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Cultural Shock Among African Students in Indonesia

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Abstract

This paper explores cultural shock experiences encountered by African students studying in Indonesian Universities. The study used qualitative approach to collect data through in-depth face-to-face interviews with African students and participant observation. The findings of the study reveal that many African students had experienced unfamiliar situation that are different from those of their home countries in the course of study in Indonesia. Such situation leads to what is called "culture shock", which includes new academic life, culture fatigue, language barrier and food outlets. The study has shown that most of the stress had a profound impact on shaping their acculturation and living in Indonesia. The study adds knowledge to literature, particularly on generating ideas for better management of culture shock in an alien environment. Accordingly, the study recommends that before embarking to abroad for education, it is very important to understand the mechanism and consequences of study abroad and shape our knowledge of how these experience function worldwide and students should develop positive attitudes in order to ease their adjustment to an alien culture and setting.

Keywords: Acculturation, African students, Culture shock.

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1. Introduction

The ever-increasing opportunities of mobility and bilateral relationships between countries has given rise to student's chances to pursue higher education in abroad. In a point of fact, the passion of students to go to abroad to pursue higher education has vividly increased (Kachru, 1992). In Africa for example, every year many students secure admission to continue their studies abroad, such as Europe, America, Asia and sometimes within Africa. It is believed that studying abroad is a worthy investment which not only aids students with future career opportunities but also broaden novice's world view and ways of thinking by providing more life experiences (Chen & Zimitat, 2006; Qun et al, 2018). It is important to note that students do not excel their academic life exclusively. Rather they are also exposed to both academic setting and socio-cultural activities. As a result, learning in abroad means both achieving academic merits and acculturating to the alien culture in order to survive in the host country: learning language, customs and values of the society (Huang, 2014). However, learning of this culture could be a stressful experience for example, acquisition of new academic culture and language as well as forced acculturation

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in the community (Qun et al, 2018). Even though it may be something you have planned and prepared for, yet the extent of the change and effects it has on you may shock you (Xioqiong, 2008).

The prevalent of students' culture shock is a global concern. Literature increasingly indicates that nearly all international students in various foreign countries are implicated different culture shocks such as language barrier, academic culture, sociocultural relations, discriminations, loneliness, lifestyles, anxiety and food outlets which could lead to inconveniences living in foreign country (Smith, 1995; Lin & Yin, 1997; Khawaja & Stallman, 2011; Qun et al, 2018). For example, Naysmith and Corcoran (2001) found that these students who embark on a journey abroad for education respond not just to one event, but to a series of events and experiences which are so dissimilar from their own. Such events and experiences are indeed 'shocking' to them, that the term 'culture shock' is used to refer those events and experiences (Hu, 2008; Qun et al, 2018). The study highlighted that a significant culture shock was largely to lack of familiar clues in the host country, even though they attended farewell program prior to their departure. Yet, they portrayed inadequate knowledge of the foreign culture and environment.

Previous research on cultural shock has been based on International students' experience of culture shock in the course of study abroad and provide some suggestions in the form of recommendations on what students should do to adjust to an alien culture (c.f. Anjalin et al, 2017; Snoubar & Celik, 2013; Shieh, 2014; Merta et al, 1988). Additionally, most of these studies which have been done so far in culture shock still revolve around Asians and Middle East students. Knowledge on what African students' regularly experience when studying abroad is largely missing from the previous research. Indeed, the experience among African students when studying in abroad has been less explored. Thus, studying African students' experience is crucial to learn the extent to which African students from collectivistic cultures, experience culture shock when study abroad. Therefore, it is, in this light this study seeks to explore culture shock experiences and coping strategies of contemporary African students, particularly in context of Indonesian Universities. In so doing, the study adds knowledge to literature of culture shock, particularly on the aspect of African students' experience of culture shock and coping strategies. The study also provides practical recommendations to help raise awareness towards mechanism and consequences of culture shock when study abroad.

