

From Jakarta to Madura: Culture Shock and Social Adaptation

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ABSTRACT

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Culture shock is recognized as a form of psychological stress related to migration. Social adaptation has been identified as a consequence of moving and is often linked to various psychological disorders. The unique experiences of students from Jakarta studying at Trunojoyo University in Madura are highlighted in this study. A fresh perspective on the decision to migrate from an urban setting to a rural one is offered, an aspect that has often been overlooked in previous literature. Using a phenomenological approach, culture shock is explained as a direct result of the cultural differences between Jakarta and Madura, and the social adaptation strategies that are employed by the students are detailed. Furthermore, how the quality of social networks influences the success of their adaptation is examined. The findings indicate that language barriers and the prevalence of Madurese stereotypes are considered significant sources of stress, fear, disappointment, worry, and loneliness among these students. Adaptation strategies are primarily involved with engaging with local communities and forming friendships with local children. Overall, valuable insights into the adaptation process are provided, and the importance of social support in mitigating the psychological stress associated with migration is underscored by these findings.

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1. Introduction

There is growing interest in migration and its impact on mental health [1-2]. Migration is recognized as a stressful process that can pose risks to both the psychological and physical well-being of migrants, largely due to culture shock [3]. Students who move from different regions, particularly urban areas, may experience psychological stress when transitioning to a new environment, even if their separation from home is only temporary. "Culture shock" refers to the stress that some individuals face when migrating to a new country or region [4]. This concept encompasses various challenges, including difficulty in adapting to a new culture, feelings of loss, confusion regarding role expectations, and struggles with self-identity [5]. Additionally, newcomers may experience feelings of rejection from members of the new

culture [6], alongside anxiety and helplessness due to their inability to adjust to the new environment [7]. Often, the decision to migrate for education is influenced by both push and pull factors [8]. The reputation of a chosen university and the presence of family in the area are push and pull factors in this decision-making process. Students typically consider the comfort of their new surroundings, even though they must adapt to a different setting [9]. Ultimately, this decision to migrate can lead to environmental uncertainty, contributing to the experience of culture shock.

Although there are many studies on migration and culture shock, fewer studies look at the rationality of the decision to move from the city to the village. Given the concept of migration is not from the city to the village, but from the village to the city [10]. The rationality of the decision made is determined by knowledge, information and the goals to be achieved, and this decision has risks [11]. Rational choice as a way to find efficient goals, by considering the costs and benefits of the decision choices. Choosing an education, specifically schools, involves considering school facilities, academic excellence, institutional accreditation standards, availability of resources, and distance from home [12]. This means that in the process of choosing, the perpetrator considers supporting resources and the goals to be achieved. Although all of these decisions contain risks.

One of the risks faced during migration is the need to adjust to differences in the social environment [13], This requires environmental adaptation [14]. A multicultural orientation can significantly influence the new environment, highlighting the necessity for psychological adaptation as well [15]. Successful adaptations can lead to improved educational achievement, as they foster effective behaviors that align with a person's goals [16]. Understanding these adaptations is crucial, as they relate to an individual's identity and sense of integrity within a safe and stable environment, enabling them to address psychological and emotional challenges that may arise upon relocation [17]. However, individuals differ in how they embrace the adaptation process, which also pertains to interactions with the customs of the new community [18]. Social and psychological adaptation efforts can include building relationships with classmates who come from different cities [19], as well as engaging with the local cultural community [20]. Migrants should also play an active role in social involvement, becoming social agents without disrupting their own activities and work [21], This engagement demonstrates their adaptation to the new social environment and reinforces their new identity as migrants.

Various studies have examined social relationships in migrants as a form of intensity and reciprocity of cultural interactions [22-23], which are indicated by the diversity of social networks and the size of these networks in different social roles for each person. Other studies have also referred to social support and mental disorders [24]-25]. Most of the results show a relationship that lack of social support and cultural adaptation causes psychological stress, especially depression [26-27]. In case of students, many have also found that high levels of social support (the presence of close friends, the presence of romantic relationships, the number of classmates who have regular contact and people who are considered confidants) are associated with low levels of stress when academic pressure is high, regardless of

personality factors [28-29]. Meanwhile, this study aims to reveal the culture shock experienced by students from Jakarta who live and study in Madura. We know that Jakarta and Madura are culturally distant, indicating a significant regional cultural difference. Jakarta as the capital city is identical to the metropolitan and diverse complex cultures, while Madura, especially Trunojoyo University Madura, is in Telang village which is identical to a rural area with a very unique Madurese culture. This cultural distance will have a very big impact on culture shock and will require heavy/high social adaptation efforts. In particular, we also believe that culture shock will be greater/stronger for students with fewer/fractured/smaller social networks, especially if they have never lived in Java or Madura before.

