial role in elevating students' adjustment to the local context.

In addition, a part of getting support from their family and friends, international students' locus of control (LOC) might be one of the factor to help them in adjusting into the new culture. Individual with an external LOC believe that outside parameters such as chance, luck, and powerful others control their lives, whereas those with an internal LOC believe their personal effort and ability determine the course of their lives (Rotter, 1966). Internal and external locus of control can explain in which international students can easily adapt during their socio-cultural adjustment process in the host country. This suggests that locus of control is of paramount importance in ensuring student's adjustment to the new environment.

Taking this into consideration, the objectives of this study are to examine the predicting role of locus of control & social support on the international student's socio-cultural adjustments.

1.2 Problem Statement

Pursuing a higher education in a foreign country is a dream of many people. This desire is constituted by a number of purposes, ranging from obtaining high-quality education, equipping themselves as prospective employees, and necessary for a country's economy in an era of globalization and knowledge-based economy today (Pandian, 2008). Apart from that, becomes foreign students bring important changes in every international student life. According to Bentley (2008), since arriving, international students have to face the challenges of adjustment to live and learn in a new environment, among others, get a place to stay, social security and driving license, register for courses, and learning to use the transport system. In other words, the international student experience a change or transition period. These major changes cause pressure that can lead to a kind of culture shock or a condition called by Redden (1975) as culture shock, a term used to describe spread negative emotions experienced by individuals who can be shown such individuals confusion in dealing with the environment. According Meintel (1973), the culture shock is more as a surprise discovery of self (self-discovery) will not shock other cultures. Because when entering a foreign culture and adapt to the new way of life, one must learn new things about themselves. In connection with the change of the conditions, adjustment necessary to the individual concerned because every human being constantly make adjustments in their social environment both internally and externally. Someone who is able to adjust will not experience the cultural commotion or suffered psychological shock. Key to the success of learning for international students is the

adjustment (Novera, 2004). In addition, the Church (1982) argued that the success of the transition, require removal or change of attitudes, values, and behavior of the old and learn new things in the vicinity.

The term of international students, according to Andrade (2006), refers to individuals who received at an educational institution on a student visa valid temporary and not the mother tongue speakers of English form. However, this restriction is too narrow because it only refers to students studying in the country with the English language. Therefore, referring to the opinion of Sakurako (2000) international students are foreign students who stay for a while in order to complete their education. These terms are often interchangeable because it has similarities with the term "temporary settlers" (sojourner). The difference is, according Gajdzik (2005) and Iversen (2009), sojourner includes businessmen, diplomats, foreign workers, students or volunteer workers who live in a new environment, not previously familiar and different over the medium term, usually for six months to five years and plan to return to the country of origin with a clear motive and certainly in terms of the reasons to stay in a foreign country. These two words have similarities with the concept defined expatriate Cohen (1977) as migrants who voluntarily and temporarily staying abroad for a specific purpose and will definitely go back to his country. In this study is with international students are foreign students who stay for a while to complete their education and are committed to return to his country. However, as a foreigner, of course they can also be categorized as a sojourner and expatriate.

According to Gayatri (2007), studying in college is a period full of tremendous stress, storm, tension and stress that is often referred to as phase terrible. Gajdzik (2005) stated

that any student, both undergraduate and graduate level, students of both domestic and foreign, must face a number of problems in the transition to college. Problems commonly encountered include academic pressures, financial problems, loneliness, interpersonal conflicts, difficulties changes and problems develop personal autonomy. However, according to Khawaja and Dempsey (2007), a number of these issues will be harder for international students to face due to the additional number of other issues e.g. culture shock, new habits, language barriers, and possible differences menu and feeding schedule. Such adjustments are sometimes so radical, that lead to difficulties in the process. Adjustment difficulties international students known as a term or phrase, such as "foreign student syndrome", "up-rooting disorder", "acculturative stress", or "international adjustment" (Khawaja & Dempsey, 2007), which describes the unique behavior of international students who experience tension and pressure. However, the literature generally choose the more common terms, i.e. adjustment. Adjustment, according to Chouhan and Shalini (2006), a very widely used and assumed to be the desired behavior, as well as a popular term used in a variety of contexts means of behavior management in relation to the environment. Similarly, Black (1988) states that the term "adjustment" refers to the ability of individuals to socialize with the environment and the extent to which the individual is able to function efficiently in society. In other words, the adjustment refers to the extent to which people feel psychologically comfortable with some aspects of the new environment. Calhoun and Acocella (1990) defines adaptation as a continuous interaction with ourselves, with others and with the world itself. The characteristics of a good adjustment by Haber, and Runyon (1984) is to have an accurate perception of reality, has a positive self-image, able to overcome the problem or deal with stress and anxiety, have good interpersonal

relationships, and the ability to express feelings. In the context of international students, Mehdizadeh and Scott (2005) characterizes adjustment as a procedure of connecting interactions between the individual characteristics of the understudies with the structure of the host community.

Understanding the process of adjustment is essential to the achievement of this short-term visitor population. From the arrival of international students in the host country, they will experience various and unexpected problems. Students may need to adjust to a new educational system, which differs extensively from the technique for study in their own particular nation (Mehdizadeh & Scott, 2005). There can be a few challenges in adjustment for the foreigner in acquiring suitable accommodation and desired food, whether for religious or individual reasons. There could be the probability that the host country may not give sufficient support for the overseas students. The students who collaborate with their own community and do not mix with other students from other cultures will neglect and fail to understand the culture of others and cannot accomplish their desired (Mahbood, 2004). Essentially, the students from different cultures have different habits, different values, and diverse methods for relating with each other.

It has become crucial to gain understanding of the relationship between locus of control, social support and socio-cultural adjustment among the international students in Malaysia. Limited studies are conducted to examine the relationship between locus of control, social support and socio-cultural adjustment specifically in terms of impersonal endeavors, cultural relatedness and cultural empathy in a single study. As such, this study provides a unique paradigm in understanding the student's adaptation process. To address these gaps, the present study aims to examine two predictors which are locus of

control and social support, and their impact on socio-cultural adjustment among international student in public universitites in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia.

1.3 Research questions

- i. Does locus of control influence socio-cultural adjustment among international students in Malaysian universities located in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia?
- ii. Does social support influence socio-cultural adjustment among international students in Malaysian universities located in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia?

1.4 Research objectives

- i. To examine the relationship between locus of control and socio-cultural adjustment of international students in Malaysia universities in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia.
- ii. To analyze the relationship between social support and socio-cultural adjustment of international students in Malaysia universities in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia.

1.5 Significance of study

Since many of international students enrolling in Malaysian universities, it becomes crucial to focusing on the needs of the students coming from different countries and cultures. Therefore, it seems particularly important to understand deeply the factors that might be influencing to the socio-cultural adjustment of international students in Malaysian University in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia in order to enhance their adjustment experiences. Literature reveals that international students face complex and challenging situations such as language problems, accommodation difficulties, misunderstandings, loneliness, less confidence, sense of loss, anxiety, confusion, and sense of isolation and alienation (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994; Lin & Yi, 1997). Moreover, they experience the same difficulties with host students such as stress of academic life, problems related to normal development of their age, leaving home, financial pressures, sharing life with strangers, and investigating what is expected from them in the university life (Spencer-Oatey & Xiong, 2006; Toyokawa & Toyokawa, 2002). It is obvious that international students need to cope with many life challenges.

This study is significant for several reasons. It will help International students who are willing to study in Malaysia in the future, as it gives students guidelines and what factors can help them to their socio-cultural adjustment process. It would help the universities, international offices, university counselors, academicians and staff of international student offices to know and understand the experiences and adjustment process of international university students in a foreign country. Moreover the results of this study can help counseling services to understand and learn about the international students' experience and collaborate with the university and other institutions interested in international students.

1.6 Operational Definition

1.6.1 Dependent Variables

Socio-Cultural Adjustment

Socio-cultural adjustment refers to culture specific skills, the ability to negotiate the host culture, or effectively interact with members of host cultures (Searle & Ward, 1990).

1.6.2 Independent Variables

Locus of Control

Locus of Control (LOC) is a psychological construct that identifies an individual's perception on the cause of events that they endure in their life (Grimes, Millea, & Woodruff, 2004).

- *Internal control* - Acceptation of events as a result of their own behavior and personality characteristics.

- *External control* - Acceptance of events as result of luck, fate and powerful others.

Social Support

Perceived social support defined as an individuals' impression of how resources can act as a support between stressful events and symptoms and comprises of three dimensions, namely family, friends and significant other. Family and friends are self-explanatory and significant other could be a supervisor, peer, colleague or any other person not explicitly characterized, but rather with whom the individual has contact consistently (Zimet, Dahlem, Simit, & Farley, 1988).

1.7 Summary of the chapter

This study consist of five chapters. Chapter one provide an introduction to the topic to be studied, purpose of the study, problem statement, research questions, objectives of the study, significant of the study, scope of the study, and definition of key terms.

Chapter two offers a review a related literature review, research framework. Under this chapter the link between locus of control and social support and socio-cultural adjustment were verified including the hypothesis.

Chapter three explain the methodology adopted. In this chapter, it includes with data collection procedures, instrumentations and also data analysis techniques. The findings of study are presented in Chapter four. This chapter explained the data obtain from three universities in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. While, conclusion reported on

the last Chapter which is Chapter five. This chapter discuss the conclusion, limitation, suggestion for future research and research implications.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Review of related literature

This chapter discussed the key terms of the research. A general introduction on socio-cultural adaptation, locus of control and social support is presented to highlight the variables understudy.