2. International students and culture shock experiences

Many students around the globe have wishes to continue their higher education in abroad. This situation is coupled by numerous pull and push factors for students' motivation to study abroad. According to (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002) pull and push factors "operate within the home and host country, and hence initiate a student's decision to undertake studies in abroad" (88). Of course, push and pull factors range from the unavailability of a study program in the home country, lack of access to home universities, better condition of education in the host country, socio-economic status, improving career prospects, and wide range of opportunities for students (Belhadi & Ayad, 2017). Accordingly, students leave their natal homes and travel to study in abroad. However, leaving home is always a stressful experience, even though it may be something you have planned and prepared for. This is due to cultural differences that exist between the home country and host country (Belhadi & Ayad, 2017). The observation shows that many students who travel to foreign countries for studies experience unfamiliar situations from

those in their homes (Naysmith & Corcoran, 2001), and hence, encounter troubles in adapting a new environment. Such experiences are commonly referred to culture shock.

The term culture shock was first used by Kalervo Oberg in 1960, in his published *Journal Culture Shock: Adjustment to New Cultural Environments*. Oberg (1960) defines culture shock as “mental illness, an occupational pathology for person transplanted abroad, ‘precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse’” (142). In recent years, researchers have proposed more findings on culture shock. Amongst them, Channey and Martin (2007) pointed out that culture shock is a wound which appears when a person moves from his or her original culture to a distinctly different one. This term expresses the physical and emotional upset when individual in contact with the new environment (Kealey, 1978). Additionally, showcases lack of familiar clues and signal they use in their daily life such as language, gestures, norms, and customs (Belhadi & Ayad, 2017). This is only recognized when a person moves to different area with different culture. So far it is proposed that culture shock could result in psychological and physiological maladjustment when reactions to cultural difference impeded performance (Winkelman, 1994). This may encompass psychology, physiology, emotion, interpersonal relationship cognition, and society, as well as changes in socio-cultural relationship, cognition imbalance, and role pressure. As a result, students may encounter some difficulties in many areas of their social and academic life.

Managing students’ culture shock is not an easy task, however it is the responsibility of all students to ensure that they cope with the situation in order to survive in abroad. Accordingly, it is suggested that almost everyone who lives in or moves to a “culturally plural society” would experience some degree of acculturation (Berry, 2005: 473). Acculturation happens to almost everyone: refugees, immigrants, sojourners, international students, ethnic minority and others who live in foreign country (Sam & Berry, 2010). The term acculturation was firstly coined by American explorer and ethnologist John Wesley Powel in 1880. Powel defines acculturation as, “the psychological changes induced by cross-cultural imitation” (Seel, 2012: 1149). Therefore, acculturation is a form of culture change that is brought by direct contact between different cultures. In broader, concepts of intercultural contact, acculturation is the process of adapting into a second culture that one does not belong (Zhou et.al., 2008), and then results in culture change due to continuous contact and cross-cultural interactions between two distinct cultures (Berry et al 1987). The process involves cross-cultural communication, cultural learning, cultural changes, and adaptation. Thus, sojourning is viewed as a learning experience rather than a medical nuisance as it is in Oberg’s culture shock model. Thus, students in cultural transit are proactively responding to and resolving problems stemming from change, rather than being passive victims of trauma stemming from a noxious event (Zhou, et.al., 2008: 65). In this study the notion of “culture shock” is regarded as a contact-induced stress accompanied by skill deficit that can be managed and ameliorated, and terms such as ‘adaptation’ and ‘acculturation’ have been increasingly used instead (Bochner, 2003). Coining the term ‘acculturation’ as an alternative of ‘culture shock’ is to recognize both positive and negative stress instead of shock with only negative connotation, and to highlight the interaction with more than two cultures involved instead of only single culture implies in the culture shock (Berry, 2006:294).

