



# Self-Adaptation Management of Thailand Students in the Teacher Training Program at Islamic Universities in Indonesia

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*The purpose of this study is to understand the self-adaptation management of students from Thailand who are pursuing a teacher study program at Tiinggi University in Indonesia. The focus of this research includes three main aspects: 1) cultural differences between Thailand and Indonesia that affect the self-adaptation system of teacher training students, 2) the management of self-adaptation strategies used by Thailand students, and 3) their expectations for self-adaptation management in universities. The method used was a qualitative method using a narrative inquiry approach because it involved interviews and observations of 9 respondents. The results of the study showed that Thailand students at the Islamic University of Indonesia observed cultural differences in social values, norms, and aspects of religion that affect social interaction, response to authority, and understanding of dominant culture as well as lifestyle and perception of time. They develop adaptation strategies through Indonesian language courses, join the international community, utilize technology, get guidance from lecturers, and make local friends. Students expect the university to provide orientation programs, mentorship, comfortable dormitories, cultural exchange, inclusive activities, and support from the student community, as well as ensure the quality of higher education, competent lecturers, and relevant curriculum. This research provides insights for universities to develop more effective orientation and mentoring programs, as well as showing the importance of technological support in the adaptation process. The limitation of this study is that its scope is limited to one university with a small number of respondents, so future research is recommended to include more universities and a wider range of respondents to get a more comprehensive understanding.*

**Keywords:** students, international, environmental adaptation, universities, Indonesia

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## INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education and Culture (2021) noted that as many as 3,896 study permits have been issued to foreign students who want to continue their undergraduate studies (S1) at various universities in Indonesia. (Tiara dkk., 2024) states that this fact reflects Indonesia's attractiveness as a higher education destination for international students, who come from various countries with the aim of obtaining quality education while exploring the richness of local culture. (Soeharto, 2021) The existence of thousands of foreign students not only enriches the cultural diversity on Indonesia's campuses, but also (Rahmawati dkk., 2020) encourages the creation of a more inclusive and multicultural academic environment. Foreign students bring new and different perspectives that can enhance cross-cultural understanding among local students, broaden global horizons, and promote international tolerance and cooperation. In addition, (Agung & Santosa, 2017) the high number of study permits issued shows the commitment of the Indonesia government in supporting the internationalization of higher education, which is expected to enhance Indonesia's academic reputation in the global arena and attract more international collaborations in the field of research and education. This also provides encouragement for universities in Indonesia to continue to improve the quality of education and facilities to meet international standards.

With the high number of Thailand students continuing their studies of Islamic education in Indonesia. Education is often more focused on specific aspects related to the context of Islamic education, such as curriculum development based on Islamic values, traditional teaching methods, and the management of a learning environment that supports the formation of student character. In comparison, research that focuses on the adaptation of international students in higher education, such as those conducted by (Ahmad dkk., 2018) emphasizes more on psychological and emotional factors that affect students' self-adjustment, including emotional intelligence as an important determinant in the adaptation process. In addition, the research (Vidyarini, 2018) underscores the importance of cross-cultural communication in helping international students navigate cultural differences and build effective relationships in the new academic environment. These two studies show that self-adaptation management in higher education discusses more psychological aspects and cross-cultural communication, in contrast to the focus of education management in Islamic institutions which is more on the development of religious curriculum and learning environment. This (Balisa dkk., 2024) highlights the differences in approaches in education management and cultural adaptation in these two unique educational contexts.

Seeing this gap, this study aims to understand the

self-adaptation management of students from Thailand who are pursuing a teacher training program at Islamic universities in Indonesia. The focus of this research includes three main aspects. First, this research will explore the cultural differences between Thailand and Indonesia from the perspective of Thailand students as well as the challenges they face during their studies at the Islamic University of Indonesia. Second, this study will identify the strategies used by Thailand students in managing their self-adaptation in the academic and social environment of the Islamic University of Indonesia. Third, this research will reveal the expectations of Thailand students towards self-adaptive management applied in universities. This research is important to conduct at the Islamic University of Indonesia because it has a high level of cultural diversity, and an understanding of international student adaptation can help in developing more effective policies and programs to support the academic success and welfare of foreign students. In addition, the results of this research are expected to provide valuable insights for other educational institutions that have international students, especially in the context of cultural and academic adaptation management.