2.1. The conceptual background of socio-cultural adjustment

Foreign student stepping into another country differentiating from their original culture, might moreover face those challenges and obstacles as discussed above, both in academic and social integration. Foreign students may confront more boundaries in light of the fact that they have a tendency to be both financially and psychologically self-responsible. The pressure of being independent in a foreign country makes them feel

homesick, lonely, and isolated from host nationals. An exploration study directed by Lin and Yi (1997) concluded that many foreign students indicated side effects of misery, which were a consequence of a lack of concentration, and low inspiration concerning academic study and social life. If an international student would not be able to deal with these difficulties and adjust according to the host society, he or she may have a tendency to less fulfilled by their performance and even quit. Subsequently, adjustments to cultures with societies of host nations are similarly essential for international students.

According to Searle and Ward (1990), Socio-cultural adjustment can be characterized as the ability to fit in and to negotiate with the host society, or successfully communicate with individuals from host societies. It has been joins with variables that impact culture learning and obtaining of social aptitudes in the host society, like language fluency, cultural assimilation systems, length of residence in host culture and culture distance (Searle & Ward; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Sociocultural adjustment includes a comprehension of the new culture's norm and values. As specified by Masgorate and Ward (2006), sociocultural adjustment does not require international students to acknowledge a new set of a norm and values of the new culture, however it obliges them to be mindful of value differences and arranged successfully deal with them.

The common measures of sociocultural adaptation have examined the level of difficulty performing every day assignments, for example, understanding the local language, making friends, participating in social activities (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The cultural adjustment requests of international students can be generous because of the contrasts between their cultural backgrounds to the host country in light of the fact that different

cultures have diverse norms to guide. Bandura (1977) proposed that effective communication with lectures and companions in academic settings, and agreeable communications with neighborhood individuals in social circumstances are critical components in the successful adjustment of international students to the host country culture. Two other factors that have been indicated to potentially influence socio-cultural adjustment are locus of control (Zimet et al., 1988) and social support (Levenson's, 1974). Newcomers ought to unavoidably make adjustments in observation, attitude, and desires due to the difference between the old culture and the new surrounding culture (Chaney & Martine, 2005; Krapels & Davis, 2005). The requirement for understanding the new culture has a huge impact for the foreigner. As indicated by Chaney and Martin (2005), they explained about intercultural phenomenon which perfectly describes the difficulties confronted by international students: "At the point when individuals live in another society for a developed time of time, they have decisions to make concerning how a great part of the new culture they are going to acknowledge and to what degree the new culture will override, complement, or be rejected based on values and behaviors of the home culture" (pp. 103-104).

Socio-cultural adjustment can be extremely challenging. Aside from changes in job and academic obligations, the socio-cultural adjustment of foreign professionals or students incorporates their general adjustment in accordance with an alternate climate, a new culture, a variety of language barriers, local transportation, shopping, excitement, local food, and other general living conditions— adjustment to collaborating with host nationals outside of work and at work to build their comfort level when they are

assigned jobs or tasks (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, and Luk, 2005). The increasing number of international students place increased emphasis on colleges and universities to ensure the success of international students' adjustment to local cultures because lack of adjustment may cause dropout of overseas students. Students from overseas, similar to expatriates stepping into a foreign country differing from their original culture, may also confront those challenges and obstacles discussed above; both in academic work and social integration. Riedlinger (2008) explained that regularly issues surrounding transition and adjustment to life can be ascribed to nervousness and some of the time connected with fear of failure. She included that perhaps the most attempting part of the international students' experience is the way that while most students experience a comparative adjustment process, they have to deal with their feelings in segregation. Different cultures have different norms to guide behavior. Consequently, the cultural adjustment demands of international students can be generous because of the contrasts between their cultural backgrounds and to the host country. Surrounded by a new culture, international students may understand the differences between their own culture and the host country's culture. Subsequently, adjustments to cultures of host countries are equally important for international students.

2.2 Concept of Locus of Control

The concept of locus of control was initially formulated by Rotter (1954) is in a view of social learning theory. In this learning theory, Rotter proposes three fundamental aspects, specifically the potential behavior, expectations and values of the amplifier. As per Rotter (1954), locus of control refers to the degree to which individuals believe that

they can control events that influence them. Locus of control can considerably influence individuals in observing and interacting with their surroundings. For this situation locus of control distinguish between internal and external. Locus of control is one of the four measurements of self-assessment, neuroticism, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. The main idea of self-evaluation was initially analyzed by Judge, Locke, and Durham (1997), and because it has indicated to be able to predict some of the work, specifically, work satisfaction and work performance. In a subsequent study, Hakim et al. (2002) argued the concept of locus of control, neuroticism, self-efficacy and self-esteem were measured together as a single factor. Accordingly, Widyastuti (2013) stated that the extent to which individuals perceive events in his life throughout his life as a result of his actions, and can be controlled by individuals themselves or controlled by factors beyond personal-called internal locus of control. Nonetheless, if international students have not been able to adjust and highly dependent on others, the students have an external locus of control is a form of an individual's belief that he can not manage and can not get by to adapt with the situation and believe that everything happens because of factors fate, fortune and others (Nurhidayah & Hidayanti, 2009).

External locus of control prompts to the belief, that the behavior, results or certain events brought about by destiny, fate, fortunes and dictated by outside powers or other (Rotter, 1954) Individuals who have an external locus of control have a tendency to conclude that something happened to him due to the strength of the outside of him, so that the individual is not responsible for their actions. Such individuals have a tendency to reactive and reject unpleasant situation (Gomez, 1998), so that these individuals tend to be bound by maladaptive behavioral patterns that can prompt to self-satisfaction does

not want to be associated between behavior and pen-achievement results. Students who consider that the problems and troubles happen because the lecturers, student activities, and lack of motivation of others are students who have an external locus of control. Students who have the locus of control will react to the views and beliefs into the shape attitudes and strategies to deal with issues or events that occur. Individuals with an external locus of control have less control over their lives and they believe that what is happening to them is caused by factors from outside themselves. (Samaei, Ramezani, and Semnani, 2012). As indicated by Rotter (1954), a factor in the external aspect to consider is the fate of the individual successes and failures got officially bound and cannot change the events that have happened, good fortunes with respect each individual has the luckiness, socioeconomic judge others based on the level of welfare, and influence others to expect assistance from others and assume that people who have a higher power, can influence their behavior.

From the above statement can be concluded that the locus of control is a person's belief about the source of that control events in his life. The source Rotter (1954), divided into two parts; internal, for those who believe that every incident is related to his behavior, and external for those who believe that the incident was caused by factors outside himself that he cannot control.

2.3. Concept of Social Support

One factor that appears to improve adjustment is social support, which may provide

international students with opportunities to develop an understanding of the new culture. Copeland and Norell (2002) expressed that the part of social support on international adjustment considered as essential in light of the fact that an overseas assignment presents both the disruption of established social support networks and the challenge to develop new one. Sarason and Sarason (1982) characterized social support is the existence or availability of people on whom we can rely, people who let us know that they care about, value, and love us. Social support is a general term that cover three distinct types of support: perceived support, enacted support and social connectedness. There are different measures for each of these types of support, and the types are only weakly related to each other (Barrera, 1986; Dunkel-Schetter & Bennett, 1990; Lakey & Drew, 1997). However, this study explained about perceived support by using Zimet et al. (1988) Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support to measure the social support of international students. The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS; Zimet et al., 1988) seeks to measure the perceived adequacy of social support from the three sources of family (FA), friends (FR), and significant others (SO). The MSPSS has been widely used by many researchers who are looking for a short, clear, and accurate scale to measure social support.

According Wills and Filer (2001), perceived support is the subjective judgment that family and friends would provide quality assistance with future stressors. Similarly, Demeray and Malecki (2002) claimed that perceived social support is an individual's perception of general support or specific supportive behaviors that are available from the people around the person that encourages the working or acting as a buffering or mediating tool. The buffering effect of social support as expressing that when an

individual feeling of belongingness is denied, emotionally supportive network replaces with it. Additionally, they report that it is conceivable that belongingness itself can address the issues that are fundamental for an ordinary and solid life (Cohen & McKay, 1984).

Individuals with high perceived-support believe that they can rely on their family and friends or companions to give quality assistance during times of trouble. This assistance may incorporate with listening to the stressed person on discuss about troubles, expressing communicating warmth and love, offering advice or another method for looking at the problem, giving particular help or simply spending time with the stressed person. As an evidence for this statement, the researcher studied the research which was conducted by by Chirkov, Safdar, Guzman, & Playford (2008). The scholars conducted the research among international students in Canada involving 72 students found that when the students get support, they are more taught about the host culture and are motivated to be open and to accept Canadian culture, and even they are better emotional, physical, sociocultural, and academically adjusted. Specifically, students with lower levels of social support reported higher levels of depression. Besides depression, they additionally found that social support also contributed significantly to the variance in anxiety, particularly students with lower levels of social support were more likely to have higher levels of anxiety. Indeed, recent work has highlighted the importance of social support network and the various key outcomes such as reduced stress, improved coping and improvements in the emotional and physical well-being during the adjustment process.

2.4 Underlying Theories

In this study, the researcher had used two theories to understand the link of theoretical paradigm and variables of the study. The researcher had used Locus of Control Theory and Social Support Theory in this study. Further, usage of theory in the research is relate to discovery of the research with the theory to contribute additional empirical evidence.

