

## EXPLORATION OF SELF DISCLOSURE: A PSYCHOSOCIAL BARRIER OF MERANTAU STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** *Self Disclosure is one of the social skills that must be possessed, especially for overseas students. These social skills will give birth to social interactions that will create good psychosocial conditions in social relationships. This study aims to describe the level of self-disclosure of overseas students in the Guidance and Counseling study program at the Bukittinggi State Islamic University. This type of research includes a quantitative descriptive research instrument, namely the self-disclosure scale. The population in the study were guidance and counseling students from outside West Sumatra, totaling 43 people. Sampling was taken using a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive sampling technique. The results of the study revealed that the self-disclosure level of overseas students at Bukittinggi State Islamic University was in the moderate category with 65.11% while the highest self-disclosure aspect was in the aspect of cultural perception. Research findings based on gender reveal that female students are more open than male students, namely in the aspects of perception of culture, perception of gender, perception of listeners, and perception of topics while men are more open in aspects of self-knowledge*

**Keywords:** : *Self Disclosure; Overseas students; Psychosocial*

## INTRODUCTION

Merantau is part of Indonesian culture as a form of independence (Hediati & Nawangsari, 2020). One of the causes for someone to wander aims to study knowledge in the hope of getting a good living in overseas lands. Overseas students have the goal of obtaining a higher quality education in the field they want (Permata, D. C., & Listiyandini, 2015). The phenomenon of overseas students can improve the quality of education and improve the quality themselves to become individuals who are responsible for making decisions (Lingga, R. W. W., & Tuapattinaja, 2012). One of them was a student of the Guidance and Counseling Study Program at the Sjech M Djamil Djambek Bukittinggi State Islamic University (UIN Bukittinggi), where there were students from various areas outside West Sumatra such as Riau Province, Riau Islands, Central Java, Jambi, Bengkulu.

When students are in overseas areas, they will certainly face challenges because they have to adapt to a new culture, a new environment that is very different from their previous environment and culture (Brown et al., 2013). Students who merantau to different regions or countries will face new conditions and cultures that may be very different from those they experienced before. This can include different languages, different social norms, and different lifestyles (Maulani, 2022). Adjusting to this new culture can be a challenge, and students need to learn to interact and adapt (Thariq & Anshori, 2017).

Overseas students will be faced with conditions such as the absence of parents, different friends, adjustment to new norms, and learning to socialize in that environment (Lingga, R. W. W., & Tuapattinaja, 2012; Hediati, 2020). Several previous studies revealed that students who are far from their families, live alone, and feel longing for family, or homesickness which causes students to feel sad (Aulia, 2018; Muti'ah, 2021). Given the problems faced by overseas students, overseas students need to learn to adapt to new cultures, environments and challenges that may be very different from what they are familiar with. Good self-adjustment helps them achieve academic success (Saputra et al., 2020), manage mental well-being, and build meaningful social relationships (Zarror et al., 2021).

Adjustment is one of the psychological aspects that need to be developed in individual life. For individuals to be able to adjust to the social environment, social skills are needed. One of the social skills needed is self-disclosure. Self-disclosure refers to the process by which individuals reveal information about themselves, either intentionally or unintentionally, to others (Towner et al., 2022). Self-disclosure involves disclosing information about oneself that is not known by others (Arifa<sup>1</sup> & Sari, 2023). Self-disclosure is seen as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon with significant implications for our personal and interpersonal lives. Self-disclosure plays an important role in the development and maintenance of close relationships. Self-disclosure can serve as a form of therapy for individuals who have difficulty expressing their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.

Problematic or low self-disclosure will result in a student's psychosocial condition. The psychosocial condition is the attempt to understand, explain, and predict how an individual's thoughts, feelings, and actions are influenced by what he perceives as the thoughts, feelings, and actions of other people (whose presence may be actual, imagined, or implied) (Wilson, 2022; Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2023). Psychosocial is also the experience and behavior of individual humans as influenced or generated by social situations (Jalal et al., 2022). These experiences and behaviors are influenced by social situations where

these social situations occur due to interactions between individuals and other individuals (Rahmania, 2023). Therefore, so that psychosocial conditions do not hinder interaction and adjustment, overseas students need to have self-disclosure skills.