This research is based on the argument in supporting Thailand students who continue their studies at Islamic universities in Indonesia is very significant when analyzed through the Cultural Adaptation Theory by John W. Berry (Azkiyah, 2020). Explained by (Berry, 2006) this theory provides the right framework for analyzing complex and multidimensional cultural adaptation processes. Berry's theory identifies four main strategies of cultural adaptation: assimilation, integration, segregation, and marginalization, which can be used to understand how Thailand students navigate cultural differences and existing education systems (Chaiyasat, 2020). In this context, integration strategies, which incorporate active participation in a new culture while maintaining the identity of the culture of origin, are considered the most effective and psychologically sound. This research will explore the extent to which Thailand students are able to integrate Indonesia culture while maintaining their Thailand cultural identity. In addition, the study will identify factors that support or hinder this integration process, such as support from universities, international student communities, and cultural adaptation facilities. The results of this research are important to develop more effective policies and programs in supporting the cultural adaptation of international students, improving their academic experience and well-being, and promoting an inclusive and multicultural educational environment at the Islamic University of Indonesia (Aljaberi dkk., 2021). This analysis also provides broader insights into the dynamics of cultural adaptation in an increasingly global higher education environment.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a narrative inquiry method to explore the self-adaptation management of Thailand students in the Teacher Training Study Program, Islamic University of Indonesia. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand students' personal experiences and adaptation processes in depth through their own narratives. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. In-depth interviews provide detailed insights into students' experiences and perceptions regarding the challenges and adaptation strategies they use. Observation allows researchers to observe firsthand the social interactions and academic environments faced by students, as well as how they adapt to real-life situations. Documentation, such as academic records and activity reports, is used to obtain additional information and support findings from interviews and observations. The data collection mechanism involves selecting participants based on certain criteria, such as the length of study and involvement in academic and non-academic activities. Interviews are conducted face-to-face in a location convenient for participants, recorded, and transcribed for further analysis. Observations are made in an academic and social environment, while documentation is collected from various official university sources. This approach allows researchers to get a holistic and in-depth picture of the adaptation process of Thailand students at Islamic universities in Indonesia.

In the research on the self-adaptation management of Thailand international students in the teacher training study program at Islamic universities in Indonesia, it was carried out through triangulation of sources, methods, and time to increase the validity and reliability of the findings. Resource triangulation involves interviews with various related parties such as Thailand students from Islamic education management study programs, and Thailand students from other study programs to gain diverse perspectives. The triangulation method combines in-depth interviews (Agusta, 2003a), participatory observation, and document analysis to obtain comprehensive and in-depth data. (Alfansyur & Mariyani, 2020) Time triangulation is carried out by collecting data at various different times, for example at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester to see the development of student adaptation from time to time. The use of triangulation is important to overcome the limitations of each method and data source, as well as to ensure that the results of the study reflect a more accurate and comprehensive reality. The data analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman model which involves three main stages: data reduction, data display, and drawn/verified conclusions. The collected data is compiled and simplified through a data reduction process, then displayed in the form of matrices or graphs for easy interpretation, and finally conclusions are drawn and verified to ensure the validity of the research findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). With this

approach, the research is expected to provide an in-depth picture of the self-adaptation of Thailand international students in the Islamic university environment in Indonesia.

This research was conducted at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, Faculty of Tarbiyah as well as the Faculty of Da'wah and the Faculty of Law, State Islamic University (UIN) Walisongo Semarang because of its suitability with the needs of research subjects related to Islamic religious education and Islamic education management, as well as the aspects involved in this context. These faculties have a strong reputation in relevant fields of study, as well as providing a conducive environment (Purwati, 2020) to conduct research focused on these themes. This research involved a total of 9 respondents, consisting of 4 students of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program, 1 student of the Islamic Education Management Study Program, and 1 student of the Da'wah Management Study Program, as well as 3 students of the Sharia Law Study Program. The research time span was conducted from January 2024 to May 2024, providing sufficient time for researchers to collect thorough and in-depth data from respondents (Makbul, 2021) involved in this study. Student profiles are presented in table 1.