2.4.1 Locus of Control Theory

The theory of Locus of Control (LOC) was derived from Rotter's Social Learning Theory of 1954 (Rotter, 1982). Social learning theory expect individuals take in specific behaviors through observing and imitating the behaviors of others, and afterward being rewarded or punished for behaving that way. The main idea in Julian Rotter's social learning theory is that personality represents an interaction of the individual with his or her environment. Rotter portrays personality as a relatively stable set of potentials for responding to situations in a particular way. Thereafter, Rotter published his Locus of Control Scale to measure generalized perceptions of individuals toward internal or external LOC.

Locus of control refers to an individual's beliefs about what determines his or her rewards or outcomes in life. Where an individual falls along the range decides the degree to which they accept they can influence the events around them. Locus of control can be

classified from internal to external. People with a strong internal locus of control accept that the responsibility for whether or not they get reinforced ultimately lies with themselves. A person with an internal locus of control believes that their rewards in life are guided by their own choices and efforts. If they do not succeed, they believe it is due to their own lack of effort.

Interestingly, externals believe that their life are controlled by luck, chance, or powerful others. Therefore, they see little impact of their own efforts on the amount of reinforcement they receive. A person with an external locus of control believes that rewards or outcomes are determined by either luck or others with more power than them. If they do not succeed, they believe it is due to forces outside of their control.

2.4.2 Stress and Coping Theory

Social support has been included as a part of this study because it emerged as an important component of international student socio-cultural adjustment conducted by researcher. The scientific interest in social support comes from paper published in the 1970s demonstrating a relationship between psychiatric disorders and the absence of adequate social support. The dominant theoretical perspective in social support research draws from stress and coping theory (Lakey & S. Cohen, 2000). The stress and coping perspective, which is similar to the stress buffering model (Cassel, 1976, Cobb, 1976) has been the most widely studied theoretical model in social support and has been found to be an important predictor in psychological adaptation during cross-cultural transitions

(e.g., Brisset et al., 2010; O'Reilly et al., 2010; Safdar et al., 2003; Safdar et al., 2009; Sumer et al., 2008; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000).

Stress and coping theory undergird the foundation of contemporary acculturation theory and research (Berry, 1997; Cervantes & Castro, 1985). Stress and coping perspective stands as the most popular and widely applied conceptual scheme in studying acculturation and cultural transition in the existing literature (Ward & Kennedy, 2001) and is expected to continue to dominate acculturation research for many years to come (Ward, 2001). According to this theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004), stress occurs when people interpret situations negatively (i.e., negative appraisals) and stress leads to health problems, in part, insofar as people do not employ adequate coping responses (e.g., problem solving, emotion regulation). Social support promotes health by protecting people from the adverse effects of stress (i.e., stress buffering; Cohen & Wills, 1985). It does so by promoting more adaptive appraisals, more effective coping or both. In theory, social support should only enhance appraisals and coping to the extent that the particular type of social support matches the demands of the stressor. Several types of social support have been investigated, such as instrumental support (e.g., assist with a problem), tangible support (e.g., donate goods), informational support (e.g., give advice), emotional support (e.g., give reassurance), among others.

Stress and coping theory has been argued to be a more flexible explanatory in understanding adjustment because it can provides individuals with a buffer or protection against the negative effects of stressful events. As indicated by Lazarus and Folkman's

(1984) the experience of stress and coping becomes most important when people are confronted with significant life changes or difficulties. Expectedly coping responses to counter stresses resulting from cultural transition cultural assimilation and social change for most immigrants, refugees, international students or sojourners. In this regard, the current cultural acculturation literature has identified acculturation related stressors frequently faced by foreign students' that demand coping responses (Sheldon, 2011; Kuo & Roysircar, 2006). Following this fact, it is not unexpected that coping plays a central role in major contemporary theories of acculturation and cultural adaptation. As explained by Berry (2006), the terms 'stress' and 'coping' bear significant theoretical implication and meaning in discerning how migrants deal with negative experiences emerging from intercultural contacts. Individuals are seen as having the potential to cope with stressors to achieve a variety of outcomes such as adaptations extending from negative through positive. That is the main reason that links social support from family, friends and significant others as variable to cope with stressors adjustment process.

2.5 Hypotheses Development

In this study, locus of control and social support are chosen as independent variable to associate the dependent variable which is socio-cultural adjustment by means that these variables could be expected to positively associate with international student socio-cultural adjustment.

2.5.1 Locus of Control and Socio-Cultural Adjustment

This study hypothesized that international student's locus of control is positively correlated to their socio-cultural adjustment. This is because locus of control is discovered to be one of the explanations on why some students adjust easier to the host country than others. Internal and external locus of control can explain the way in which international students interact and their psychological health. For example, based on the research of Seipel (1988) among Koreans in the United States and reported that respondents with an internal locus of control maintained more positive psychological health, described in terms of greater life satisfaction, than did those with an external locus of control. Despite that, Black (1990) conducted the research among New Zealand adults in Singapore showed that respondents with an external locus of control had more difficulty living in a new culture. They experienced a higher level of mood disturbance, depression, confusion, and anger. These studies are consistent with Young Kim's (2001) theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation. The theory proposes that active interaction with a host environment facilitates cultural learning and adaptation and brings positive outcomes of effective intercultural communication and psychological health. Individuals with an internal locus of control participate in intercultural communication more actively than individuals with an external locus of control participate and are psychologically healthier.

In addition, Yamaguchi and Wiseman (2003) found a positive relationship between external locus of control and Japanese international students' host communication. Similarly, Wheelless, Erickson, and Behrens (1986) found that international students with external locus were more likely to subscribe to their culture's values. Persons with an internal locus of control reflect less influence from their cultural environment.

According to empirical evidence, the hypothesis proposed for this study is:

H₁ : Locus of control is positively related to the dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment.

H_{1a} : Internal locus of control is positively related to impersonal endeavor.

H_{1b} : Internal locus of control is positively related to cultural relatedness.

H_{1c} : Internal locus of control is positively related to cultural empathy.

H_{1d} : External locus of control is positively related to impersonal endeavor.

H_{1e} : External locus of control is positively related to cultural relatedness.

H_{1f} : External locus of control is positively related to cultural empathy.

2.5.2 Social Support and Socio-Cultural Adjustment

This study hypothesized that student's social support is positively correlated to their socio-cultural adjustment. This is apparent upon reviewing the empirical evidence such as Lin (2006); Sumer et al. (2008); Zhai (2002); Chirkov et al. (2008). While some studies reported that social support was unrelated to adjustment outcomes (Ward & Kennedy, 2001). There are also some studies examining the relationship between social support and international student adjustment.

One study on the relationship between adjustment and social support in international student experience is the study of Lin (2006). The researcher interviewed 50 graduate students and spouses aged between 23. The interviews were semi-structured and

generally in an informal format. Participant observation and focus groups additionally utilized as a part of gathering information. The researcher took post-interview notes based on the memory after the interviews had finished. The study shown that social support helped the students better adjust to the college and campus life. Furthermore, the study revealed that the university staff support offered new international students' acknowledgement and affirmation for example sends email to the students to relieve pressure and stress.

Sumer et al. (2008) examined gender, age, race/ethnicity, social support, English ability, and length of stay, and their relationships to depression and anxiety among international students. Total of 440 international students with the average age of 26 years participated in the study. They found that students with lower levels of social support reported higher levels of depression and anxiety.

Another research which is conducted by Zhai (2002) investigated the relationship between international students' adjustment to college and needed of social support at Ohio State University. Ten postgraduate students were interviewed, five of the students were male and five were female with a mean age of 33. The results of the study indicated that international students experienced significant problems related to coping with U.S. education system, cultural differences, and language challenges. It was found that friends and family were the most preferred social support source to seek help. For especially emotional and psychological problems international students had tendency to seek help from friends and family. Support from university staff such as counseling services does not have a big impact to the students since most of them were not aware of counseling services in the campus. It is shown that orientation program on academic and

collaboration with international student offices is necessary for the international students' adjustment. Similarly, Chirkov et al. (2008) stated, if students get support, they are more educated about the host culture and are motivated to be open and to accept host culture, and even they are better emotional, physical, sociocultural, and academically adjusted. Total of two hundred and twenty-eight undergraduate and graduate international students in Canada participated in the study. The finding of this research proved visibly that social support influences the international students' socio-cultural adjustment strongly.

Lastly, Ward and Kennedy (2001) found an interesting result in their study with 113 British citizens living in Singapore. In their study they examined the relationship between the coping styles and adjustment and social support was recognized as one way of coping in the study. While they found avoidant coping, humor, approach coping and adjustment, acceptance and social support were found to be unrelated to the adjustment process.

Upon reviewing the empirical evidence, the hypothesis proposed for this study is:

- H₂ : Social support is positively related to the dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment.
- H_{2a} : Support from family is positively related to impersonal endeavor.
- H_{2b} : Support from family is positively related to cultural relatedness.
- H_{2c} : Support from family and is positively related to cultural empathy.
- H_{2d} : Support from friends is positively related to impersonal endeavor.
- H_{2e} : Support from friends is positively related to cultural relatedness.
- H_{2f} : Support from friends is positively related to cultural empathy.

H_{2g} : Significant others is positively related to impersonal endeavor.