This study offers a new perspective in understanding the phenomenon of student migration from metropolitan areas to rural areas, focusing on students from Jakarta who continue their education at Trunojoyo University, Madura. This study aims to explore in-depth experiences related to culture shock and social adaptation, which arise as a consequence of significant differences between Jakarta's urban culture and Madura's local culture. This expands the literature that has mostly focused on rural-to-urban migration. It also aims to explore the quality of social networks on students' ability to cope with psychological stress, which has not been widely discussed in the context of educational migration. This study highlights how the level of social familiarity and diversity of social networks play an important role in reducing the intensity of culture shock and supporting successful social adaptation. The emphasis on social adaptation strategies, including integration into the local community and the creation of new social relationships, provides valuable insights into how individuals can successfully navigate complex cultural transitions.

2. Method

The participants in this study were students from Jakarta who had studied at Trunojoyo University Madura and had lived in the campus area of Telang village, Madura for the past three years. The informants agreed to have their names disguised. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, with questions focusing on: 1) demographic information (age, gender, major taken, residence in Jakarta, the first year stay in Madura, and previously never lived in Madura). 2) Revealing information about culture shock, including feelings of tension, fear in a new place, missing family and friends in Jakarta, feeling accepted by the locals, wanting to escape from the new environment, feeling confused about roles or identities in a new culture, finding things in the new environment that are surprising or disgusting, feeling helpless when trying to find a new culture, feeling anxious or awkward when meeting locals, and others; 3). Information on adaptation efforts made, namely adjustments made, trying to overcome a new culture, understanding facial movements or expressions, and others.

The criteria of this informant will be reinforced by support from friends or relatives that the informant met or called during the first two weeks of living in Madura. The criteria of this informant will be strengthened by supporting informants, namely the experiences of friends/relatives that the informant met/phoned in the first 2 weeks while living in Madura.

This will determine whether their social network is strong or weak, and the diversity of the network will be known. The diversity of the network will help reveal the quality of support received by the informant from those around him, and to reveal the level of anxiety of the informant from what he feels and has told others (within the scope of his social network). The collected data will be analyzed using the phenomenological method of Husserl's thinking [30], which involves identifying all information originating from the informant's life experience, coding the available data, and grouping it into thematic findings. This approach also seeks to uncover hidden meanings to ultimately reveal the informant's awareness of certain issues and is answered based on highly subjective experiences [31]. Analysis of the findings will involve exploration of culture shock and social adaptation carried out by the informant. In the end, the quality of the social network that the informant received to answer and support adaptation to the culture shock that the informants experienced will also be revealed.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of this study are categorized into the following themes: (1) culture shock faced by the students and (2) social adaptation. The theme of culture shock encompasses the psychological and emotional disorientation students experienced when confronted with a new academic, social, and cultural environment. On the other hand, social adaptation outlines the various strategies and processes students employed to overcome these challenges and integrate into the new environment.

Culture Shock Faced by Students

When discussing culture shock, it often feels like we are referring to a condition or disease. Culture shock occurs due to the anxiety stemming from the loss of familiar identities, symbols, and signs from our place of origin. As we enter a new environment with significantly different cultural norms, the symbols we once recognized begin to fade [32]. This transition can be perceived as a loss of our usual cultural habits, forcing us to adapt to new signs in our surroundings. One prominent aspect of this adjustment is language. For example, in Jakarta, people commonly use slang and contemporary terms, while in Madura, many may struggle to understand the Madurese language. This language barrier is particularly noticeable in everyday situations, such as in markets or mosques. However, on campus, where communication is conducted in Indonesian, they find it easier to understand and engage with others. This is as expressed by the informant (Irma, 20 years old) as follows:

"The language was a problem, because I didn't understand it at all at first, it was really stressful".

