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CULTURAL ADJUSTMENTS FOR OUT-OF-TOWN STUDENTS TO OVERCOMING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

**Isna Nur Aini¹, Charishma Devi Risty Mustaniroh², Bintang Ananta Elyana Putri³,
Berlian Mayang Indraswari⁴, Alamanda Wahyu Isnawati⁵**

¹State University of Surabaya, Lidah Wetan, Sub-District Lakarsantri, Surabaya, Indonesia,
isna8866@gmail.com

²State University of Surabaya, Lidah Wetan, Sub-District Lakarsantri, Surabaya, Indonesia,
devvdevi30@gmail.com

³State University of Surabaya, Lidah Wetan, Sub-District Lakarsantri, Surabaya, Indonesia,
bintanganantaelyanaputri@gmail.com

⁴State University of Surabaya, Lidah Wetan, Sub-District Lakarsantri, Surabaya, Indonesia,
mayangberlian1103@gmail.com

⁵State University of Surabaya, Lidah Wetan, Sub-District Lakarsantri, Surabaya, Indonesia,
alamandaisnawati@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Education is an important step to achieving dreams, so that everyone want to get a higher level of education, specifically the college. To achieve this dream, so many people decide to leave their origin area so that they can get into the best universities. Deciding to leave means that they have to adapt to a new environment that has a different culture from the culture of origin in their home. Each person adaptation process is different from other. This research aims to find out the various ways of out of town students in the adaptation process due to cultural differences. This research is a descriptive qualitative method. Data was collected from various literature sources such as articles, journals, and documents with similar themes. The data analysis technique in this study uses data reduction. The study results shows that there are various ways that out of town students can adapt to their new environment. Some ways of adaptation that can be done are by: respecting and appreciating other regional cultures, communicating with members of other cultures, and trying to adjust themselves so that they can do social interactions with others and they can adapt freely.

Keywords: out of town students, cultural adjustment, cultural diversity

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INTRODUCTION

The need for improved self-competence in line with the era development for a person to be more competitive in living his life. Examples of this include the need to obtain the job that one wants, boost social dignity, and be able to get along with people in his social environment. Continuing education, whether at state universities or private universities, is one way to make this a reality. According to Indonesia's Central Bureau of Statistics, the total of college students in Indonesia in early 2023 reached 7.8 million students. Of these, around 3.3 million students are in public universities and 4.4 million students are in private universities.

People who want to continue their education to a higher level usually face a number of obstacles. Apart from financial difficulties, one of the most significant is the issue of access to educational institutions. Aside from those who live near education centers and attend the college of their choice, who are often from villages or far from education centers, and people who want to attend certain universities but are unable to do so because they are not locals, inevitably they have to move outside the region or city. The results of a survey conducted by APTISI DIY on 51 private universities in Yogyakarta show that 57,334 students (40%) are native DIY residents and 84,885 students (60%) are migrants. Of the tens of thousands of migrant students, APTISI DIY obtained the results that 27% or 22,928 students were in DIY and 73% or a total of 61,957 students had returned to their hometowns. A study conducted by Nisa et al (2023) revealed research for students Scopelliti and Tiberio reported that 74% of students living in Rome had experienced homesickness (Scopelliti & Tiberio, 2010). Another study conducted by Guinagh found that out of a sample of 304 students, approximately 68% were freshmen and second-year undergraduates experienced homesickness, and as many as 41% of students felt homesickness for the first time (Guinagh, 1992).

In addition, the issue that is no less important is the issue of where they will live in another region or city. Actually, for housing matters, there are indeed some students who live with relatives for those who have it in the destination area, but for students who do not have it in general they use the services of providing housing, such as: hotels, motels, inns, rented houses, boarding houses. And many other types of housing provision services. Of course, every student has their own criteria when it comes to choosing the place to live

One of the problems that often occurs in out-of-town students in adapting to their new environment is language limitations. According to Afdjani (2013) in the journal *Proses Adaptasi Mahasiswa Rantau Dari Batam Dalam Menghadapi Komunikasi Antarbudaya Di UPNVJ*, there are language limitations where ambiguous words are created due to different interpretations of perceptions and socio-cultural backgrounds. As a result, language use will be better if it has a common understanding.

Out-of-town student certainly need a strong mentality to face and solve existing problems, including problems of adapting or socializing. Therefore, out-of-town students can experience culture shock or culture shock due to differences in cultural backgrounds. Where culture shock or culture shock is

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an emotional phenomenon caused by the unclear cognitive abilities of a person, which can cause identity disorders (Stella 1999; Bidang et al., 2018).