Self-disclosure skills as social behavior that is influenced by culture (Seo et al., 2022) namely subjective culture such as attitudes, norms, and values in certain groups. A cultural perspective in self-disclosure with other people from different tribes, regions, and nations. Self-disclosure is heavily influenced by culture. Culture has a big role in educating a person's self-disclosure behavior (Seward, 2023). There is a culture that is closed and difficult to express itself to others and there is a culture that inhibits by covering up the right thing. Individuals who can open themselves will be able to express themselves appropriately, be able to adapt, and be more confident (Idaningsih, 2023).

The existence of self-disclosure will develop interpersonal relationships (Halversen et al., 2022; Cho et al., 2022). Self-disclosure is a special form of conversation in which a person shares information and personal feelings with others and conveys the most personal things to others (Wibisono & Pratisti, 2022). Relationship closeness will develop through four stages, namely (Watson, DL, deBortali-Tregerthan, G., & Frank, 1984):

1. Orientation stage

This stage is the initial meeting where a person only gives brief and shallow information, to create a good first impression. At this stage, individuals tend to provide information briefly and superficially in an effort to create a good first impression. This is the initial stage in the self-disclosure process, where people may feel the need to build a positive impression of others before they decide to open up more deeply. The orientation stage often involves light conversation and topics, such as the weather or daily activities, that are not too personal or deep (Ann Demarais and Valerie White, 2005). At this stage, individuals may feel wary and cautious in sharing more personal information because they don't yet feel completely comfortable or trusting other people. This is the stage where communication is more formal and less information is shared. In addition, the orientation stage also creates the basis for further development of the relationship. Success in creating a positive impression and feeling of comfort at this stage can open the door to more self-disclosure in the future. This is the stage where individuals begin to understand how to interact with others in certain situations, and create the foundation necessary to build deeper relationships.

2. The investigating stage ( exploratory affective stage ): develops relationships by conveying broader information but has not yet touched on personal aspects. . This stage is an important step in the process of developing interpersonal relationships. This gives individuals the opportunity to grow closer to each other, get to know each other more deeply, and build a strong foundation for deeper self-disclosure in the future. At the same time, maintaining appropriate privacy boundaries is important to ensure comfort and respect in social interactions.
3. Affective stage: people begin to develop close friendships, each of whom has begun to tell different aspects of himself and to give praise and criticism. Giving constructive criticism is a great way to open up. . This stage is an important step in the process of developing interpersonal relationships. This gives individuals the opportunity to grow closer to each other, get to know each other more deeply, and build a strong foundation for deeper self-disclosure in the future. At the same time,

maintaining appropriate privacy boundaries is important to ensure comfort and respect in social interactions.

4. The fourth stage is the stable exchange stage: feelings that are very personal and accessible to other individuals have emerged. The fourth stage is the peak stage in the development of interpersonal relationships. This is a time when individuals feel very close and connected to each other. They feel comfortable talking about very personal things and have very deep feelings for each other. This is the stage where the relationship reaches its maximum level of openness and depth, creating a solid foundation for a strong and meaningful relationship.

There are five dimensions of self-disclosure as stated by Culbert (Kim et al., 2015), namely :

1. Accuracy  
This accuracy relates to the information conveyed that is relevant to the events in which the individual is involved or not. Sometimes self-disclosure may deviate from the norm in a specific relationship if the individual is not aware of these norms so he must learn to be responsible. Appropriate and appropriate self-disclosure increases positive reactions from participants or listeners.
2. Motivation  
Motivation relates to what motivates a person to express himself to others. Encouragement from within relates to what is the desire or goal of someone doing self-disclosure. While from the outside, influenced by the family environment, school, and work.
3. Time  
Choosing the right time is very important to determine whether someone can open up or not. If the time is not right, that is, the condition is tired and in a sad state, the person tends to be less open with other people. While the time is right, namely happy or happy, he tends to be open with other people.
4. Intensity  
A person's intensity in self-disclosure depends on who a person discloses himself, whether close friends, parents, casual friends, or people he just met.
5. Depth and Breadth  
The depth of self-disclosure is divided into two dimensions, namely shallow and deep self-disclosure.

Self-disclosure is seen as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon with significant implications for our personal and interpersonal lives. Self-disclosure plays an important role in the development and maintenance of close relationships (Tardy & Smithson, 2018; Sprecher et al., 2018). Self-disclosure is influenced by the environment in which a person behaves. The environment will affect the formation of culture. A culture that influences the process of forming social behavior is subjective. Self-disclosure skills as a social behavior that is influenced by culture, namely subjective culture such as attitudes, norms, and values in certain groups. A cultural perspective in self-disclosure with other people from different tribes, regions, and nations. Self-disclosure is heavily influenced by culture. Culture has a big role in educating a person's self-disclosure behavior (Seward, 2023). There is a culture that is

closed and difficult to express itself to others and there is a culture that inhibits by covering up the right thing.