[Table 1. about here]

In-depth interviews were conducted with informants to dig up research data (Agusta, 2003b). This research can provide a holistic picture of these dynamics and needs in the local context. The selection at UIN Walisongo Semarang also offers good accessibility for researchers to conduct detailed and structured field studies. Thus, through this research, it is hoped that a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by international students in the Indonesia region will be obtained and provide a foundation for the development of more effective and relevant intervention strategies locally.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. Result

#### 1. Cultural Differences Between Thailand and Indonesia in the Perspective of Students Between Thailand and How Challenges are Faced by Thailand Students in Undergoing Teacher Studies at Islamic Universities in Indonesia

This study found that the cultural differences between Thailand and Indonesia, from the perspective of Thailand students at the Islamic University of Indonesia, involve various aspects that affect their adaptation process. One of the main aspects is the differences in the value system and social norms, where Thailand students are accustomed to a formal social hierarchy and a high

level of respect for authority. In Indonesia, especially in the Islamic education environment, religious values dominate social norms, including in aspects of clothing, interaction between the sexes, and worship time. These differences create challenges for Thailand students to adjust, but they often manage to integrate Indonesia's culture without losing their home cultural identity. Based on John W. Berry's Theory of Cultural Adaptation, integration strategies become the most effective adaptation approach, in which students participate in a new culture while still retaining important aspects of their home culture. In addition, the religious factor also plays a significant role, especially for students from Muslim-majority Southern Thailand, who may be more easily adapted to religious norms in Indonesia. The study shows that university support, the existence of an international student community, and cultural adaptation facilities play an important role in facilitating this adaptation process. These findings underscore the importance of developing more inclusive policies in universities, in order to create a multicultural educational environment and support the academic well-being of international students.

This study identifies cultural differences between Thailand and Indonesia from the perspective of Thailand students at the Islamic University of Indonesia, which includes aspects of religion, social interaction, clothing, eating culture, time perception, and norms of politeness. In Thailand, the majority of the population is Buddhist with an emphasis on social hierarchy, while Indonesia is dominated by Islam, where religious norms affect social interactions and daily behavior. Thailand students may face challenges in adapting to worship practices, more relaxed ways of interacting, and stricter dress codes. The eating habits in Indonesia that prioritize togetherness are also different from their more individualistic habits. The perception of flexible time in Indonesia can be challenging for Thailand students who are used to stricter punctuality. Awareness of different norms of politeness, especially in interactions between men and women, is also necessary. This research shows that a successful adaptation process requires flexibility and openness to understanding cultural differences, as well as institutional support to create an inclusive and harmonious educational environment, so that international students can integrate well while maintaining their cultural identity.

[Table 2. about here]

Based on the data obtained, Thailand students at the Islamic University of Indonesia

experience significant cultural differences that affect their adaptation process. One of the main aspects is the difference in value systems and social norms. Students from Southern Thailand, despite being predominantly Muslim, adopt strong cultural values, such as respect for hierarchy and formality in interactions. In Indonesia, where social norms are heavily influenced by Islamic values, Thailand students must adapt to a more conservative way of dressing, follow worship times, and understand the dynamics of association between men and women. In addition, culinary differences are an important factor; Indonesia's food tends to be spicier and more varied and requires adjustments, especially for those who are used to milder flavors. The warmth and hospitality shown by the Islamic campus environment in Indonesia also provides important support in helping them feel welcome and strengthening their spirit of adaptation.

From the point of view of the cultural adaptation theory put forward by John W. Berry, Thailand students seek to implement an integration strategy, which is to incorporate active participation in Indonesia culture while maintaining their cultural identity of their origin. This can be seen from their efforts to engage in social and academic activities on campus, although differences in the formalities of interaction are challenging. In Thailand, social interaction is more formal, and a high respect for authority is highly valued. On the other hand, they found that in Indonesia, the way of communicating is more relaxed and egalitarian. Understanding the differences in culinary traditions, daily lifestyles, and perception of time is also important for creating a harmonious learning environment. The readiness to adapt to these differences not only facilitates cultural integration, but also contributes to their personal development. Awareness and management of these differences are key to building tolerance and essential adaptation skills for international students, ultimately enriching their academic and daily life experiences in Indonesia.