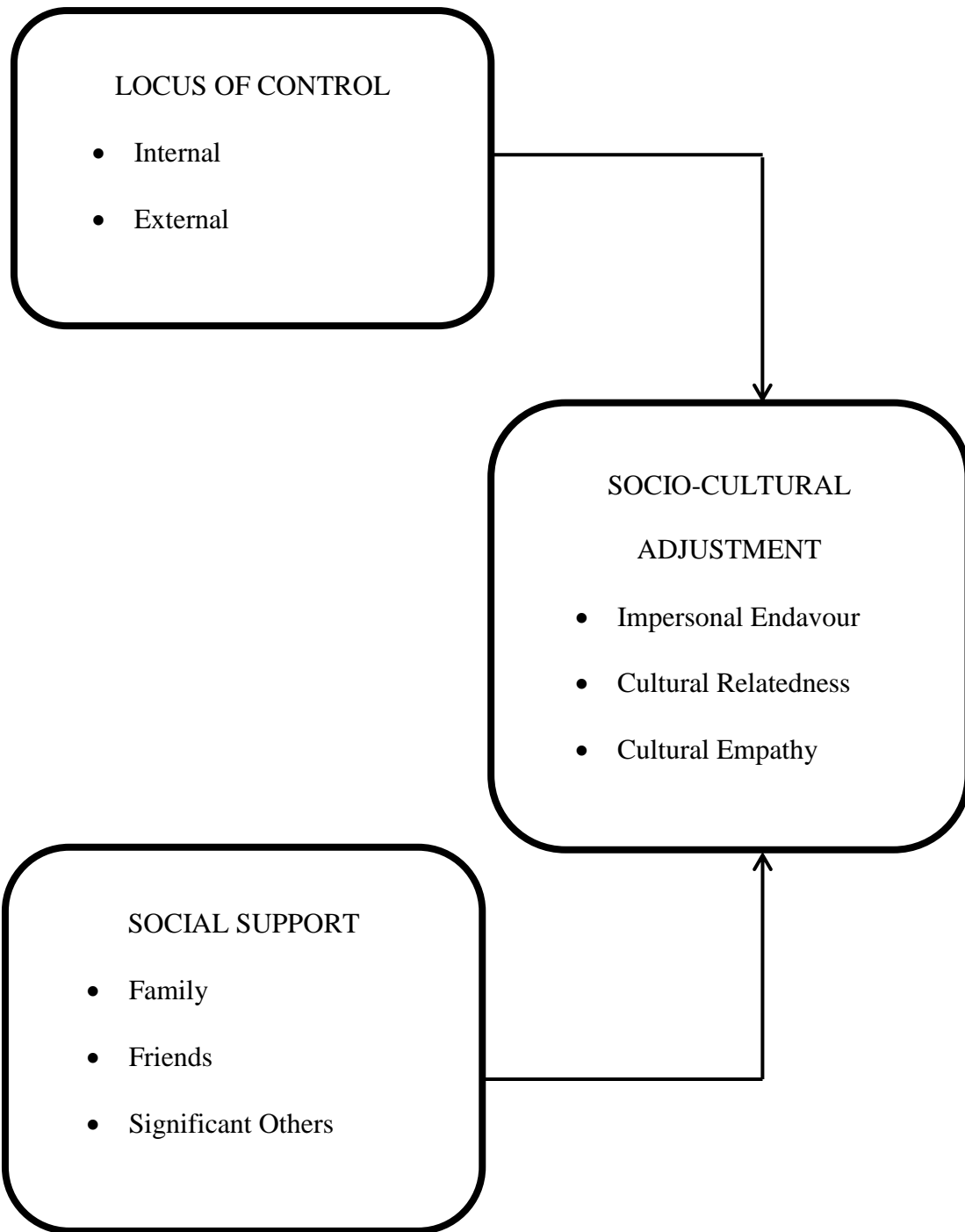
H_{2h} : Significant others is positively related to cultural relatedness.

H_{2i} : Significant others is positively related to cultural empathy.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

Based on the discussion and review of the theoretical and empirical literature, a schematic model was developed, expressing the relationships among the major theories and variables in this study. The theoretical framework of this study consists of Locus of Control, Social Support and Stress Factor as the independent variables and Socio-Cultural Adjustment as the dependent variable. Figure 2.1 portrays the hypothesized links between the independent variables and dependent variable in this study.

Figure 2.1 Hypothesized Theoretical Framework



2.6 Summary of the chapter

Overall, in this chapter the researcher analyzed previous studies and researches regarding the variables that are examined in this study. The theoretical and empirical evidence from previous studies had been discussed and highlighted in this chapter. In addition, this chapter also presents the hypotheses development for each variable and theoretical framework of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explains how the process involved in this study starting from research design until the technique of analyzing the data. They are two types of variables known as independent and dependent variables. The dependent variable is the main variable that lends itself as a viable factor for investigation meanwhile independent variables is one that influences the dependent variable in either a positive or a negative way (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran, 2001). In this study, the independent variables consist of locus of control and social support and the dependent variable is socio-cultural adjustment. This study is designed to test whether there is a significant relationship between locus of control and social support with socio-cultural adjustment.

3.1 Research Design

This study is a quantitative and non-experimental study to examine the relationships. According to Fowler (1994), quantitative research is a sample through the data collection process of asking question of people. The quantitative methods ensured high levels of reliability of data gathered. The main concerns of the quantitative paradigm are that measurement is reliable, valid, and generalizable in its clear prediction of cause and effect (Cassell and Symon, 1994). This study is an attempt to test the hypotheses that has been constructed in Chapter 2. Questionnaires survey is approach adopted for this study.

The questionnaires surveys that will be used consist of a combination of questions in the area of locus of control, social support and socio-cultural adjustment. Obtaining responses by distributing questionnaires is considered as an appropriate tool upon referring to the hypotheses of this study.

3.2 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for this study is individuals and the target population is international students which are inclusive of undergraduate and postgraduate students. The respondents for this study will be the international students in Malaysian universities in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia.

3.3 Measurement and Instrument

In this study, the researcher had distributed set of questionnaires in order to obtain the information needed to test the generated hypotheses. International student from three different Malaysian universities in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia was chosen to fill up the questionnaires. These questionnaires consist of four (4) sections which comprises of 63 questions with complete written instructions which include demographic, sociocultural adaptation scale adapted from Ward & Kennedy (1999), Levenson multidimensional locus of control scale adapted from Levenson (1974) and multidimensional scale of perceived social support adopted from Zimet et al., (1988). Nominal scale was used to divide the questionnaire into four parts of A, B, C, and D. Section A illustrate items on the dependent variable and consist of twenty nine (29)

items about socio-cultural adjustment (SCAS) as the latest version of the measurement developed by Ward and Kennedy (1999). The instrument designed to measure socio-culture adjustment from a three dimension perspective (impersonal endeavor, cultural relatedness and cultural empathy). The scale measured the degree to which international students perceived difficulties in understanding the local values and cultures, interacting with the hosts, meeting the demands of daily life, and behaving in a culturally appropriate manner. The questions using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (no difficulty) to 5 (extreme difficulty). Scores obtained from the scale indicated the respondents' perceptions when facing difficulties understanding host country values and cultures. Higher values obtained in the scale indicated greater difficulty in socio-cultural adaptation.

Section B contain eight (8) questions with regards to locus of control. This is a standardized psychological assessment instrument developed by Levenson's (1974) original twenty four-item scale validated for use with international students' in the united states research by Sheldon (2010). The Levenson scale is now widely accepted as an alternative to Rotter's (1966) original scale (Lam and Mizerski 2005). The instrument contains 8 items designed to measure locus of control from a two dimension perspective (internal locus of control and external locus of control). Direct scoring is used for all the items. Of eight items, three items measured the internal locus of control, while the others measured the external locus of control. Items 1, 2, and 3 measure internal locus of control; items 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 measures external locus of control. All of the items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1, representing strongly disagree, to

5, representing strongly agree. The items were summed into a scale, such that the larger the value of each scale, the greater the internal or external locus of control. The coefficients of reliability provided by Sheldon (2010) for the internal locus of control dimension was .636, whereas the mean score for the external locus of control dimension was .76. Those reliabilities are acceptable and are similar to Lam and Mizerski (2005) findings (Cronbach's $\alpha = .61$ and $\alpha = .72$, respectively).

Section C contain twelve (12) questions used which solely discuss about social support. This scale was developed by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet and Farley (1988) using adult samples. It has been used to measure perceived social support across cultures (Canty-Mitchell & Zimet, 2000; Chou, 2000). The MSPSS has been shown to be relatively free of social desirability bias (Dahlem, Zimet & Walker, 1991). The 12-item MSPSS provides assessment of three sources of support: family support, friends support and significant others support. It is scored on a 5-point Likert-type structure from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree". Items 3, 4, 8 and 11 measure family supports; items 6, 7, 9 and 12 measures friend support while items 1, 2, 5, and 10 measures significant other support. Sample items on the scale includes, "I get the emotional help and support I need from my family", "I can count on my friends when things go wrong", "There is a special person who is around when am in need". The factor loading of the items were relatively high. The internal consistencies of the subscales (Cronbach's alpha) are: .79, .81 & .82 for family support, friends support and significant other support respectively.

The last part of this questionnaire which is section D inclusive of fourteen (14) items is regarding demographic profile of the respondents such as gender, age, marital status, country of citizenship, length of stay in Malaysia, current universities and also level of education. Finally a cover letter from the researchers was attached to each questionnaire with complete written instructions.