This research is a literature study that examines various reading sources such as articles, journals, and documents with similar themes. The study results shows that there are various ways that out of town students can adapt to their new environment. Some ways of adaptation that can be done are by: respecting and appreciating other regional cultures, communicating with members of other cultures, and trying to adjust themselves so that they can do social interactions with others and they can adapt freely.

METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative method. Data was collected from various literature sources such as articles, journals, and documents with similar themes. The data analysis technique in this study uses data reduction. Where researchers select the necessary data and which data is not needed. Then, the next step is to present the data that has gone through the data reduction process. After that, the data that has been given will then be interpreted through the data analysis process. This research aims to find out the various ways of overseas students in the adaptation process due to cultural differences. The results showed that there are multiple ways that overseas students adapt to their new environment.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respect The Culture Of Other Regions

Indonesia has tremendous wealth. Indonesia's wealth is not only from natural resources. Cultural wealth is also one of the wealth that is owned, starting from the diversity of tribes, religions, languages, races, and so on so as to produce a diverse culture. Every corner of the region in Indonesia has a culture that is different from one another. The existing culture is preserved from generation to generation until now by the community. This culture is a human product and humans are a form of interpretation of the culture they have. Thus, between one individual from a region and another individual who is in an area has cultural differences. These cultural differences can provide opportunities for conflict and division. To minimize and prevent these conflicts and divisions can be done by one of them, namely each individual has an awareness from within to respect the culture that exists in other regions. Respect is a behavior that is considered panatas and polite based on social norms or manners and as a human right and this is marked by aspirations with the aim that behavior according to the norm is not lost. Then respect also has the understanding of a person's behavior that shows appreciation for what has been achieved, the nature, behavior, and interaction or reciprocity of mutual respect for each other. This attitude and mutual respect also looks at how the social, physical, emotional characteristics of each individual. Appreciating the culture of other regions is an essential attitude in establishing harmonious relationships and respecting existing diversity. In terms of appreciating the culture of other regions, it is not only about recognizing differences, but also respecting the things that each individual has to live their lives in accordance with

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their beliefs and cultural identity. By respecting the cultures of other regions, it can be a step to increase harmony, peace, maintain the diversity of existing cultures, and broaden the perspective of individuals.

Based on the results of a study conducted by (Selegam, S. 2023), it can be obtained that the attitude of respect for other regional cultures carried out by overseas students in Pontianak where even though when migrating to study in Pontianak they experience culture shock due to differences with the culture that exists in themselves, these students still appreciate and accept the regional culture that exists in Pontianak. These overseas students in Pontianak experience differences in the aspects of food, language, socialization, academic lectures, and the community environment. However, they still appreciate the culture of the place where they migrate. This attitude of appreciation is shown by accepting some of the culture of the place where they migrate. Then in language differences where this pontianak area uses Pontianak Malay language and there are swear words that are commonplace to be spoken in this area, overseas students still appreciate this by remaining silent and trying not to be affected, but still adjusting to the environment where they migrate.

This attitude of respecting other cultures is also shown by PMM students at Malikussaleh University (Ardila, Ira. 2023) where PMM students come from various regions throughout Indonesia. Students from these various regions certainly have different cultural backgrounds with where they are now migrating, namely in Aceh. Despite these cultural differences, these PMM students show an attitude of respect for other regional cultures by learning and starting to communicate using the Acehnese language which is used by the Acehnese people. Then, PMM students at Malikussaleh University when they migrated in Aceh, these students also appreciated the available transportation, namely motorized rickshaws or even they had to walk to mobilize. Transportation such as gojek or grab is not available here, even so PMM students still appreciate the existing culture. Acehnese people have habits that are thick with Islamic law, even so PMM overseas students still appreciate what is the habit of the Acehnese people by following what is the habit of the Acehnese people such as in habits in terms of worship. Then, in food they also have differences from the culture they have from their home area. Although this happens, PMM students at Malikussaleh University appreciate the food in this Acehnese area by not overly concerned about the distinctive taste of this Acehnese food.

In addition to overseas students in Pontianak and in Aceh, overseas students from West Kalimantan studying in Surakarta (Sujudi, F.F., & Haryanti, Y. 2022) also show respect in the place where they migrate, namely Surakarta. These appreciative attitudes are shown by appreciating the people of Surakarta who prioritize a sense of discomfort to express something to prevent conflict from occurring and lack openness in conveying their emotions, these overseas students from West Kalimantan appreciate what is the regional culture in Surakarta and these overseas students adjust what is the regional culture in Surakarta so that the culture brought in the form of outspoken culture will be more adapted to the culture in Surakarta. These overseas students from West Kalimantan do not impose that Surakarta people must follow their outspoken culture, but they appreciate how the culture exists in the area where they migrate.