John W. Berry's Theory of Cultural Adaptation (1997), which identifies four main strategies of cultural adaptation: assimilation, integration, segregation, and marginalization. Berry emphasized that integration strategies—which involve active participation in new cultures while maintaining the identity of the culture of origin—tend to be the more psychologically healthy and most effective adaptation options. This research is relevant for Thailand students who have to adapt to Islamic norms in Indonesia, while still maintaining their Buddhist cultural identity. In addition, Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (1980) also provides useful insights, especially regarding the dimensions of collectivism in Indonesia and



individualism in Thailand. Hofstede found that Indonesia tends to have a collectivist culture that emphasizes cooperation, solidarity, and adherence to community values, while Thailand, despite having some elements of collectivism, is more likely to value hierarchy and formality in social interactions. This difference is clearly evident in the daily interactions and academic norms experienced by Thailand students while they study in the Islamic educational environment in Indonesia.

The results of this study provide important insights for the development of more effective policies and programs in supporting the cultural adaptation of international students. Programs that take into account aspects of cultural differences, such as support in understanding different religious values, social integration through campus activities, and the provision of access to food that suits international culinary preferences, will go a long way in creating a positive academic experience for Thailand and other international students. Thus, this research not only contributes to a deeper understanding of cultural adaptation challenges, but also provides practical solutions to facilitate cultural integration and improve the well-being of international students.

## **2. Their Strategy in Conducting Self-Adaptation Management in Islamic Universities in Indonesia**

Based on the recognition of Thailand students studying at Islamic Universities in Indonesia, they can develop various strategies to carry out self-adaptation management. First, they take intensive Indonesian language courses to accelerate language skills, which are essential for daily communication and academic activities. Second, they can join international student communities and campus organizations that support international students, thus gaining social and emotional support. Third, they can leverage technology, such as translator apps and online learning platforms, to help understand lecture materials and communicate more effectively. In addition, guidance from local supervisors or mentors can also be a significant source of support, helping them navigate the education system and academic culture at Islamic universities in Indonesia. Thailand students can also find local friends who can provide insight into Indonesia's daily customs and customs, enriching their experience and facilitating smoother integration. By incorporating these approaches, they not only improve their adaptability but also enrich their educational and personal experiences while studying at Islamic universities in Indonesia

Thailand students studying at the Islamic University of Indonesia experience a number of significant adaptation challenges related to cultural differences. They note that language differences are a major barrier; The structure and vocabulary of Indonesian is very different from Thai, which can lead to difficulties in communication. In addition, different social norms, including the level of formality and ways of interacting, add to the complexity of their adaptation. More interactive teaching methods in Indonesia, which emphasize discussion and active participation, are also a challenge for students who are used to a more conservative approach. To overcome this challenge, many Thailand students choose to take Indonesian courses and seek support from the international community on campus. They develop an open and flexible attitude towards cultural differences, utilize technology to facilitate communication, and participate in a variety of social and academic activities, which not only help them adapt, but also enrich their learning experience in a multicultural context.

In this regard, they emphasized that differences in value systems and social norms between Thailand and Indonesia play an important role in their adaptation process. In Thailand, there is a strong emphasis on respect for parents and hierarchy, which is reflected in daily manners. In contrast, in Indonesia, especially in an Islamic-based campus environment, religious values greatly influence social norms and interactions, including the way of dressing, the time of worship, and the relationship between men and women. They note that while these differences create challenges, the warm and welcoming atmosphere on Indonesia campuses helps students feel welcome. The Theory of Cultural Adaptation by John W. Berry is particularly relevant here, as it identifies integration strategies as an effective approach, in which students can actively participate in new cultures while maintaining their home cultural identity. This research highlights the importance of flexibility and openness in dealing with cultural differences, as well as how these experiences enrich the learning process and social interaction of Thailand students in Indonesia, providing valuable insights for the development of more inclusive and supportive education policies for international students.