Table 3.1 Items and Sources of Items for Each Variable

Dimension	Operational Definitions	Items
Socio-Cultural Adjustment	Culture specific skills, the ability to negotiate the host culture, or effectively interact with members of host cultures (Searle & Ward, 1990).	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impersonal Endeavor 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making yourself understood. 2. Talking about yourself with others. 3. Understanding jokes and humor. 4. Making yourself understood. 5. Adapting to local* accommodation. 6. Communicating with people of a different ethnic group. 7. Interacting with members of the opposite gender 8. Finding your way around the new environment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Relatedness 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making friends. 2. Using the transport system.

Dimension	Operational Definitions	Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Empathy 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Getting used to the pace of life. Going shopping. Going to social events / gatherings / functions. Worshipping / praying in your usual way. Dealing with someone who is unpleasant/aggressive. Getting used to the local* food. Following rules and regulations. Dealing with people in authority. Dealing with unsatisfactory service. Dealing with people staring at you.
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with the bureaucracy. Dealing with the climate/weather. Accepting / understanding the local* political system. Understanding the locals' view on world issues. Taking a local perspective on the culture. Understanding the local value system. Seeing things from the locals' point of view. Understanding cultural differences. Being able to see two sides of an

Dimension	Operational Definitions	Items
Locus of Control	<p>intercultural issue.</p> <p>Locus of Control (LOC) is a psychological construct that identifies an individual's perception on the cause of events that they endure in their life (Grimes, Millea, & Woodruff, 2004).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal control Acceptation of events as a result of their own behavior. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My life is determined by my own actions. 2. When I get what I want, it is usually because I worked hard for it. 3. I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Locus Acceptance of events as result of others, and binding them to fortune, fate and luck. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To a great extent my life is controlled by accidental happenings. 2. When I get what I want, it is usually because I am lucky. 3. It is not always wise for me to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad luck. 4. I feel like what happens in my life is mostly determined by powerful people. 5. My life is chiefly controlled by powerful others.
Social Support	<p>Perceived social support defined as an individuals' impression of how resources can act as a support between stressful events and symptoms and comprises of three dimensions, namely family, friends and significant other. Family and friends are self-explanatory and significant</p>	

Dimension	Operational Definitions	Items	
• Family	<p>other could be a supervisor, peer, colleague or any other person not explicitly characterized, but rather with whom the individual has contact consistently (Zimet, Dahlem, Simit, & Farley, 1988).</p>	1. My family really tries to help me.	
		2. I get the emotional help and support I need from my family.	
		3. I can talk about my problems with my family.	
		4. My family is willing to help me make decisions.	
• Friends			1. My friends really try to help me.
			2. I can count on my friends when things go wrong.
			3. I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.
			4. I can talk about my problems with my friends.
• Significant Others			1. There is a special person who is around when I am in need.
			2. There is a special person with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.
			3. I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me.
			4. There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings.

3.4 Population and Sample

A sample is a group of people or events drawn from a population (Marion, 2004). A research study is carried out on a sample from a population. The goal is to be able to find out true facts about the sample that will also be true of the population. In order for the sample to truly reflect the population, we need to have a sample that is representative of the population. The target population were limited to all international students (both undergraduates and postgraduates) in Malaysian universities in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. In this study, the researcher decided to use a convenient sampling to collect the data. Convenient sampling stated in Keni, Muthuveloo, Ping & Rahman (2013) is a subset of a statistical population in which each member of the subset has an equal probability of being chosen. Therefore, in this study the researcher decides to gather about 150 of samples of all international students in Universities in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. Table 3.2 presents the number of questionnaire distributed and received from each university that participated in this study.

Table 3.2 Total number of distributed and received questionnaires

Name of the University	Number of distributed questionnaire	Number of received questionnaire
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Universiti Utara Malaysia	80	75
Universiti Malaysia Perlis	40	33
Universiti Sains Malaysia	30	12
TOTAL	150	120

3.5 Data Collection Method

Data collection methods are an integral part of research design (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). As stated by Patton (1987, p.144), the processes of analysis and interpretation of data involve disciplined study, creative insight and careful attention to the purposes of the study. In this study, the data will be collected using a set of questionnaire adopted from previous research as the data collection instrument and this will be done following all required processes to validate the findings of the research as discussed in the following subsections. A structured questionnaire used in this study is adapted from Ward and Kennedy (1999), Zimet (1988) and Levenson (1974) with some modifications to suit the context of this study. The researcher provide hard copy to distribute to all international students and also provide soft copy of the questionnaire via e-mail. The researcher obtained the completed questionnaire by hand and through e-mail from the students. A total of 150 sets of questionnaire have been distribute to three Malaysian Universities in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. After seven days, the international students have returned 120 sets completed questionnaire both hard and soft copy. Hence, the response rate for this study was 80 percent.

3.6 Pilot Test

A pilot test was conducted to pretest the items and also to measure the reliability of each dimension in the questionnaire. Pilot test is necessary for the study even though the items that are used in the questionnaire were adapted from a well-established questionnaire is due to the fact that different country of origin of international students might respond differently. Furthermore, pilot test was conducted to test the practicability of the instructions given, language and words used, the length of the questionnaire and to identify approximate time required to complete the questionnaires. The feedback and comments will be acquired and will be used for further questionnaires refinement.

A total of 30 international students participated in the pilot test. A pilot study was conducted among the 120 respondents to determine the reliability of the items of the research instruments. The most widely used Cronbach's Alpha test of SPSS was used, any item of the instruments whose Cronbach's Alpha was not closed to 1 will be considered unreliable. In line with Sekaran (2000) the reliability construct in a quantitative study of this nature was considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha was greater than 0.7. Therefore, the three constructs involved in this study with Cronbach Alphas of 0.93, 0.78 and 0.79. With the reliability result, suitable decision was made as to whether the instruments could be used or not. Table 3.3 illustrates the reliability of each variables of the study.

Table 3.3 Reliability of Each Variable

Variable		Number of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Dependent Variable					
	Impersonal Endavours	8	17.9	5.47	0.85
Socio-Cultural Adjustment	Cultural Relatedness	12	29.08	7.53	0.84
	Cultural Empathy	9	23.11	6.49	0.88
Independent Variable					
	Internal Locus of Control	3	11.12	2.5	0.76
Locus of Control	External Locus of Control	5	13.08	3.44	0.77
	Family and Significant Others	4	15.35	3.02	0.79
Social Support	Friends	4	14.57	2.95	0.81
	Significant Others	4	14.44	2.8	0.82

3.7 Analysis Techniques

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 was used for the statistical analyses. This study adopts a combination of descriptive and correlation data analysis procedures. Descriptive statistics, correlation of observed variables and reliability scores were calculated by SPSS 20.0. In this study, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of scale. The tests of reliability were performed on all the measures used. As cited in Salleh, Nair & Harun (2012), Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients for all the variables which exceed 0.60 indicated a good internal consistency of the measures (Lee & Mowday, 1987).

Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was used to determine the relationship between motivation, ethnic identity, self-efficacy and socio-cultural adjustment. The Pearson correlation coefficient indicated three areas of the strength of relationship between the variables. Strong correlation is coefficient between 0.50 to 1.0, while coefficient between 0.30 to 0.49 indicate a moderate correlation and coefficient between 0.10 to 0.29 indicates a weak correlation (Sidin & Zawawi, 2002).

Lastly is regression analysis. Regression analysis was used in a situation where independent variable is hypothesized to affect one dependent variable. In this study, multiple regression analysis was used where more than one independent variable used to explain variance in dependent variable. Multiple regression analysis provides a means of objectively assessing the degree and the character of the relationship between the independent variables and the independent variable: the regression coefficients indicate

the relative importance of each of the independent variables in the prediction of the dependent variable.

3.8 Summary

Overall, this chapter give detailed explanation on methodology that were used in this study. In the next chapter, researcher will discuss about the research finding.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the procedures used in transforming and analyzing the data collected by questionnaire of this study. This chapter commences with data screening; ensure the accuracy data input, reverse coding of items and validity and reliability result of measurements. This is followed by the demographic profiles of the respondents, correlation and regression analysis. The study arranged according to the hypotheses of the study which is to investigate the influential factors that affect international student's socio-cultural adjustment by looking into relationship of one of each dimension: locus of control and social support.

4.1 Data Screening

The first step after key-in data in Statistic Package for Social Science (SPSS) software is data screening. Data screening is carried out before data analysis because this process is important to ensure the accuracy of data input. Negative statements were reverse-coded in which five negative items of external locus of control (i.e. *“To a great extent my life is controlled by accidental happenings”* and *“ When I get what I want, it is usually because I am lucky”*) after conducting pilot test. One negative items of external locus of

control were omitted due to low reliability test. As such, reverse coding was performed for four negative items remained in the questionnaire.

4.2 Respondent's Demographic Profile

International students who were invited to participate in this study were enrolled in Malaysian Universities in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia during the 2015 and 2016 academic years. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed and 120 questions were received (80%). The student respondent were from 16 different nationalities; with respondents from South East Asian representing the biggest sub-group (39.2%), followed by African (25.8%), East Asian region (15.8%), Middle East (12.5%) , South Asian (1.7%) and Central Asian (5%). Collectively almost 40% of the respondents were from the South East Asian region which is Indonesia, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam and Myanmar. 25.8% were from African region which is Algeria, Libya, Uganda, Somalia and Mauritania while China represents the sole country of East Asia 15.8%, and 12.5% were from the Middle East region which is Jordan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Palestine. Pakistan and Bangladesh 5%; Uzbekistan 1.7% represent South Asian and Central Asia regions, respectively.