Confirmed by Ade (19 years):

"I can't even speak Javanese and Madurese and I feel annoyed when I gather without using the national language, because I don't feel like I'm being talked to".

All the signs expressed by the informants that the main problem is in the language. The language used in daily communication. This becomes a source of stress for them. When someone enters a foreign culture, all or most of these familiar signs they try to get rid of [33], can cause feelings of frustration and anxiety. People react to frustration in almost the same way. What the informants did, among others, they rejected the environment that caused discomfort, often also complained about the environment and its people. This condition makes us sure that they suffer from culture shock. And at first, they felt that home (parents and siblings) became very important. This is as expressed by Andy (21 years old):

“At first I thought Madura had a McD and it was like a city, LOL.... then I just took it, but when I got there I was surprised there wasn't anything and if I wanted something I had to go to Surabaya first, I missed home.”

Some symptoms of culture shock are washing hands too often, being too worried about drinking water, food, plates, and bedding, fear of physical contact with people, blank stares, feelings of helplessness and a desire to depend on old residents (origin), anger due to delays and other minor frustrations [34], but those experienced by informants were slightly delayed and outright refusal to learn the host language. This is also included in culture shock [35]. Moreover, with the stereotype of Madura with *carok* incident. *Carok* is a form of duel, often involving sickles, practiced by some people in Madura, Indonesia, to resolve conflicts, particularly when a man's honor is perceived to have been insulted. It makes these Jakarta students feel excessively afraid of being cheated, robbed, or injured, very worried about pain; and finally, a great longing to return home, to talk to people they really know well.

The level of impact of culture shock on individuals varies greatly. This occurs during the first few weeks, most informants are accompanied by their parents to stay at their boarding house and they observe the language used to speak, being polite and friendly to foreigners. There are also difficulties experienced, transportation problems, shopping problems, and the fact that the host people (new area) are mostly indifferent to all these problems. They help, but they do not understand the informant's concerns about these difficulties. Therefore, they must be insensitive and unsympathetic to newcomers and their concerns. As a result, informants feel they do not like their current place of residence. And they like to criticize the host country, its ways, and its people. However, this criticism is not an objective assessment, but a derogatory assessment. And this is natural if someone has just lived in a new place with a contrasting culture [36]. As conveyed by informant Dewi (21 years old):

“ It's hard to go out, transportation is hard. Because Gojek/Grab are still rare. There are campus motorcycle taxis but I'm a bit scared. I'll only use them if I really need them. Here, I'm confused about who to ask for help if I need something”.

People in the new environment feel that the host understands their discomfort. However, newcomers often seek refuge from people in the same area and their surroundings.

This arises because there is a stereotype, and this makes it very emotional for them. Jakartans have a stereotype that Madurese are known to be rude, these informants are often afraid if they have to meet the natives. In the end, the informants have to accept the customs/way of life in the current place. The tension will disappear if there is a complete understanding of cultural cues/signs in social relations [37]. For a long time, the individual will understand what the residents say but is not sure what the natives mean. With complete adjustment, the newcomers not only accept food, drinks, habits, and customs but also really start to enjoy them. Although at first there are difficulties arising from not knowing how to communicate and the uncertainty caused by strange customs, the frustration and anxiety that result are understandable. However, as time passes, people make adjustments, doing important things about water, food, and other little things in everyday life. They adjust to these deficiencies. In summary, the environment remains constant, but the attitudes of its inhabitants change [38].

Students from Jakarta come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. One prominent issue they face is the rural economy, which is particularly relevant due to the lower cost of living compared to Jakarta. This difference allows students to make economic decisions without needing to pay serious attention to their financial situations. Many students choose to live in boarding houses or nearby housing, as these options are readily available around campus. The atmosphere in this residential area doesn't pose a problem for the students; it tends to be peaceful, especially after 9:00 PM. An experience shared by informant Rika, who is 20 years old, illustrates this point:

“The difference with housing at home is that it's quiet after nine o'clock, but it's still okay. I don't know about living in the village, it can be stressful”.

The differences in living environments and available facilities can be navigated effectively. For instance, some people may reside in urban residential areas rather than in rural villages or hamlets. The comfort of one's living space often influences their choice of where to live. These environmental differences and the resulting lifestyle changes can provide new experiences. Ultimately, maintaining a quality social network is essential for ensuring their overall comfort and well-being [39].