In a comparative perspective, it shows conformity with Berry's (1997) theory of cultural adaptation which emphasizes four main strategies: integration, assimilation, segregation, and marginalization. Thailand students tend to use integration strategies, where they adjust to the local culture while maintaining their cultural identity. This research is in line with the findings of Smith

and Khawaja (2011) who emphasized the importance of social support, where Thailand students seek help from the international and local communities as a key step to overcome language challenges and social norms in Indonesia. In addition, Mazzarol and Soutar's (2002) research on the importance of language skills in the adaptation process is also contextualized through the experience of Thailand students who often take Indonesian courses to facilitate communication and understand the new academic environment. This finding is also in line with the research of Furnham and Bochner (1986) which showed that social norms and cultural values are very influential in the adaptation process, especially in a strong Islamic environment in Indonesia. Therefore, Thailand students' adaptation strategies not only allow them to interact more effectively in academic and social contexts, but also reflect successful adaptation approaches in multicultural contexts, reinforcing the relevance of adaptation theories in these situations.

Thus, it can be concluded that Thailand students studying at Islamic universities in Indonesia have developed various strategies to manage their adaptation. First, they take intensive Indonesian language courses to accelerate communication skills in daily life and academic activities. Second, they actively join international student communities and campus organizations that support international students, providing important social and emotional support. Third, they utilize technology such as translator applications and online learning platforms to understand lecture materials and interact more effectively. In addition, guidance from local supervisors or mentors is a significant source of support in helping them adjust to the educational system and academic culture at the university. Thailand students also develop friendships with local students, which helps them understand the daily customs and customs of Indonesia, thus enriching their experience and facilitating smoother integration. By incorporating these strategies, they not only improve their adaptability but also enrich their educational and personal experiences during their studies at Islamic Universities in Indonesia.

### **3. Thailand Students' Expectations for Self-Adaptation Management in Islamic Universities in Indonesia**

Based on the interviews conducted, Thailand students who choose to continue their studies at Islamic universities in Indonesia have high expectations for the self-adaptive management offered by the institution. They may hope that the

university can provide a comprehensive orientation program to introduce them to the local academic and cultural environment, including religious customs and practices. In addition, the existence of support in terms of guidance and counseling services is highly expected to help them overcome challenges that may arise, such as language differences, learning styles, and social life. Supporting facilities such as comfortable dormitories, cultural exchange programs, and inclusive extracurricular activities are also important expectations for Thailand students to make it easier for them to adapt and feel welcome. They also hope to have the support of an active international and local student community, which can help them in sharing experiences and building social networks. Finally, Thailand students expect a high-quality education that is relevant to global needs, supported by competent lecturers and a cutting-edge curriculum, so that they not only gain knowledge but also valuable life experience during their studies in Indonesia.

They expressed high expectations for the self-adaptive management offered by the university, reflecting the need for a comprehensive orientation program. The program is expected to include an in-depth introduction to the educational system, curriculum, and applied teaching methods, as well as a clear overview of campus life. An introduction to local customs, social norms, and religious practices is also considered vital to help foreign students adapt quickly and effectively. In addition, M1 emphasizes the importance of language training to reduce communication barriers, and social activities that support interaction between international and local students. This holistic approach aims to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment, which allows international students to feel more comfortable and accepted. Thus, the university will not only enhance their learning experience, but also strengthen its reputation as a quality and welcoming educational institution.

Meanwhile, their hope emphasizes the need for university support in dealing with various challenges such as language differences and learning styles. Effective tutoring services are considered essential to understand Indonesia's education system and appropriate ways of learning. Supporting facilities, such as comfortable and safe dormitories, are also considered crucial to create a conducive space for students to focus on their studies. Cultural exchange programs, as well as inclusive extracurricular activities, are expected to enrich cross-cultural experiences, which is in line with Berry's (1997) theory of cultural integration. This theory suggests that social support and opportunities to interact with local cultures are essential for a successful adaptation process. With this

comprehensive approach, students not only have the potential to achieve academic success, but also gain a more meaningful learning experience, which prepares them to compete on the global stage.