In total, 57 of the respondents were male (47.5%) and 63 were female (52.5%). The majority of the respondents were between 21 and 25 years old with 47.5% representing the group. Majority of the respondents were single 82.5% and only 15.8% were married. In terms of field of study, majority of respondents were master's students 43.3% followed by degree students 30.8% and doctorate 25.8%. From the total respondents,

68.4% have been in Malaysia for more than 1 year but less than 5 years, while 25.8% have been in Malaysia for less than 1 year. Whereas, 5.8% indicated that they have been in Malaysia for more than 5 years. For the universities, 75 of the respondents are from Universiti Utara Malaysia 62.5%, followed by Universiti Malaysia Perlis for 33 respondents 27.5% and Universiti Sains Malaysia 10%. Table 4.1 summarizes the demographics details of the samples.

Table 4.1 Frequencies Distribution of Respondents Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	57	47.5
	Female	63	52.5
	Total	120	100
Age	Below 20	3	2.5
	21 - 25	57	47.5
	26 - 30	32	26.7
	31 - 35	17	14.2
	36 - 40	5	4.2
	Above 40	6	5.0
	Total	120	100
Marital Status	Single	99	82.5
	Married	19	15.8
	Others	2	1.7
	Total	120	100
Country of Citizenship	South East Asian	47	39.2
	East Asian	19	15.8
	Central Asian	6	5.0
	South Asian	2	1.7
	Middle East	15	12.5
	African	31	25.8
	Total	120	100

Demographic Profile	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Length of Stay	Less than 1 year	31	25.8
	1 - 3 year	71	59.2
	4 - 5 year	11	9.2
	More than 5 years	7	5.8
	Total	120	100
First time as Overseas Student	Yes	94	78.3
	No	26	21.7
	Total	120	100
Time being overseas student	2nd	16	13.3
	3rd	9	7.5
	4th	4	3.3
	Total	29	24.2
	Companion	Family member(s)	8
On my own		100	83.3
Others		12	10
Total			100
Ability to speak Bahasa Malaysia	Yes, fluently	18	15.0
	Yes, Partly	35	29.2
	No	67	55.8
	Total	120	100
Education fees	Scholarship/s	20	16.7
	Government Sponsor	8	6.7
	Self - Family Funding	65	54.2
	Self - Support	27	22.5
	Others	0	0
	Total	120	100
Reason choosing university	Good Reputation	22	18.3
	Family/Friend's suggestion	61	50.8
	Recognized/Acredited courses	25	20.8
	For exposure	2	1.7

Demographic Profile	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
	Others	10	8.3
	Total	120	100
University	Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)	75	62.5
	Universiti Utara Perlis (UNIMAP)	33	27.5
	Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)	12	10.0
	Total	120	100
Level of education	Bachelor Degree	37	30.8
	Master Degree	52	43.3
	Doctoral Degree	31	25.8
	Total	120	100
Semester	Semester 1	21	17.5
	Semester 2	38	31.7
	Semester 3	23	19.2
	Semester 4	16	13.3
	Semester 5	5	4.2
	Semester 6	9	7.5
	Semester 7	6	5.0
	Semester 8	1	0.8
	Others	1	0.8
	Total	120	100

4.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis using principal component analysis and varimax rotation was used in this study. The factor analysis with varimax rotation identified three variables in this study which are socio-cultural adjustment (18 items), locus of control (7 items) and social support (8 items). The factor analysis was conducted to provide the evidence of validity and factor structure for each variables. Items with cross loading and low loading

(i.e below 0.3) are omitted. As mentioned earlier, socio cultural adjustment covers 18 items and three factors were extracted based on eigenvalues greater than 1 and item loadings greater than 0.3. The three factors explained 53.71 of the total variance of Socio-Cultural Adjustment. Eleven items (4, 6, 8, 9, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22 and 25) had had high cross loading were deleted from further analysis. The first factor, whose items were labelled the Impersonal Endeavors, accounted for 18.93 of the variance. Factor 2 accounted for 18.79 of the total variance was labelled the Cultural Relatedness. Factor 3 accounted for 15.99 of the total variance and was labelled as Cultural Empathy. Table 4.2 shows the results of factor analysis of socio-cultural adjustment.

Furthermore based on factor analysis, locus of control covers 7 items and two factors were extracted based on eigenvalues greater than 1 and item loadings greater than 0.3. Two factors were extracted based on eigenvalues greater than 1 and item loadings greater than 0.3. The two factors explained 61.5 percent of the total variance and KMO value is 0.72 of locus of control. Items 4 had high cross loading were deleted from further analysis. Factor 1 reflected internal locus of control, and contained 3 items with loadings greater than 0.7 and accounting for 34.05 percent of the total variance. Factor 2 contained 4 items with loadings of at least 0.6 on this factor, accounted for 27.45 percent of the total variance. This factor reflected as external locus of control. Table 4.2 shows the exploratory factor analysis of this measure.

And the last, for social support eight items were used to measure this construct. Two factors were extracted based on eigenvalues greater than 1 and item loadings greater than 0.3. The two factors explained 59.27 percent of the total variance and KMO value

is 0.86 of social support. Four items (6, 8, 10 and 11) had high cross loading were deleted from further analysis. Factor 1 reflected support from friends and significant others, and contained 5 items with loadings of at least 0.7 on this factor, accounting for 32.37 percent of the total variance. However, the expected distinction between support from family and significant others was not replicated. The combination of these two supports is therefore used in this study as a single factor. It was labelled as support from family and significant others and used it in the remainder of this paper to denote the combined factor. Factor 2 contained 3 items with loadings greater than .70 and accounted for 26.9 percent of the total variance. This factor reflected as support from friends. The result factor analysis for social support shows in Table 4.2

Table 4.2 Factor Loadings based on Exploratory Factor Analysis

Variable	Items	Factor Loading
Socio-Cultural Adjustment		
• Impersonal Endavour	1. Dealing with someone who is unpleasant/aggressive.	.698
	2. Getting used to the local* food.	.581
	3. Following rules and regulations.	.672
	4. Dealing with people in authority.	.775
	5. Dealing with the bureaucracy.	.819
	6. Dealing with unsatisfactory service.	.537
• Cultural Relatedness	1. Making friends.	.725
	2. Using the transport system.	.731
	3. Making yourself understood.	.860
	4. Going shopping.	.499
	5. Worshipping / praying in your usual way.	.579
	6. Making yourself understood.	.860

Variable	Items	Factor Loading
• Cultural Empathy	1. Accepting / understanding the local* political system.	.579
	2. Understanding the locals' view on world issues.	.714
	3. Understanding the local value system.	.846
	4. Seeing things from the locals' point of view.	.804
	5. Understanding cultural differences.	.669
	6. Being able to see two sides of an intercultural issue.	.757
Locus of Control		
Internal Locus of control	1. My life is determined by my own actions.	.836
	2. When I get what I want, it is usually because I worked hard for it.	.807
	3. I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life.	.769
External Locus	1. When I get what I want, it is usually because I am lucky.	.697
	2. It is not always wise for me to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad luck.	.684
	3. I feel like what happens in my life is mostly determined by powerful people.	.846
	4. My life is chiefly controlled by powerful others.	.791
Percentage of Variance Explained		61.5
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.728
Approximate Chi Square		303.731
Social Support		
Family & Significant Others	1. There is a special person who is around when I am in need.	.645
	2. There is a special person with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.	.741
	3. My family really tries to help me.	.755
	4. I get the emotional help and support I need from my family.	.802

Variable	Items	Factor Loading
	5. I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me.	.773
Friends	1. I can count on my friends when things go wrong.	.730
	2. I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows.	.842
	3. I can talk about my problems with my friends.	.843
Percentage of Variance Explained		59.27
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.86
Approximate Chi Square		732.813

4.4 Re-statement of Hypotheses

After reviewing and analyzing the result of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), re-statement of hypotheses was done. Following are the proposed hypotheses for further analysis:

H₁: Locus of control is positively related to the dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment.

H_{1a}: Internal locus of control is positively related to impersonal endeavor.

H_{1b}: Internal locus of control is positively related to cultural relatedness.

H_{1c}: Internal locus of control is positively related to cultural empathy.

H_{1d}: External locus of control is positively related to impersonal endeavor.

H_{1e}: External locus of control is positively related to cultural relatedness.

H_{1f}: External locus of control is positively related to cultural empathy.

H₂: Social support is positively related to the dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment.

H_{2a}: Support from family and significant others is positively related to impersonal endeavor.

H_{2b}: Support from family and significant others is positively related to cultural relatedness.

H_{2c}: Support from family and significant others is positively related to cultural empathy.

H_{2d}: Support from friends is positively related to impersonal endeavor.

H_{2e}: Support from friends is positively related to cultural relatedness.

H_{2f}: Support from friends is positively related to cultural empathy.

4.5 Reliability Analysis

This study had assessed the internal consistency reliability and stability of the instruments used in this study to measure all the variables. The result of Alpha Cronbach value range will determine the acceptability and reliability of the instruments. The internal consistency reliability for the items of independent and dependent variables were obtained through Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient. Based on the Explanatory Factor Analysis, reliability test were conducted on the remaining items on independent variables and dependent variable. The reliability test for socio-cultural adjustment which is dependent variable of this study consist of 18 items with three dimensions. Cronbach's Alpha value for the first and second dimension is 0.829 and the third dimension is 0.869. The Cronbach's Alpha Value for locus of control internal and external are 0.762 and 0.786 meanwhile the Cronbach's Alpha Value for social support

from family and significant others and friends are 0.846 and 0.806 respectively. The Cronbach's Alpha results for each variable are presented in the Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Reliability Coefficients Results

Variable		Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Dependent Variable			
	Impersonal Endeavors	6	0.829
Socio-Cultural Adjustment	Cultural Relatedness	6	0.829
	Cultural Empathy	6	0.869
Independent Variable			
Locus of Control	Internal Locus of Control	3	0.762
	External Locus of Control	4	0.786
Social Support	Family and Significant Others	5	0.846
	Friends	3	0.806

4.6 Descriptive Statistic

This section presents the descriptive statistics for independent variables and dependent variables. The mean value and standard deviation value for independent variables and dependent variable are presented in Table 4.4. The mean value for socio-cultural adjustment; impersonal endeavors, cultural relatedness and cultural empathy are 2.746,

2.121 and 2.514 respectively. The respondent provide highest mean value for social support from friends which is 3.797 followed by internal locus of control is 3.706, social support from significant others and family 2.519 and external locus of control 1.026.