Ward, Bochner, & Furnham (2001) provides the ABC model which describes culture shock as an active process describing how individuals, feel, think, react, and behave when

they are exposed to a new culture. The ABC model consists of three components as pointed below:

- a. Affective (stress, coping, and adjustment). The affective (A) element identifies the feelings and emotions of how individual cope with the acculturative stress.
- b. Behavior (culture learning). The behavioral (B) element looks at how individuals acquire new skills and learn to adapt the new environment.
- c. Cognition (social identification). The cognitive (C) element studies how individuals develop, change and maintain their social identities

These three viewpoints together offer a foundation for a comprehensive model of cultural adaptation. The ABC model provides a positive view of culture shock instead of only viewing it as unhealthy, negative, and passive phenomena (Ward et al, 2001). It views culture shock as an active on-going process with skills deficit that can be learned and managed (Bochner, 2003). Given the contextual cultural shock experiences of students across the world, the analytical framework presented in this section guides the investigation of culture shock that African students experience when move to a new culture, study abroad students' experience in Indonesian's Universities, where there is a knowledge gap on the study of this nature. In this light the present study attempts to examine the aspects of cultural shock that African students do experience in Indonesia, the impacts of culture shock to students' social and academic life in Indonesia and the coping strategies that African students adopt to settle in the existing alien culture environments.

3. Method

The researcher deployed qualitative research approach to collect data in this study. Since, qualitative research approach calls for studying a phenomenon in its natural and social settings by engaging the how and what questions on the socially-constructed reality (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Thomas, 2009; Fussy, 2018); it facilitated the present study to explore aspects of culture shock, its effects in respect to students' social and academic life, and participants' experience and coping strategies to deal with it (Qun et al, 2018). The qualitative approach in this study was informed by a case study design. Yin (2009) defines case study design as, "an empirical inquiry that investigate a contemporary phenomenon in-depth and within its real-life context". (18). In this study, the case study was deployed because the researcher intended to explore students' experiences pertaining to culture shock and coping strategies while studying abroad (Anjalin et al 2017).

Accordingly, the data for this study were generated from African students who study at Airlangga University (Indonesia). African students were selected because their number in Indonesian higher learning institution display significant increase so far. Airlangga University was also selected because it topped the list of Indonesian's leading universities in accommodating international students from Africa. These participants were purposively sampled based on year of study (in 2016, 2017 and 2018) and country of origin as well as based on their gender (male and female) to increase diversity and rich data. Thus, a sample of 10 (5 males, 5 females) participants of African origin was drawn-three from East Africa (one from Tanzania, one from Uganda, and one from Kenya), three from South Africa (Zimbabwe), and four from West Africa (two from Gambia and two from Nigeria) participated in the in-depth interview.

Adhering to ethical issues, the researcher pursued the permission from Airlangga Global Engagement (AGE) to conduct this study. Airlangga Global Engagement (AGE) is an organization which is responsible for international students' affairs. The named organization, in turn, issued a permit to enable the researcher's access to international students in Airlangga University. Within international students, the researcher approached the president of international students and explained the purpose of the study which was geared towards adding to the literature in order to promote students' adjustment to an alien culture and environment. Then the president assisted the researcher to inform the international students and share their contact information. With participants' consent to participate in the study, a convenient schedule and time was arranged for the interviews. However, before interview, participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity nature of the interview. Thus, the researcher ensured the collected data are kept safely and used for such purpose only. Similarly, the researcher did not mention names of participants, particularly during reporting the findings of the study.

Data were collected using semi-structured face to face interviews and participant observation. The participants were interrogated about their experiences pertaining to culture shock in Indonesia. In a semi-structured interview, the probes developed around the aspects of culture shock, effects, adjustment and coping strategies. With the consent of study's participants, interviewees' responses were recorded and then transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Participant observation mainly used in circumstances where interview could hardly work. Specifically, in classroom attendances and outdoor activities. The researcher also noted and evaluated participants' performances in classroom and outdoor activities. The observation of these phenomenon helped to create a clear picture of the students' experience in alien culture and environment.