Several factors affect self-disclosure (DeVito, 2015)

1. Self Knowledge

Self-knowledge is key in self-disclosure ability. Individuals who have a good understanding of themselves, including their social preferences and level of openness, tend to be more able to effectively self-disclose (Alfazani, 2021). They can understand their personal boundaries, as well as when and to what extent they feel comfortable opening up to others. Thus, self-knowledge helps individuals regulate their level of self-disclosure according to the situation and relationships with others. In this regard, self-knowledge plays an important role in enabling individuals to communicate more authentically, in accordance with their personality and values, which in turn can strengthen social bonds and human relationships.

Highly sociable and extroverted people provide more information to others than less sociable and introverted people. self-knowledge can develop because of the cognitive component (Edwin, 2019). The aspect of self-knowledge is an individual reflection which is the result of individual thinking in this case related to differences between individuals and the need to socialize with other humans.

2. Perception of Cultural Aspects (BDY)

Individuals who have good self-disclosure will understand the cultural differences that develop in themselves and the culture that develops in others. individuals will try to adjust to other people's cultures so that they can be accepted and not offend other people's cultures (Aririguzoh, 2022). Cultural factors affect individual behavior when communicating with individuals with different cultures in terms of verbal and non-verbal verbal (Ebesu Hubbard, 2022; Oloidi, 2023)

3. Gender

Gender differences make men reluctant to talk about themselves. Women are considered to open up more than men and open themselves deeper and deeper as a form of effort toward a more intimate relationship (DeVito, 2015). Generally, men tend to be more reluctant to discuss personal and emotional aspects about themselves, while women tend to be more open and more comfortable in talking about their personal feelings and experiences. This can be influenced by social and cultural factors, where gender stereotypes often direct communication behavior. Women are often expected to be more expressive and emotional, while men may feel the need to demonstrate masculinity by refraining from talking about their feelings.

4. Listener

Individuals are more open to people they like and trust. In the counseling process clients will prefer counselors who have self-disclosure (Ifdil, 2013). The counselor's self-disclosure as a listener influences the behavior and feelings of the counselee because he feels accepted by the counselor. The counselor's self-openness as a listener can create a supportive climate where counselees feel comfortable and safe to talk about their personal problems (Lumongga, 2017; Rasimin & Hamdi, 2021). When counselors demonstrate their own self-disclosure, this can stimulate the counselee to be more open and describe their personal experiences. This is important because self-disclosure in counseling can help build a more intimate relationship and strengthen

the bond between the counselor and the counselee. Thus, a positive relationship between the listener (counselor) and the discloser (counselee) is key in facilitating effective self-disclosure in the counseling context (Yunita, 2016).

#### 5. Topic and Flow

Individuals tend to choose topics when communicating with others. Individuals are more likely to disclose favorable information than unfavorable information. The more personal the information and the more negative the topic, the less likely the individual is to disclose himself because the individual is trying to protect his information (DeVito, 2015)

The phenomenon of guidance and counseling students who come from overseas is faced with cultural differences, a new environment that is very different from their environment and culture. This can be seen in daily interactions, more gathering with friends from the same area, more open conversations with other regional friends compared to friends from other areas, and choosing to sit close to friends from the same area. The behavior of grouping one area is because they feel there are similarities with one another, so closeness appears. Proximity is a form of emergence of self-disclosure. But of course, this cannot be done continuously, because the lecture process will require students to work in groups together to do assignments, field observations, and practice lecture activities, which of course cannot choose friends from different regions, if this continues it will also have an impact on student academics. Therefore, this research wants to explore the self-disclosure ability of overseas guidance and counseling students from outside West Sumatra.

## METODOLOGY

The research design used is descriptive and comparative research. The results of the study will describe a variable as it is, then look at the differences in self-disclosure in students from aspects of gender and aspects of self-disclosure. The population in this study were guidance and counseling students from outside West Sumatra or referred to as overseas students from semester 2 to semester 8, totaling 43 respondents. The sampling technique in this study is a non-probability sampling technique with purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique for data sources with certain considerations. The instrument used is the Self Disclosure Scale which contains four indicators, namely self-knowledge, perceptions of culture, perceptions of gender, perceptions of listeners, and Topics of Conversation. The results of data measurement are calculated using a quantitative descriptive technique which is calculated using a percentage technique.