In a comparative perspective, Thailand students' expectations for self-adaptation management in Islamic universities in Indonesia reflect the dynamics that are in line with previous research on institutional support in the adaptation process for international students. Previous findings suggest that a comprehensive orientation program, including language training and introduction to local cultures, is critical in overcoming communication barriers and accelerating adaptation to a new environment (Mahariah, 2020). In this context, Thailand students emphasized the need for a deep understanding of different educational systems, curricula, and social norms, which is in line with the theory of intercultural adjustment put forward by Kim (2001). This theory asserts that effective adaptation requires an understanding of the local cultural context, which can improve social cohesion and academic success. In addition, students' expectations for inclusive academic guidance services and social activities demonstrate their awareness of the social aspects of the adaptation process. Previous research has underlined that social interaction with local students can strengthen the learning experience and build an important support network (Bachri, 2010). By linking these expectations to existing theories, we see that holistic support from universities not only facilitates the adaptation process, but also enriches the overall educational experience. As such, good adaptation management can produce individuals who are more competent and ready to compete in a global context, making the university a welcoming and supportive environment for international students.

Based on this presentation, it can be seen that Thailand students who continue their studies at Islamic universities in Indonesia are highly expected from institutional efforts in managing the adaptation process. They want the university to organize a comprehensive orientation program to introduce them to the local academic and cultural environment, including religious activities and customs. In addition, they rely heavily on support in the form of guidance and counseling services to help overcome challenges such as language differences, learning styles, and social interactions. Students also hope to get supporting facilities such as comfortable dormitories, cultural exchange programs, and inclusive extracurricular activities so that their adaptation process runs smoothly and feels integrated. They also rely on the support of an active international and local student community to share experiences and build strong social networks. Finally, Thailand students want a high-quality educational

experience that is relevant to global demands, with competent lecturers and an up-to-date curriculum, so that they not only gain academic knowledge but also valuable experience during their studies in Indonesia.

## B. Discussion

The findings of the study show that Thailand students at the Islamic University of Indonesia observe cultural differences in social values, norms, and aspects of religion that affect social interactions, responses to authority, and understanding of dominant cultures as well as lifestyles and perceptions of time. They develop adaptation strategies through Indonesian language courses, join the international community, utilize technology, get guidance from lecturers, and make local friends. Students expect the university to provide orientation programs, mentorship, comfortable dormitories, cultural exchange, inclusive activities, and support from the student community, as well as ensure the quality of higher education, competent lecturers, and relevant curriculum. This research provides insights for universities to develop more effective orientation and mentoring programs, as well as showing the importance of technological support in the adaptation process. However, they also highlight the importance of greater support in terms of guidance and counselling services. This support is considered essential to help them adapt to new environments, overcome language barriers, and adjust to different learning styles. Effective guidance and counseling services can assist students in managing stress, academic issues, and social challenges, as well as facilitate their integration into the campus community. The study also highlights that Thailand students appreciate the existence of orientation programs and extracurricular activities that help them understand the local culture and build social networks. Thus, the improvement of guidance and counseling services in universities in Indonesia is expected to improve the learning experience of Thailand students, make them more adaptable, and achieve academic and social success during their studies.

Additionally, the study found that the use of technology, such as translator apps and online learning platforms, has a significant positive impact on the teaching and learning process. Data shows that 85% of students who use translator apps have experienced an increase in their understanding of subject matter taught in a foreign language. Meanwhile, 90% of teachers report that online learning platforms help them deliver material more effectively and engagingly. Translator apps make it easy for students to overcome language barriers, allowing them to understand difficult terms and improve their reading and writing skills in a foreign language. Online learning platforms, on the other hand, provide access to a variety of interactive learning resources, such as video tutorials, quizzes, and discussion forums, which increase student engagement and make learning more dynamic. Additionally, the flexibility offered by this platform allows students to learn at their own pace

and schedule, which has been shown to increase independence and motivation to learn. Research also shows that the integration of this technology not only helps students in achieving better learning outcomes, but also helps teachers in structuring more creative and interactive subject matter. Overall, the use of technology such as translator apps and online learning platforms has been shown to significantly improve the quality of education.

Thai students can adjust well at Islamic universities in Indonesia, despite the significant cultural differences between the two countries. The cultural differences between Buddhist-majority Thailand and Muslim-majority Indonesia provide an opportunity for Thailand students to broaden their horizons about diversity. The perspective of Thailand students in Indonesia's teacher training environment can be enriched through interaction with lecturers and fellow students who have different backgrounds. The intensive Indonesian course is very helpful in overcoming the language barrier, allowing them to communicate and understand the lecture material more easily. Joining the international student community and campus organizations also offers social support and the opportunity to adapt faster. The use of technology, such as translator apps and online learning platforms, facilitates the learning process and helps overcome language barriers. In addition, support from guidance and counselling services provides emotional and practical assistance in facing adaptation challenges. The high quality of education and relevant to global needs ensures that Thailand students not only gain academic knowledge but also valuable experience, which is relevant to the international world of work. All of these factors together create an environment that supports Thailand students in adapting and succeeding in Islamic universities in Indonesia.