Data gathered through interview and participant observation were subjected to thematic analysis. Thematic analysis allows for qualitative data to be analyzed according to relevant themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Cresswell, 2009; Fussy, 2018). Themes were identified basing on what has been said or observed by [from] the participant only (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Aspects of culture shock

The findings indicate that culture shock is an avoidable phenomenon and it is experienced by almost every sojourner who have ever travelled abroad to study. This applies whichever country one is coming from, and wherever you are going to study, even though some cultures might be alike. These experiences similarly encounter international students, including Africans. As noted earlier in this study, the culture shock derives from both the challenge of new socio- cultural settings and from the loss of a familiar clues, which could be manifested in the following aspects:

4.1.1. Academic culture

All students reported to have experienced varying degree of culture shock when studying at Airlangga University. They reported that the academic culture at the named University is totally different from that of their home countries in everything: educational system, curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation systems. Precisely, anxiety, loneliness, and frustration were reported to be the main symptoms African students suffered from. Some participants felt overwhelmed after they first set foot in the class. One student who had two

years' experience explained that: "I was overwhelmed because everything seemed new to me in the class. The teaching system was totally different from ours 'teacher's centered and more *tugas* (assignments). At first it was hard to complete assignments on time" (Student: 2016). Another student added that: "I was confused and helpless. Communication with others was my big problem. I couldn't understand lectures and contact with others. I had no friends to talk and study with, no one could associate with me" (Student: 2017). These responses indicate that most students were surprised with the teaching system used at the university. Accordingly, the language of instruction was reported to be a hindrance towards their understanding in the classroom and social settings. Most of them get used to English, but in Indonesia, it quite different. Indonesian language and Javanese are the main means of communication in Surabaya. They described the new language as "too difficult" (student: 2018), and they had suggestions such as "It would be better if English language could be used in the classroom" (student: 2018) and "It could be easy for us to understand" (student: 2016).

African students found listening and speaking in *Bahasa Indonesia* tiring and confusing. They felt isolated in this alien environment (Surabaya) because they could not interact with people due to language obstruction. One of them said: "I felt anxious. I found communication with teachers and other people was hard. I wanted to return home" (student: 2018). Another student expressed a similar view:

"It was difficult for me to communicate with local people because I could not speak Bahasa Indonesia. One student day I went for shopping, I asked an Indonesian for directions and my pronunciation confused him. He told me to repeat it but still he could not get what I said" (student: 2017).

Students were also asked about the experience of other international students. They explained that other international also experienced culture shock but however not at the same degree as Africans does. For instance, international students with Asian-based origin: Thailand, Malaysia, and others. It has been not the same case to such students because their culture and indeed, their local languages are somehow related to Indonesian language. For example, one student commented: "Our fellow students from Malaysia for instance speak *Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian language) fluently. Their language is somehow similar, this makes easy for them to communicate and understand in the class" (student: 2018). This suggests that African students suffered more from culture shock compared to their fellow international students from other Asian countries like Malaysia and others. Most of them had obstacles when engaging in communication with teachers and classmates as well as local people. They found difficult to understand lectures, and thus lacking complete understanding of what is taught in the class due to language barrier.

4.1.2. Food

In an interview with African students it was described that food in general had brought cultural difficulties as it is not the same as in their home countries. They found Indonesian food strange. It is cooked and tasted different compared to what they are used to. As the student reported that: "I was frustrated in the first day I arrived in Surabaya². I was hungry but I could not eat the food, because it was too *manis* (sweet) and oily" (student: 2017). Students were shocked with the way Indonesian food is prepared and served. As another student added that: "They put too much spices, oil and most of time

² Surabaya is the capital city of East Java Province-Indonesia, where Airlangga University is located.
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with no *garam* (salt). Food is served everywhere in *warung* (small restaurants)" (student: 2016). The finding illustrated that the food is cooked differently from the way African dishes are prepared, it is oily, sweet or too spiced, which make it taste totally differently from African foods. Hence, most of the students could not manage to eat the Indonesian food. One student who stays off-campus said: "If you are in self-accommodation *kos* (boarding house) and unused to cooking for yourself, you may find yourself on 'bread' everyday instead of your usual diet" (student: 2018).