## RESULTS and DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Self Disclosure of descriptive data**  
**N = 43**

|                        | N  | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Means   | std.<br>Deviation |
|------------------------|----|-------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------|
| Knowledge of Self      | 43 | 16.00 | 4.00    | 20.00   | 14,0000 | 3.84212           |
| Perceptions of Culture | 43 | 14.00 | 6.00    | 20.00   | 14.6744 | 3.61031           |

|                         |    |       |      |       |         |         |
|-------------------------|----|-------|------|-------|---------|---------|
| Perception of Gender    | 43 | 14.00 | 4.00 | 18.00 | 10.8140 | 3.23122 |
| Perception of Listeners | 43 | 13.00 | 7.00 | 20.00 | 13.5814 | 3.28222 |
| Perception of the Topic | 43 | 12.00 | 6.00 | 18.00 | 12.4651 | 2.82294 |
| Valid N (listwise)      | 43 |       |      |       |         |         |

The table above is descriptive data that provides an overview of a number of indicators related to self-disclosure. The results show that:

Knowledge of Self; This variable reflects an individual's level of knowledge or understanding of themselves. This data covers 43 samples, with a range of values between 4.00 and 20.00. The mean knowledge of self was about 14.00, with a standard deviation of about 3.84. This shows the variation in the level of self-knowledge among the sample.

Perception of Culture; This variable measures an individual's perception of culture or cultural values in the context of self-disclosure. This data also includes 43 samples, with a range of values between 6.00 and 20.00. The mean perception of culture is about 14.67, with a standard deviation of about 3.61. This shows the variation in perception of culture among the sample.

Perception of Gender; This variable reflects how individuals perceive the role of gender in self-disclosure. This data also included 43 samples, with a range of values between 4.00 and 18.00. The mean perception of gender was about 10.81, with a standard deviation of about 3.23. This shows the variation in perception of gender among the sample.

Perception of the Listener; This variable measures how individuals perceive the role of the listener in the self-disclosure process. This data also includes 43 samples, with a range of values between 7.00 and 20.00. The mean perception of the listener was about 13.58, with a standard deviation of about 3.28. This shows the variation in perception towards the listener among the sample.

Perception of Topic; This variable reflects how individuals perceive the types of topics that they find suitable for self-disclosure. This data also included 43 samples, with a range of values between 6.00 and 18.00. The mean perception of topic was about 12.47, with a standard deviation of about 2.82. This shows the variation in perception of the topic among the samples.

In the overall analysis, the data reflects variations in self-knowledge, perceptions of culture, gender, audience and topic in the context of self-disclosure among the sample of 43 respondents. This data can be used to understand patterns and trends in self-disclosure and how certain factors may influence such behavior.

To see the classification of high and low levels of self-disclosure in students, the data is classified into three categories, namely high, medium, and low as illustrated in Table 2 below:

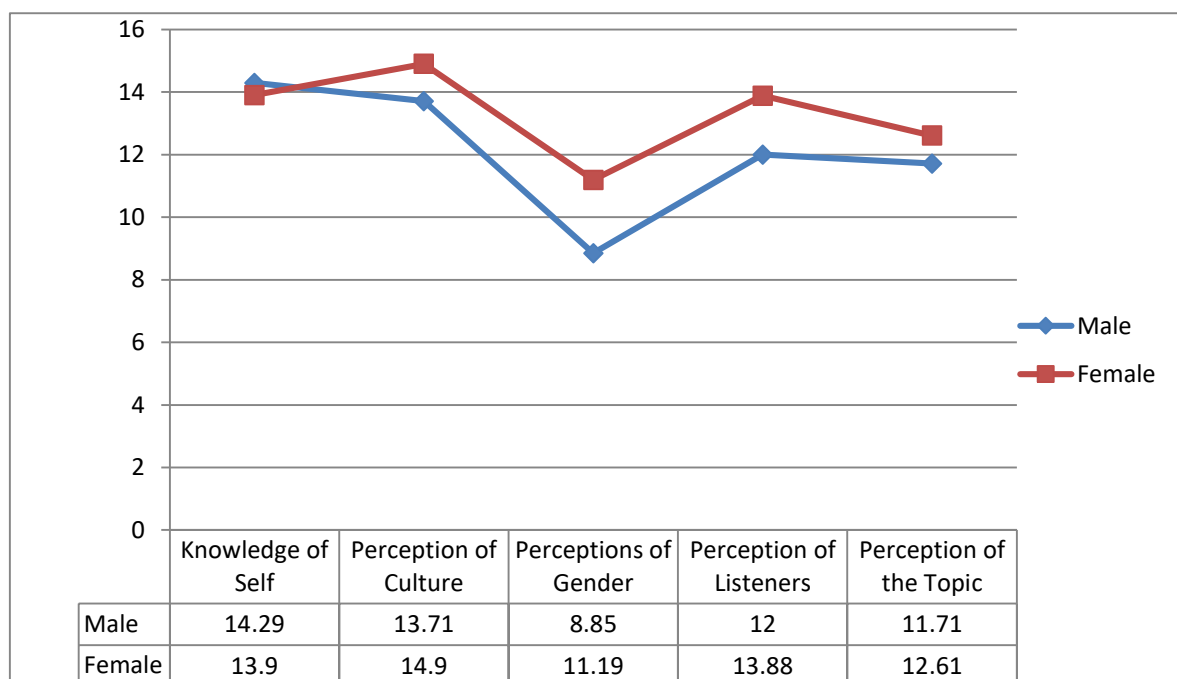
**Table 2: Self Disclosure Category**  
**N= 43**

| No | Category  | range         | F  | %      |
|----|-----------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1  | Tall      | $X \geq 73.3$ | 12 | 27.91% |
| 2  | Currently | 46.7-73.3     | 28 | 65.11% |
| 3  | Low       | $X \leq 46.7$ | 3  | 6.97%  |

Table 2 illustrates the results of self-disclosure categorization based on certain ranges. The results show that of the total sample (43 respondents), the majority of respondents, 65.11%, fall into the moderate self-disclosure category, with self-disclosure scores ranging from 46.7 to 73.3. Furthermore, around 27.91% of the respondents fell into the high self-disclosure category, with self-disclosure scores reaching or exceeding 73.3. Only a small proportion, 6.97%, fell into the low self-disclosure category, with self-disclosure scores less than or equal to 46.7.

The results of this study show that most respondents have a level of self-disclosure that is in the middle, which can be interpreted as a balance between openness and closure in communicating about themselves. The high and low self-disclosure groups represent minorities who may be more open or more closed in terms of self-disclosure. Further analysis may be needed to understand the factors underlying the differences in self-disclosure between these groups and their impact in the context of social interactions and personal relationships.

The next finding regarding the classification of self-disclosure based on gender, revealed the data as illustrated in the following graph:



Graph 1: Comparison of Self-Disclosure of Male and Female Overseas Students

The data presented is a comparison between men and women in several variables related to self-disclosure. The following is a description of the data:

Knowledge of Self; The average self-knowledge of males is about 14.29, while females have an average of about 13.9. This shows that men tend to have a slightly higher level of self-knowledge than women. Perception of Culture (BDY); Males have an average perception of culture of about 13.71, while females have an average of about 14.9. In this

case, women had a higher mean score, suggesting that they may be more aware or more sensitive to cultural aspects in the context of self-disclosure. Perception of Gender; The mean perception of gender for males was about 8.85, while females had a mean of about 11.19. This suggests that females may be more attentive to the role of gender in self-disclosure compared to males. Perception of the listener; Men had a mean perception of the listener of about 12, while women had a mean of about 13.88. This suggests that women may have a higher level of awareness regarding the role of the listener in the self-disclosure process. Perception of Topic; Men had a mean perception of topic of about 11.71, while women had a mean of about 12.61. Women had a slightly higher mean in terms of perception of topic, suggesting that they may be more attentive to the type of topics discussed in self-disclosure.

These results suggest that there are variations in perceptions and knowledge about self-disclosure between men and women in the context of the observed variables.

## DISCUSSION

This discussion reflects the results of research which reveals several relevant findings in the context of self-disclosure, especially for guidance and counseling students who are migrants from areas outside West Sumatra. The research results show that the majority of migrant students fall into the moderate self-disclosure category, with a percentage of around 65.11%. This shows that most of them have a balanced level of self-disclosure, where they tend to be neither too closed nor too open in talking about themselves.