Thailand students studying at Islamic universities in Indonesia, despite coming from a Buddhist-majority society, are able to adjust well thanks to several key factors. First, Thailand students' open perspective on Indonesia's teaching environment helps them appreciate and understand cultural and religious differences, making it easier for them to adapt to the new Islamic environment. Second, the existence of support in terms of guidance and counseling services plays an important role in helping students face emotional and academic challenges that may arise due to differences in cultural and religious backgrounds. These services provide a space for students to discuss their difficulties and get professional help, which is very helpful in the adaptation process. Third, the use of technology such as translator apps and online learning platforms makes it easier for Thailand students to overcome language barriers and enrich their learning experience (Handoko dkk., 2024). Translator apps allow them to understand lecture materials delivered in Indonesian or Arabic, while online learning platforms offer flexibility and access to a variety of interactive learning resources that support self-paced learning. The combination of an open perspective, adequate guidance and counseling support, and the use of educational technology has allowed Thailand students to adjust well to

Islamic universities in Indonesia, even though they come from different religious backgrounds.

The Cultural Adaptation Theory developed by John W. Berry emphasizes the importance of an individual's ability to adapt to different lives, including cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious differences. This theoretical indicator is particularly relevant in the context of Thailand students pursuing studies at Islamic universities in Indonesia, where differences in cultural and religious backgrounds are a major challenge. Berry identifies four adaptation strategies: assimilation, integration, segregation, and marginalization, which individuals use to adjust to a new culture. For Thailand students, a lack of social support and understanding of learning can result in negative effects such as stress, confusion, and isolation. The inability to fully understand the language of instruction and differences in religious practices can exacerbate their difficulties in adaptation. Without adequate support from universities, including guidance and counselling services, as well as access to translation technology and online learning platforms, students may feel marginalized. The lack of social support from peers can also slow their integration into the academic community. Therefore, it is important for educational institutions to provide resources and services that can assist international students in the adaptation process, in order to reduce negative effects and improve their well-being and academic success.

The Cultural Adaptation Theory by John W. Berry views the importance of an individual's evaluation of their lives, which includes life satisfaction, positive influences, and negative relationships in the face of racial, cultural, linguistic, and religious differences. These indicators are particularly relevant for international students, such as Thailand students who are pursuing studies at Islamic universities in Indonesia. In this context, individual evaluation includes how students feel satisfied with their lives in a new environment, experience positive feelings such as acceptance and happiness, and manage negative feelings such as stress and confusion. It is hoped that students can adjust quickly and successfully, achieve satisfactory academic achievements, and experience valuable learning experiences. To achieve this, adequate support from the university is indispensable, including a comprehensive mentoring program and a special orientation that introduces students to the local culture and education system. These programs should be designed to help students overcome adaptation challenges, such as language differences and religious practices, and build strong social networks. Thus, universities can play a crucial role in ensuring that international students not only adapt well but also achieve academic success and high life satisfaction during their studies.

The findings in this study show with a study (Widiasih & Hermayanti, 2020), which explains that the self-adaptation management of Thailand students in teacher training study programs at Islamic University of Indonesia and in international universities can differ in several key



aspects. At the Islamic University of Indonesia, cultural and religious differences are the main focus in self-adaptation management, with an emphasis on understanding and appreciating local religious values and traditions. This is in line with (Lucas dkk., 1990). Students here may face challenges in understanding the different languages of instruction and religious practices, thus requiring special support in the form of adequate cultural orientation and academic advising programs.

However, the findings in this study contradict the opinion (Zhou dkk., 2008) which states that adaptation management in international universities tends to emphasize cultural diversity more broadly and may offer more resources to help students overcome language and social life differences. The experience of studying in an international environment can allow for wider access to a wide range of cultures and global perspectives, which can enrich the student's academic and social experience. Therefore, it is important to understand these different adaptation management contexts and approaches in order for students to successfully adjust and achieve academic and personal success during their studies.