Besides food preparation, even the main food in Surabaya makes African students realize that they are in culture shock. For example, most people in Surabaya like to eat rice in every meal (morning to evening). While most of African are used to eat different food in every meal: such as may take yam for breakfast, *ugali* (stiff porridge) for lunch and rice for dinner. For instance, student (2017) reported that, "I cannot eat rice in every meal, so I skip eating sometimes". From the interview demonstrate that most of the students cannot take rice regularly because they are not used to such eating style in their home country. In fact, *nasi* (rice) is the most available food in Indonesia, but most of the African students find difficult to eat rice daily. Therefore, they would opt to eat 'fast' food or skip the meal as stated somewhere by some students. This situation affects students' diet which in turn, could affect their healthy in general.

4.1.3. Social Values

This study has found that African students despite of being aware on some cultural differences that exist in the host country; e.g. food, academic culture, language barrier, they also came to notice that they were shocked with Indonesian social and cultural situation. It was surprising and sometimes distressing when students find out that, people in Indonesia do share some of their most deeply ideas, unlikely as most of Africans take in their socio-cultural settings. As one of students narrated about her experience:

"I felt embarrassed when people ask about my personal information; questioning about my family, whether I am married or do I have a boyfriend or I have children, my age, religion, occupation and everything about me. You cannot ask such personal questions in my home country. It sounds impolite in my country." (student: 2017)

Another student shared her experience that she was asked to take *foto* (selfie) by many people in a famous mall in Surabaya. The student reported that she never wanted to go in malls and scenic spot because she would feel shy and sometimes get annoyed when strangers ask for selfies. Moreover, findings demonstrate that many students were not happy when exposed to Indonesian living condition. There was no permission to visit males' or females' hostels if you are of different sex and there was a limited time (22:00pm) to enter the hostel. Almost everyone had moved from *asrama mahasiswa* (students' hostel) to a *kos* (boarding house) or apartment near their campus where there was little freedom if compared to *asrama*. Another student explained:

"I remember, in few days after my arrival in *asrama* (hostel), I moved to an apartment. It is not allowed to visit *asrama putri* (females' hostel) and vice versa, it is their *budaya* (culture). Oddly, we must return hostel before 22:00pm". (student: 2016)

The responses from the interview showed that students were not interested when exposed to Indonesian socio-cultural settings. They were strained with the way people live

and the way they asked too many questions. It sounded impolite to students, but however for Surabaya people and Indonesian in general, it is polite and culturally accepted to ask about one's information, even if you have never met before. Generally, for Indonesians, they believe it's a way of being friendly to a new stranger.

4.2. Impacts of culture shock to African students

Culture shock stress responses cause both psychological and physiological reactions to the acculturating group (Winkelman, 1994). These reactions include: emotional, interpersonal, cognitive, and social components resulting from changes in sociocultural relations, cognitive fatigue, role stress, and identity loss (Berry, 2005). As per interview with Students studying at Airlangga University, it was reported that, most of African students were psychologically and intellectually affected when trying to respond to culture shock stresses.

Students reported that culture shock comes as a hurtful surprise to most of them. Additionally, psychologists have suggested mental disorders as one of the results of culture shock (Belhadi & Ayad, 2017). African students reported to encounter emotional disorders, when living in and adjusting to Indonesian culture. Thus, results to psychological confusion among themselves, and hence physical stress occurred too. Some of the students were reported to skip classes from time to time as they found classroom setting boring. However, the degree of shock would vary from one person to another depending on one's personality and social support.