Communicating with members of other cultures

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One of the ways that other out of town students adapt is by developing communication with members of other cultures. In a cultural context, this term is often referred to as cross-cultural communication. Cross-cultural communication is a term that is often interpreted as a form of intercultural communication that is not limited by geographical, racial and ethnic contexts. Differences in social cultural background often become obstacles in the communication process. This is because there are different standards of good, bad, right and wrong in each culture that exists in each region. Therefore, it is important to learn cross-cultural communication to be able to adapt to new socio-cultural values through communication. Which is one of them in out of town students.

The focus of cross-cultural communication itself is the interaction between individuals who have different socio-cultural backgrounds. These differences include beliefs, values, perceptions, and the most striking is the language and language style that is different from each member of another culture. This is in accordance with the out of town students from West Kalimantan that studying in Surakarta in a study by (Sujudi, 2022). Which they recognize that there are cultural differences between West Kalimantan and Surakarta. Where if the cultural background of West Kalimantan tends to be harsh and firm in its style of speech, it is different from Surakarta which has a cultural background of language styles that are subtle, polite, gentle, and not straightforward. The same thing was also found in out of town students from Sulawesi who studied in Salatiga in a study by (Nole, 2023). Which gets a difference in the style of speech in the Salatiga area tends to have a quiet intonation while in Sulawesi tends to be with a style of speech that often shouts. Therefore, out of town students should develop cross-cultural communication as a way of adaptation. This can prevent them from negative intercultural perceptions such as stereotypes, prejudice, racism, and ethnocentrism towards other cultures.

The ways developed by out of town students in order to continue to communicate with members of other cultures are very diverse. One of them is in a study by (Rusdi et al., 2019) where out of town students more often utilize Indonesian as their main language in communicating with other students. This is done to avoid misunderstandings in communication. As in the studies by (Ambarwati & Indriastuti, 2022) and (Patawari, 2020), it is stated that one way of adapting out of town students by how they develop intercultural communication. Another thing can be found in the study by (Maulani & Wahyutama, 2022). Where in this study it is mentioned that the way out of town students adapt there is when they communicate to adapt their communication style and speaking style with their interlocutors. As in another study by (Hutabarat & Nurchayati, 2021), it is stated that in communication language adjustments occur. Which is done in order to understand the conversation between friends or interlocutors.

Adapt to the Existing Environment

For students who migrate to another town, one of the way that must be done to adapt is by adjusting to the existing environment. Cultural differences cause a person to experience a culture shock, but by adjusting to the new environment, over time a person will be able to adapt and be able to live daily life without problems with the new culture. In one study, it was mentioned that adjustment to a new

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culture is referred to as acculturative stress. This stress is related to the effects of displacement and the novelty of the surrounding environment. One study mentioned that barriers that often occur are barriers to participation in academic or social activities. Cultural adjustment, including acculturation and adaptation to the norms and values of the host culture, is essential for social integration. The study highlighted the difficulties international students face in adjusting to a new cultural environment, including homesickness, culture shock and identity crisis.

Several ways can be done to adjust to different cultures. One study mentioned that the way to make cultural adjustments is to have a positive self-concept as done by students from Kalimantan studying in Surakarta. This self-concept can make students easier to communicate so that they have no problems in social interaction. Another study also mention that the process of self-adjustment is to pay attention to the attitudes of members of other cultures so that it can produce a new pattern and can be accustomed. When someone follows the flow and culture, they will unconsciously adjust to their new cultural environment. These adjustments are basically dependent on how the individual themselves try to adapt. By developing positive self-skills such as communication skills, building self-concept, and even time management carried out like out-of-town students in Surabaya did to socialize and it can be affected to their adjustment in the new environment.

CONCLUSION

One of the ways that other out-of-town students adapt is by developing communication with members of other cultures. In a cultural context, this is often referred to as intercultural communication. Cross-cultural communication is a term that is often interpreted as a form of intercultural communication that is not limited by geographic, racial, and ethnic contexts. Differences in socio-cultural backgrounds often become barriers in the communication process. These differences include beliefs, values, perceptions, and, most conspicuously, language and style, which are different for each member of another culture. Out-of-town students should develop intercultural communication as a way of adaptation. This can prevent them from developing negative intercultural perceptions such as stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and ethnocentrism toward other cultures.

In one study, adaptation to a new culture was referred to as acculturative stress. This stress is related to the effects of displacement and the novelty of the environment. Cultural adaptation, including acculturation and adaptation to the norms and values of the host culture, is essential for social integration. There are several ways to adapt to different cultures, including having a positive self-concept, paying attention to the attitudes of members of other cultures, and creating a new and familiar pattern. These adaptations basically depend on how the individual tries to adapt.

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