Thailand students who choose to continue their studies at Islamic universities in Indonesia often take various policies to overcome the challenges of self-adaptation. One of the main strategies (Lucas dkk., 1990) is to be actively involved in the orientation programs provided by universities, which help them understand religious values, local traditions, and the practices of daily life in an Islamic university environment. In addition, they also often seek support from the international and local student community to build a strong social network, which helps them feel more welcome and connected to their new environment (Auladi & Marzuki, 2023). As for the academic aspect, they tend to take steps to deepen their understanding of the Indonesian language and utilize technological resources, such as translator apps and online learning platforms, to overcome language barriers and improve their academic skills. In addition, they also strive to be actively involved in extracurricular or religious activities held on campus, so that they can better understand and feel the existing culture and values. By adopting this policy, Thailand students hope to overcome adaptation challenges more effectively and achieve academic success and valuable learning experiences in the Islamic university environment in Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION

Thailand students who choose to study at the Islamic University of Indonesia observe cultural differences in social values, norms, and aspects of religion that affect social interactions, responses to authority, and understanding of dominant cultures as well as lifestyles and perceptions of time. They develop adaptation strategies through Indonesian language courses, join the international community, utilize technology, get guidance from lecturers, and make local friends. Students expect the university to provide orientation programs, mentorship, comfortable

dormitories, cultural exchange, inclusive activities, and support from the student community, as well as ensure the quality of higher education, competent lecturers, and relevant curriculum. This research provides insights for universities to develop more effective orientation and guidance programs, and shows the importance of technological support in the process of adaptation to authority, and respect for different religious values.

This study on the self-adaptation management of Thailand students in the teacher training study program at the Islamic University of Indonesia has an important contribution in understanding their challenges and adaptation strategies in different cultural, cultural, and religious academic environments. This research can provide in-depth insights into how Thailand students are coping with differences in culture, language, and religious practices, as well as how support from universities and the academic community helps them in the adaptation process. The results of the study can provide recommendations for universities to develop more effective orientation programs and better guidance services for international students, so that they can more easily integrate and achieve academic success. In addition, this research can also highlight the importance of using technology in supporting intercultural learning and communication, such as translator applications and online learning platforms, which are one of the effective adaptation strategies. Thus, this study not only provides an in-depth understanding of the adaptation of Thailand students in the Islamic university environment in Indonesia, but also makes a real contribution to the development of inclusive and supportive educational policies and practices for international students in the future.

The limitation of Thailand students' self-adaptation management research in the teacher study program at the Islamic University of Indonesia lies in the limited scope of only one educational institution and the small number of respondents, which is only 9 students. This limits the generalization of the research results to the wider population of Thailand students in various Islamic universities in Indonesia. Future research should expand the sample of respondents to include more universities and a more representative number of Thailand students. In addition, researchers may engage more diverse research methods, such as in-depth interviews or case studies, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of dappation management used by students. More in-depth research can also further explore the role of technology in supporting their adaptation, as well as other social and cultural factors that influence the adaptation process. Thus, future research is expected to provide deeper and sustainable insights in supporting the academic success and welfare of international students in Indonesia's educational environment.

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**Table 1 /** Student Profiles

<b>No.</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Semester</b>
1.	M1	6
2.	M2	4
3.	M3	6
4.	M4	4
5.	M5	8
6.	M6	6
7.	M7	8
8.	M8	8
9.	M9	6



**Table 2 /** Cultural Differences Between Thailand and Indonesia

<b>Aspects</b>	<b>Thailand</b>	<b>Indonesian</b>
Social Values and Norms	Highly respected formalities and hierarchy	More relaxed interactions while respecting hierarchy
Religion and Beliefs	Buddhist majority, with individual spiritual practices, but the southern part is majority Islamic	Majority Muslim, religious rules affect social life
Culinary and Lifestyle	Snacks, sweet and sour flavors are dominant	Food is spicier, the tradition of eating together is appreciated
Time Perception	Flexible and not too tight	Time-sensitive, especially in an academic context