Table 4.4 Descriptive Statistic

Variable		Mean	Standard Deviation
Dependent Variable			
Socio-Cultural Adjustment	Impersonal Endeavor	2.746	4.391
	Cultural Relatedness	2.121	4.832
	Cultural Empathy	2.514	4.750
Independent Variable			
Locus of Control	Internal Locus of Control	3.706	2.501
	External Locus of Control	1.026	2.977
	Friends	3.797	2.299

4.7 Pearson Correlation Analysis

In this study, the Pearson Correlation analysis indicated the direction, strength and significance of the bivariate relationship between the variables that were measured. The result of Pearson Correlation for this study indicated that three variables correlated positively with socio-cultural adjustment. The three variables are external locus of control on three socio-cultural adjustment dimensions; impersonal endeavor, cultural

relatedness and cultural empathy (H_{1d} , H_{1e} , H_{1f}).

	IE	CR	CE	ILO	ELO	SOFAM	FRIENDS
IE	1						
CR	0.36**	1					
CE	0.49**	0.39**	1				
ILO	-0.09	-0.18*	-0.28**	1			
ELO	0.23**	0.52**	0.31**	-0.21*	1		
SOFAM	-0.14	-0.32**	-0.19*	0.26**	-0.17*	1	
FRIENDS	-0.07	-0.04	-0.11	0.39**	0.03	0.49**	1

Table 4.5 Correlation Analysis

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

IE: Impersonal Endeavour; CR: Cultural Relatedness; CE: Cultural Empathy; ILO: Internal Locus of Control; ELO: External Locus of Control; SOFAM: Significant others and Family.

4.8 Multiple Regression Analysis

In order to arrange for a further understanding on the influence of the four independent variables on dependent variable, multiple regression analysis was carried out. The value of β for each hypothesized relationship is observed and reported in this section.

Table 4.6 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable (Impersonal Endeavor)	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.708	.531		5.099	.000
Independent Variables					
ILO	-.008	.089	-.010	-.096	.924
ELO	.217	.093	.221	2.330	.022
SOFAM	-.095	.110	-.091	-.859	.392
FRIENDS	-.033	.106	-.034	-.306	.760
<i>F</i> Value	2.150				
<i>R</i> ²	.070				
Adjusted <i>R</i> Square	.037				

As shown in Table 4.6, the Beta value for external locus of control positively associated with impersonal endeavor. The Beta value for external locus of control is $\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.05$. In contrast, the results for other three variables found out not associated with impersonal endeavor. The Beta value for internal locus of control is $\beta = -.010$, $p > 0.05$, social support from significant others and family is $\beta = -.091$, $p > 0.05$ and social

support friends is $\beta = -.034$, $p > 0.05$.

Table 4.7 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable (Cultural Relatedness)	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.873	.493		3.797	.000
Independent Variables					
ILO	-.048	.082	-.050	-.588	.558
ELO	.502	.087	.464	5.789	.000
SOFAM	-.314	.103	-.274	-3.059	.003
FRIENDS	.098	.099	.093	.989	.325
<i>F</i> Value	14.628				
<i>R</i> ²	.070				
Adjusted <i>R</i> Square	.037				

As shown in Table 4.7, the Beta value for external locus of control is positively associated with cultural relatedness. The Beta value for external locus of control is $\beta = 0.46$, $p < 0.05$. Social support from significant others and family is $\beta = -0.27$ $p < 0.05$, produced inverse relationship and negative influence on cultural relatedness. In contrast, the results for other two variables found out not associated with cultural relatedness. The Beta value for internal locus of control is $\beta = -0.05$, $p > 0.05$, social support from friends is $\beta = 0.09$ $p > 0.05$.

Table 4.8 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable (Cultural Empathy)	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.927	.547		5.354	.000
Independent Variables					
ILO	-.193	.091	-.203	-2.119	.036
ELO	.276	.096	.259	2.870	.005
SOFAM	-.108	.114	-.096	-.947	.346
FRIENDS	.005	.109	.005	.045	.964
<i>F</i> Value	5.387				
<i>R</i> ²	.070				
Adjusted <i>R</i> Square	.037				

As shown in Table 4.8, the Beta value for external locus of control positively associated with cultural empathy which is $\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.05$. The Beta value for internal locus of control is $\beta = -0.20$, $p < 0.05$ produced inverse relationship and negative influence on cultural relatedness. In contrast, the results for two variables found out not associated with cultural empathy. The Beta value for significant others and family is $\beta = -.09$, $p > 0.05$ and friends is $\beta = -.00$, $p > 0.05$.

Based on the result, it is proven that the external locus of control have very strong and positive relationship on three dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment followed by negative relationship between internal locus of control with one of dimensions which is cultural empathy and significant others and family with one of dimensions which is

cultural relatedness . However, internal locus of control does not have positive influence on impersonal endeavor and cultural relatedness, significant others and family does not have positive influence on impersonal endeavor and cultural empathy and friends does not have positive influence on three dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment.

4.9 Result and Hypotheses Status of The Result and Analysis

No	Hypotheses	β	p	Hypotheses Status
H1a	Internal locus of control is positively related to impersonal endeavor.	-.010	.924	Rejected
H1b	Internal locus of control is positively related to cultural relatedness.	-.050	.558	Rejected
H1c	Internal locus of control is positively related to cultural empathy.	-.203	.036	Rejected
H1d	External locus of control is positively related to impersonal endeavor.	.221	.022	Accepted
H1e	External locus of control is positively related to cultural relatedness.	.464	.000	Accepted
H1f	External locus of control is positively related to cultural empathy.	.259	.005	Accepted
H2a	Support from family and significant others is positively related to impersonal endeavor.	-.091	.392	Rejected
H2b	Support from family and significant others is positively related to cultural relatedness.	-.274	.003	Rejected
H2c	Support from family and significant others is positively related to cultural empathy.	-.096	.346	Rejected
H2d	Support from friends is positively related to impersonal endeavor.	-.034	.760	Rejected
H2e	Support from friends is positively related to cultural relatedness.	.093	.325	Rejected
H2f	Support from friends is positively related to cultural empathy	.005	.964	Rejected

4.10 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter presented the findings of the study. The analyses were carried out using Exploratory Factor Analysis, Descriptive Frequencies, Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression. The overall objective of this study is to identify the influence of locus of control and social support on three dimension of socio-cultural adjustment which are impersonal endeavor, cultural relatedness and cultural empathy. However, after conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis, seventeen (17) items from three (3) variables were eliminated due to the cross loading factor and re-statement of hypotheses were done. The result of the findings revealed that five variables which is internal locus of control positively influence on socio cultural adjustment; cultural empathy, external locus of control positively influence on three dimension of socio-cultural adjustment and support from significant others and family is positively influence on socio-cultural adjustment; cultural relatedness. The other seven variables which is internal locus of control on socio-cultural adjustment; impersonal endeavor and cultural relatedness, social support from significant others and family on socio-cultural adjustment; impersonal endeavor and cultural empathy and social support from friends on three dimension of socio-cultural adjustment does not positively influence. The researcher discussed the findings of the study. Furthermore, in the next chapter the researcher made recommendation and conclusion in relation to the research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the results of this research. The chapter also addresses the limitations of the study, suggestion for future research, theoretical and practical implications and conclusion of the study.

5.1 Discussions

This study investigated the relationship between locus of control and social support on socio-cultural adjustment dimensions among international students in Malaysian Universities in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. Specifically, this study examines twelve hypotheses from three dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment with two dimensions for locus of control and social support variables, respectively. Overall, three hypotheses were found to be significant and have positive relationship with socio-culture adjustment, while two hypotheses were found to be significant but negative relationship with socio-culture adjustment among international students. Further, external locus of control was found to have a significant and positive relationship with all dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment. Internal locus of control had a significant but have negative relationship with cultural empathy, but this dimension is not related to

impersonal endeavors and cultural relatedness. Second, the current study examined the relationship between international student's social support and socio-cultural adjustment. The social support from family and significant others are significant but this dimension has a negative relationship with cultural relatedness. Interestingly, this study found that support from friends is not related to all dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment.

5.1.1 The Relationship between Locus of Control and Socio-Cultural Adjustment

Locus of control appeared to be a meaningful construct that can assist to interpret the international students' socio-cultural adjustment. Locus of control is the variable that best explains about the ability of international students to adapt to the new culture and environment in host country society effectively or to be less adaptive.

5.1.1.1 Internal Locus of Control and Socio-Cultural Adjustment

Hypothesis 1a, 1b and 1c predicted that internal locus of control is positively related to impersonal endeavors, cultural relatedness and cultural empathy. However, this study found that internal locus of control had a significant and negative influence on cultural empathy. International students who reported have a higher level of internal locus of control were not well adjusted in terms of cultural empathy. This finding revealed that, the adjustment on cultural empathy among the international students will be lower when the internal control is high.