This indicates that the majority of them have a balanced level of self-disclosure, where they tend to be neither too closed nor too open in talking about themselves. This phenomenon can be interpreted as an attempt to maintain a balance between maintaining privacy and sharing information with others. This balanced self-disclosure may be an appropriate strategy for maintaining comfort and positive interpersonal relationships in a new environment, especially for migrant students who face cultural differences and different social environments.

One of the prominent findings in this research is the aspect of perception of culture which has the highest score of 14.67 compared to the other three aspects. These results confirm the role of culture in influencing a person's self-disclosure behavior. Culture reflects the norms, values, and rules that govern an individual's daily life, and migrants often have to deal with a culture that is different from their place of origin. In this context, the level of sensitivity to culture and the values contained in the new culture may be the main factor influencing self-disclosure. Research by Wang et al. supports these findings by emphasizing the role of culture in self-disclosure (Wang et al., 2023).

Furthermore, significant differences in self-disclosure based on gender is also an important finding in this study. Women tend to have higher self-disclosure abilities than men, especially in aspects such as perception of culture, gender, audience and topic. These findings are consistent with previous research that has identified gender differences in interpersonal communication. Men tend to be more reluctant to discuss their feelings and personal experiences, while women are more open in this regard. Previous research carried out by Nirwana on secondary school students also observed that female students were higher in self-disclosure than male students (Nirwana, 2012).

The next finding that needs to be considered is the difference in self-disclosure between first semester students and final semester students. The results of the research show

that final semester students, who have been away for longer and exploring life in overseas cities, may have a different level of self-disclosure than early semester students who have just migrated. Final semester students may be more open in talking about themselves because of their broader life experience in an overseas environment. This underscores the role of experience and time in the development of one's self-disclosure. This is also in line with previous research proving that the initial perception of life abroad changes when the subject begins to settle and explore daily life in an overseas city (Hediati & Nawangsari, 2020). This will prove that there is a difference in perception between first semester students and final semester students, because final semester students have explored overseas cities more than new students.

Based on the research background, there is the importance of understanding and adapting to Minangkabau culture for migrant students who face cultural differences with their current place of residence. Minangkabau cultural traditions have rules and norms that regulate the lives of the Minangkabau people. Migrant students who come from various cultural backgrounds must be able to understand and respect Minangkabau cultural values, including the rules that apply in the overseas context (Kosasih, 2013; Munir, 2013; Febriani Sya, 2021). When it comes to migrating, the value of humility as expressed by the proverb "Manyauk di ilia-ilia" (Checking under and under) is very important. This emphasizes that as minority immigrants, individuals must be good at adapting and respecting local cultural values.

Along with cultural values, the ability to adapt is an important factor in the context of self-disclosure. An individual's ability to adapt to different social environments can influence how they communicate and open up to others. Social skills, including self-disclosure abilities, can help individuals interact effectively in different environments. In the context of migrant students, ability Self-disclosure can be an important tool in building healthy and positive social relationships, especially with fellow students and the local community.

It is important to emphasize that self-disclosure is a highly personal and contextual process. This means that a person's level and style of self-disclosure will vary depending on the situation, culture, and other factors. The results of this study provide an initial picture of the self-disclosure patterns of migrant students, but it is important to remember that self-disclosure is an individual response to various complex factors. Additionally, this research highlights gender differences in self-disclosure, with women tending to be more open in talking about themselves. This is consistent with literature which has identified that women are often more open in communication, both as communicators and communicators.

This research can make an important contribution to the understanding of self-disclosure in the context of migrant students and the role of culture and gender in self-disclosure. However, for a deeper understanding, further research could explore other factors that influence self-disclosure, including more extensive overseas experiences.

## CONCLUSION

This research reveals a number of relevant findings in the context of self-disclosure among migrant guidance and counseling students from outside West Sumatra. The majority of migrant students fall into the moderate self-disclosure category, indicating that they maintain a balance between privacy and self-disclosure. The perception aspect of culture has the highest score, emphasizing the important role of culture in influencing self-disclosure

behavior. Findings also indicated significant differences in self-disclosure based on gender, with women tending to be more open than men.

The implications in the counseling context of the findings of this research are very relevant. Counselors need to understand and take into account differences in culture, gender and life experiences in approaching clients. In counseling sessions, it is important to create a safe and supportive environment where clients feel they can open up without fear or discomfort. Knowledge of the role of culture in self-disclosure can help counselors provide better support for migrant students who face significant cultural differences.

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