On the other hand, culture shock influence intellectual growth. Argyle (1969) as cited in Zhou et al. (2008) explained that culture shock and other cross-cultural adjustments stresses are regarded as learning experience with education impact. Such as they stimulate, motivate, and enhance the culture traveler's intercultural communicative competence (Belhad & Ayad, 2017). African students illustrated that they were motivated and sometimes forced to learn culturally relevant social skills to survive and thrive in Indonesia. Students did so because they found culture shock was not only a stressing experience but, rather a process of intercultural learning, leading to greater self-awareness and personal growth (Adler, 1975). They conceived the potentially positive and negative consequences of culture shock as part of the culture learning process (Bochner et al, 2003). As a result, African students learn the skills, rules, and roles that are required in the new culture (Indonesia).

4.3. Strategies for managing culture shock

As noted elsewhere in this study, managing students' culture shock is not an easy task as it varies from one individual to another. Such variations are bound to individuals' characteristics, their intent and needs, and the cultural and social context of adaptation, but however some are universal (Yam & Lam, 2017; Taft, 1977; Berry, 2005). The study found demonstrate that most of the students had acculturated to understand the new culture and establish adaptive strategies (adaptation and adjustment in intercultural contact). Intercultural adaptation and adjustments refer to as a long-term process in which sojourners adjust to and lastly feel comfortable in a new cultural setting (Kim, 2001; Qun, 2018). The ABCs model offer a foundation for a comprehensive model of cultural adaptation with reference to African students studying in Airlangga University, Indonesia (Zhou et al., 2008). Through the ABC model to culture shock students explicitly expressed their process of acculturation from cross-cultural transition to acculturative stress,

individual's responses, and outcomes looking into both societal and individual level variables (Ward et al, 2001).

First, based on the interview the researcher found that students were connected with their compatriots in the host country (countrymen in host country). They increased communication with those remaining in the home (family member and friends). Similarly, they became more involved in academic activities in order to establish good friendship with teachers and local students in the host country and hence feel more adapted to the academic life and kept communicating with their friends and relatives in the home country. As one of the students said:

“I kept in touch with my family and friends who supported me to be strong and attend lectures. I participated in some university activities. I developed friendship networks and connected to faculty staffs. The most important thing is that I believed in myself” (student: 2016).

Another student added:

“I called my homebased friends (who studies at Airlangga University) whenever I felt lonely, because they gave me strength every time I talked to them. They know better than me” (Student: 2017).

Student received social supports from both host and co-nationals while study abroad, which ameliorated stresses amongst themselves. Through social supports, students became aware that culture shock is just a result of changes of everyday life, which can be learned and adopted. Moreover, findings reveal that students' adaptation to a new academic life become stronger as they become more involved in campus activities. Thus, enabled them to successfully adapt new academic setting and achieve their goal successfully.

Second, Students interacted with local people: Indonesian students, teachers, and counsellors, through which they learn series of culturally relevant skills to facilitate their survival in a new cultural environment. As the student said:

“I also tried to be a friend with local students because they know much more about their education system and how teacher evaluate students. I tried to develop my relationship with teachers, and I consulted the head of the department whenever I had a problem in my studies” (Student: 2017)

Another student who used to isolate herself form local people stated that:

“I made two close friends in the class. They are more than friends now. They taught me how to speak Indonesian language. They always translate whenever I don't understand the word. This is how I learnt to speak Indonesian Language quickly” (Student: 2017).

Also, student who used to keep quite in the class confessed:

“It is funny that my *bahasa* (Indonesian language) is getting better now, because I hang out with local students. One day my classmates were amazed when they heard me saying *matur suwon* (thank you in Javanese dialect) instead of *terima kasih* (thank you in formal Indonesian language). I feel that I am improving to speak Indonesian language” (Student: 2018)

African students managed to understand Indonesian language and manifest behaviors that are understood in the host culture through being in contact with the native speakers. Additionally, they consulted their academic advisors whenever they had a problem. Thus, helped to minimize the stress they had when study abroad.