The plausible reason for this is because most of the respondents in this study are postgraduate students and most likely the level of education reinforces the idea that adjustments are based on internal factor rather than external factors. Further, almost 50 percent of respondents in the range of 21 – 25 years old. Younger individuals are less likely to have been in positions of power or control than older individuals, and thus their expectancy that they are under the control of powerful others is reinforced. Another plausible factor is because once an international student reaches certain stages, the international students will have more control over the adjustment towards the new environment, and the internal expectancies are reinforced, resulting in more internal control rather than external control. These findings is supported by the findings of Taft (1986), who mentioned that characterization of the immigrant is a person with initiative, active and energetic, and the one who feels comfortable with people and scores high in values, such as personal liberty and individualism. Hence, this study suggested that, the higher the internal locus of control among students, the less the cultural empathy of international students towards the socio-cultural adjustment to the host country.

5.1.1.2 External Locus of Control and Socio-Cultural Adjustment

Furthermore H1d, H1e, H1f is supported. The results showed that external locus of control had a significant and positive impact on impersonal endeavor, cultural relatedness and cultural empathy. Descriptive analysis revealed that external locus of control is higher than internal locus of control among international students in this study. The benefits of having external locus of control are crucial for the international student's socio-cultural adjustment. The researcher found that international students with external

locus of control able to adjust in the host country, specifically in the Malaysian context. This is in line with Yamaguchi and Wiseman, (2003) findings on Japanese international student that communication competence on adjustment to the host countries is positively correlated with external locus of control. According to Kim, (1988) students with external locus of control have a better knowledge on the host country's communication system, more complex cognitive system in responding to the host environment, better affective co-orientation with the host culture, and higher behavioral capability to perform various interactions in the host environment.

According to the demographic distribution of the home country of the respondents, highest number of respondents are from countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, China some part of Africa and Middle East countries. Based on Hofstede's cultural dimension of collectivism / individualism, these countries are viewed as collectivist countries. According to Schreier (2010), collectivist culture people are generally high in social anxiety as they feel pressured to conform to the norms and value of the society to maintain social harmony. This clearly shows that the person from collectivist society will emphasize more on family, friends and work group goals above the individual needs or desires. Each person is encouraged to be an active player in society, working together and do what is best for society as a whole rather than themselves. They are bound to feel that they have to abide by the social norms and values as not to offend the locals and have a strong fear of rejection in the society especially when they experiencing cross culture in different countries.

Given the larger number of female the respondents, it was found that female international students may easily adjust with the influence of external locus of control. The roles of historical gender have resulted whereby a female student expresses their control through alignment with powerful others or through emotional response mediation (Weisz, Rothbaum & Blackburn, 1984). Female international students are much more capable in adjusting in the host country compared to male students. This is evident that women are more collectivist in nature than men. Since women's social network is larger, they may also adapt easier to the host society and therefore score higher on the communication competence.

In addition, level of education of the respondents also give great impact to this study. The result of this study has been concluded that the external locus of control competence among international students will be high if the level of education is also high. Tsekouras (2005) asserted that adjustment takes place gradually. The process includes not just language acquisition, but affects food and clothing preferences, value and belief systems, rituals and holidays observed, among others (Lum 2000; Thomas & Schwarzbaum 2006).

5.1.2 The Relationship between Social Support and Socio-Cultural Adjustment

5.1.2.1 Family and Significant Others and Socio-Cultural Adjustment

As predicted by Hypothesis 2, social support is positively related their socio-cultural adjustment process. In contrast, this study found that support from family and significant others had a significant and negative impact on cultural relatedness. Thus, the findings

had made a considerable contribution whereby researcher found that the more support from international students' family and significant others, the less of adjustment on cultural relatedness they will have. Items such as making friends, using the public transportation, making yourself understood, going shopping, and praying in the usual way are the items in cultural relatedness. This study found that the importance of having social support from family and significant others relationships are crucial for the international student's on their adjustment and it pays less attention to their cultural relatedness adjustment in Malaysia.

Students who experienced higher levels of support from their special someone were less to experience cultural relatedness. Furthermore, some of the respondents in this study may have special someone who play the role as a support person in which they may understand the difficulties in studying in Malaysia. The students felt his or her partner, who could be international student as well, was able to provide better support for them. Further, the support from family members also have significant role on cultural relatedness of socio-culture adjustment. This study found that, international students with high level of support from family were lowly need to the cultural relatedness. Plausibly, the respondents in this study frequently communicate with their family about cultural differences and sharing opinion which may perhaps reduce the cultural relatedness of social-support adjustment among the international students.

5.1.2.2 Friends and Socio-Cultural Adjustment

The regression result of statistical analysis showed social support from friends is not a significant predictor of all dimensions in socio-cultural adjustment. Given these findings, there is no relationship between international students' on the social support from friends and the socio-cultural adjustment dimensions. This finding contradicts to the findings by Church (1982), who asserted that co-national friends are beneficial in providing the sense of belonging and may provide social and emotional support during the adjustment process. Nevertheless, in one study, Ward and Kennedy (2001) also found that social support was unrelated to the adjustment. As more close to collectivist end (Hofstede, 1980), in the natural supportive environment of Malaysian culture, social support from friends might not have functioned as an extra source of support for international students. A plausible reason for this is because most of the respondents are postgraduate students and at the age of mid 20's, so having friends are not essential when it comes to cultural and personal adaptation for them.

Another plausible explanation is international students get full support from their families and someone special during their time in Malaysia. Perceived high support from family and significant others makes the international students not interested to develop new cross-cultural friendships with individuals from the host nation as well as other international students. The international students in the present study received social support from their family and significant others and that protected them from cultural and personal difficulties during their adjustment process.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

There is a couple of limitation worth noting in this study. First, the results of this study could not be generalized to a larger population, due to the fact that the sample was limited to international students from the Universities in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. Additionally, the variables to understand social cultural adjustment are limited to social support and locus of control.

5.3 Suggestions for Future Research

Future researchers may focus on the expansion of the sample size. By using a larger population, not only in the Northern region but also entire Malaysia. Furthermore, various population of international students from different continents who are pursuing study in Malaysian universities or regions should be included, to further verify the findings of this study.

Lastly, there may be other variables that can explain the remaining variance in international socio-cultural adjustment. Future studies should incorporate other predictors such as self-efficacy, motivation and life stress to determine the relationship with the socio-cultural adjustment of international students.

5.4 Implications

This study offers several important theoretical and practical implications based on the findings.

5.4.1 Theoretical Implications & Practical Implications

This study provides additional empirical evidence in the socio-cultural adjustment literature by providing interesting findings on the influence of international students' locus of control and social support on the socio-cultural adjustment. The researcher had used two theories to understand the link of theoretical paradigm and variables of the study which is locus of control and stress coping theory to contribute additional empirical evidence in this study.

The findings of this study are considered to have made a significant contribution to the academic sector mainly for international student offices, university counseling services and university staff. International student office, counseling centers and staff should be in contact to help international students. To begin with, international student offices are the first places for international students to ask for any kind of help and information (Bektaş, 2004). Universities can establish formal and informal meeting to address the needs of international students, offer orientation and social programs to facilitate adjustment process of these students. For instance, arranging social or cultural activities

and engaging international students as volunteers for different events and the programs may increase international students' perceptions of social support.

Social support from friends is one indicators that influence international students' socio-cultural adjustment. Peering up new comers with the adjusted international students before coming (Lin, 2006; Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007, Zhai, 2002) and preparing orientation programs can extremely useful for international students in getting acquainted to their new surroundings. Moreover, many international students build co-national in group community who provides strong relationships and sense of belonging to share familiar cultural values and practices. Study conducted by Barratt & Huba (1994) shown that relationships with friends from the same country, other international students, and host nationals help international students adjust to the new culture. International students had a tendency to look most support from compatriots, less from other international students, and least from host national students (Findsen, 1987). However, international students may encounter issues establishing and maintaining relationships with host nationals. Universities should seek ways to create opportunities for international students to interact and develop close relationships with host national students. Host national students, on the other hand, should be encouraged to seek interaction with international students perhaps as an advisor or study partners.

Another important implication of this study can help university counselors to understand the experiences and adjustment process of international university students. Open support groups in which international students can discuss issues regarding their adjustment (Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007) can be valuable. Such a support group can help students to relieve their negative emotions through expressing them and can help seeing

in that they are not alone in having difficulty in adaptation process or they can also see other well adapted students, can learn what strategies they use in adaptation and learn from experiences of others.

Cultural training may also prove helpful to international students and host national students for understanding the nature and dynamics of international student relationships. Events that bring international and host students together can be prepared. These events can facilitate the adjustment process through reducing acculturative stress and increasing social support and developing more acceptance and tolerance between differences (Poyrazli et al., 2004; Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007; Rosenthal et al., 2007).

5.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study focused on investigating the factors affecting international students' socio-cultural adjustment process by looking into the relationships of one aspect of each dimension: locus of control and social support. The findings of this study revealed that the three dimensions of socio-cultural adjustment, namely, impersonal endeavor, cultural relatedness and cultural empathy have positive and significant relationship with the international student external locus of control. Furthermore, international student's internal locus of control and social support from family and significant other is negatively related to the cultural empathy and cultural relatedness on their socio-cultural adjustment. This study adds to the understanding of international students' adjustment processes and offers many avenues for future investigations.

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