Social Adaptation

To overcome culture shock, individuals need to engage in social adaptation. Aside from existing in a physical environment, people also inhabit a cultural environment comprising human-made objects, social institutions, and a range of ideas and beliefs [40]. Individuals are not born with a culture; rather, they possess the capacity to learn and utilize it. Therefore, immigrants must familiarize themselves with the various existing cultures. Each person's culture is shaped by history and develops over time through processes that often go unnoticed by the individual. This cultural foundation is essential for adapting to both the physical environment and the people they interact with. Teenagers, in particular, often face challenges during the learning and adjustment processes. However, once a culture is learned, it becomes a way of life, a familiar routine that brings comfort within the new environment

and helps establish values [41]. People tend to view their own culture as the best and only way of doing things. This perspective, known as ethnocentrism [42], encompasses the belief that one's own culture, race, and nation are central to life. Individuals often identify closely with their own group and its ways.

There are also differences in the environment that require students to adapt to their new surroundings. One of the simplest ways to adapt is by building relationships with fellow students or with the local community. As expressed by Adi, a 20-year-old informant:

“Then when in class there were often group assignments, I tried to join in the conversation. And it turned out that they also respected us if we also respected them”.

Another informant, Ratna (21 years old), also states as follows:

"When I entered college, I seemed to mix with female classmates when doing assignments or just hanging out with them”.

Activeness allows students to interact with many people and create close relationships. This makes it easier for students to get to know and interact with friends from various regions. Thus, students who successfully adapt to the education at Trunojoyo University, Madura will establish more relationships with students who are not from Jakarta, as well as establish relationships and interactions with students who are in the same department compared to fellow students from Jakarta. A relationship of mutual trust is one of the keys to life that is very important in building a better community life [43]. Migrants are faced with various changes and differences in various aspects of life, such as lifestyle, social interaction and responsibility for the actions taken so that they are required to be able to adapt. High self-adjustment in migrant students can be obtained from their participation in various activities, both activities in organizations and other social activities.

In practice, informants typically engage in short-term coping rather than proactive adaptation. Adaptation represents the initial path. In other contexts, they must survive to pursue their chosen education. The adaptation shows that they must succeed in mediating risks to the environment. The existing cultural inequality has (re)produced socio-ecological vulnerability, which allows some people to survive temporarily and forces others to remain in risky areas, the most serious risk is school failure [44]. Overall, one of the risks is how to adapt if triggered by forced cultural inequality [45]. However, this is different from these Jakarta students, many of them study in Madura because of reasons to please their parents, that whatever form of risk they face, they will persist before they graduate. It is possible that this cultural shock experience can provide a negative bias in the assessment of social support [46]. Parental intervention is the cause of this bias. However, what is particularly unique and interesting is that these students can organize their friends, both those in their local area by joining a community and friends from other regions. Social support has a positive impact on them, as shown by the number of friends they connect with. The quality of the support they

receive is identified as the aspect of social support most closely linked to the psychological distress they experience. Assessing social support and enhancing interventions are crucial to help protect against culture shock.

4. Conclusion

In the context of educational migration among students from Jakarta, culture shock has emerged due to significant cultural differences. These contrasts can create feelings of unfamiliarity, leading to psychological stress, including anxiety, fear, and discomfort. However, students do adapt by learning about the new culture, which can facilitate their adjustment to these different cultural conditions. This is particularly relevant for students who are moving to a new environment for educational purposes, often influenced by their parents' decisions.

The findings of this study are relevant not only to the development of psychosocial support within the campus environment but also gives contribution to the broader literature on migration and cultural adaptation. By extending the concept of migration rationality to the context of cross-cultural education, this study offers a new framework for understanding the motivations and challenges that students face when making migration decisions that involve considerable cultural distance. Additionally, the results underscore the importance of providing robust social support to help students effectively navigate their new cultural experiences. Ultimately, this study highlights that culture shock is primarily oriented towards psychological and psychosocial challenges, often rooted in preconceived stereotypes held prior to relocation. Adaptation, in this sense, serves as a remedy for the issues associated with culture shock.

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