Third, responses from the interview showed that students learnt social behavior patterns by observing and participating in the daily life of the host culture, and questioning. This helped them to reduce stress and make it easier to accept the fact that culture and behaviors in the new setting make sense and are logical as in their own countries. One student explained that they had a special program, where they learnt about Indonesian language and culture in general. Another student informed that: "I participated in different cultural trips, where I had a chance to learn *budaya* (culture). We practiced *tari indonesia* (Indonesian dance). It is funny that I can dance some of their dances" (Student: 2018). This indicated that many students blended in Indonesian culture by participating in different community activities with local people. They showed high self-esteem and enjoyed the intercultural blending while studying in Indonesia.

Fourth, students created friendship with other non-compatriot foreign student, from which they drive mutual social support and enjoy some social recreational activities. The student reported that; "I made friendships with many international students because we share the same situation. I participated in some recreational activities with them" (student: 2017). However, besides, being in a non-English speaking country, student had improved their language competence, as one of them admitted that: "I improved my English, because I always use English when hanging out with foreign students (countrymen excluded) in this non-English speaking". African students participated in structured peer-program, where they could spend more informal leisure with their peers. Therefore, led to better social adjustment among African students in new cultural environment (Zhou et al., 2008).

Fifth, student also declared that Airlangga Global Engagement (AGE) had facilitated much towards their adjustment while studying at Airlangga university. The named organization had been taking care of the foreign students (African students inclusively) since their arrival in Indonesia. The organization always organize cultural trips where students could learn and practice Indonesian culture. "I remember we were sent to *Pusat Pendidikan Lingkungan Hidup (PPLH) Seloliman Trawas* (Center for Environmental Education in Seloliman Trawas) to learn how to conserve environment in Indonesia, how to prepare traditional medicines and others" (student: 2017). Additionally, AGE, assign buddies to assist international students ease their adaptation in the alien culture especially in language barrier, searching for accommodations and others. However, their number is still a challenge for example a group of ten student, is assigned with two or three buddies.

5. Conclusion

This study explored the aspects and effects of culture shock encountered by African students when studying in Indonesian Universities and attempted to investigate the coping strategies from the perspective of ABC model of culture shock. Through interview of ten African students' cultural experiential accounts from 2016, 2017 and 2018, the responses showed that almost every African student had experienced culture shock. They had shown stress (in new education system, food, social value and living condition), anxiety, loneliness and isolation through language barrier. Such situation implicated students academic and social life while studying in Indonesia. It is found that they had tried adapting

and adjusting themselves to a new cultural environment, including integrating themselves with local people, participating in cultural activities, learning Indonesian language, and creating friendship with other non-compatriots' foreign students. However, the degree of adaptation and adjustment varies from one individual to another depending on individual's personality and attitude towards the foreign culture. Some students were not motivated enough to learn Indonesian language hence it took long time for them to know the foreign language. However, the study has found that African students obviously experience higher degree of culture shock when compared to other international students such as Asian based (Thailand, Malaysia, China and others).

Based on the study's conclusion, the study recommends the following on students planning to study abroad. First, before embarking to abroad for education, it is very important to understand the mechanism and consequences of study abroad and shape their knowledge of how these experience function worldwide. Second, students should develop positive attitudes towards alien culture, in order to ease their adaptation and adjustment in abroad. Third, students should accept and appreciate the cultural difference that exists in host country. Fourth, it is advisable for universities to pair foreign students with local students to ease students' adaptation into a new culture. Finally, the Airlangga Global Engagement (AGE) should not be left to welfare and migration affairs of the students only. Rather it should be combined with university academic departments, such as faculties, schools and others aimed towards facilitating the international students' achievement.

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