



The Influence of Social Support on the Adaptation of Guidance and Counseling Students Experiencing Culture Shock in a Campus Environment

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ARTICLE INFO

Received: July 10, 2025; Revised: August 19, 2025; Accepted: August 29, 2025

KEYWORDS

Social Support;
Campus Environment;
Adaptation;
Culture Shock

ABSTRACT

The background of this study stems from the challenges faced by new students, especially those from outside the region, in adapting to differences in culture, language, and social norms. This study aims to analyse the influence of social support on the ability of UIN Ar-Raniry Guidance and Counselling students who experience culture shock to adapt to the campus environment. The research method used a quantitative approach with a simple regression design. The research sample consisted of 67 students selected through purposive sampling. The research instruments consisted of a culture shock scale, a social support scale, and a campus environment adaptation scale. The regression analysis results showed a coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.967, which means that 96.7% of the variation in social support can be explained by campus environment adaptation. The significance value of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.001$) proves a significant effect. The study's conclusion reveals that social support plays an important role in improving students' ability to adapt to the campus environment, while reducing the negative impact of culture shock. This study contributes to developing social support-based guidance and counseling programs and inclusive campus policies for migrant students.

KATA KUNCI

Dukungan Sosial;
Adaptasi Lingkungan;
Kampus;
Culture Shock,

ABSTRAK

Latar belakang penelitian berangkat dari tantangan adaptasi mahasiswa baru, khususnya yang berasal dari luar daerah dengan perbedaan budaya, bahasa, dan norma sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh dukungan sosial terhadap kemampuan adaptasi lingkungan kampus pada mahasiswa Bimbingan dan Konseling UIN Ar-Raniry yang mengalami culture shock. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain regresi sederhana. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 67 mahasiswa yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Instrumen penelitian terdiri atas skala culture shock, skala dukungan sosial, dan skala adaptasi lingkungan kampus. Hasil analisis regresi menunjukkan nilai koefisien determinasi (R^2) sebesar 0,967, yang berarti 96,7% variasi dukungan sosial dapat dijelaskan oleh adaptasi lingkungan kampus. Nilai signifikansi $p = 0,000$ ($p < 0,001$) membuktikan adanya pengaruh yang sangat signifikan. Kesimpulan penelitian mengungkap bahwa dukungan sosial terbukti berperan penting dalam meningkatkan kemampuan adaptasi mahasiswa terhadap lingkungan kampus, sekaligus mengurangi dampak negatif culture shock. Penelitian ini berkontribusi sebagai bahan pengayaan dalam pengembangan program bimbingan dan konseling berbasis dukungan sosial serta kebijakan kampus yang inklusif bagi mahasiswa perantau.

1. INTRODUCTION

Moving to a new campus environment is challenging for students, especially those from different cultural and regional backgrounds. Differences in language, social norms, academic customs, and lifestyles often trigger culture shock, an emotional and psychological reaction that occurs when individuals are confronted with a foreign culture (Nailevna, 2017). Culture shock that is not managed correctly can cause stress, feelings of alienation, and barriers

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22460/quanta.v9i3.6445>



to social interaction, which ultimately disrupt psychological adjustment, reduce motivation to learn, and reduce students' mental well-being (Putra et al., 2022).

In the context of students in the Counselling Guidance Program at UIN Ar-Raniry, this phenomenon deserves attention, given their role in requiring interpersonal relationship-building skills and managing cross-cultural communication dynamics. Social support, whether from family, peers, faculty, or campus institutions, is believed to be a significant protective factor (buffer). Such support includes emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance that can reduce stress, enhance a sense of belonging, and facilitate academic and social adaptation (Cui et al., 2024).

The culture shock experienced by counselling students at UIN Ar-Raniry, especially those from outside the region or with different cultural backgrounds, can be highly significant. The absence of academic attention to this condition has the potential to disrupt students' mental health, reduce their motivation to learn, and even threaten the continuity of their studies. Without adequate social support, students are prone to stress, anxiety, and social isolation, which can affect their academic performance and quality of life. Therefore, educational institutions must pay more attention to this issue by providing appropriate mentoring and support programs.

The culture shock experienced by students in the campus environment is often caused by social, value, and behavioural differences between their background and the new environment they face (Ivins et al., 2017). Students from different regions or cultures may feel awkward about their interactions, the education system, and the free lifestyle on campus (Marginson, 2014). Differences in language or dialect, dress, socializing, or daily routines exacerbate this discomfort. The adaptation process requires time and support from friends, lecturers, and orientation facilities provided by the campus to help students feel more accepted and comfortable.

Several studies indicate that social support effectively reduces the negative impacts of culture shock. Shali et al. (2024) found that international students who received institutional support, such as cultural orientation and academic counselling, could adapt more quickly and had higher academic engagement. These findings align with a meta-analysis (Smith & Khawaja, 2022) revealing a negative correlation between social support and acculturative stress. However, the magnitude of the effect varies depending on the cultural context. In Indonesia, (Syafitri & Wahyuni, 2023) demonstrated the effectiveness of group counseling in helping international students overcome culture shock through facilitating emotional expression, enhancing cross-cultural understanding, and strengthening social skills.

According to Ward et al. (2020) culture shock is an adaptive response to cultural differences that is divided into three aspects: (1) affective emotional reactions such as confusion, anxiety, loss of identity, and longing for the original environment; (2) behavioral changes resulting from uncertainty in understanding rules and norms of interaction; and (3) cognitive changes in perspectives, values, and self-identity due to cultural contact. A study by Ayub et al. (2024) on international students found that poorly managed culture shock is correlated with increased stress, anxiety, and feelings of isolation, which impact learning motivation and academic adaptation. Therefore, strong social support, cultural orientation programs, and counseling services are needed to minimize these negative impacts.

Sarafino & Smith (2020) define social support as emotional, instrumental, informational, or evaluative assistance provided by family, friends, or the academic environment to help individuals cope with life pressures, including in the context of higher education. This support reduces psychological burdens and promotes the development of adaptive coping strategies (Utomo et al., 2022). Students who receive adequate support tend to have higher self-confidence, build healthy social relationships, and adapt more quickly to new environments. Rahmadani & Mukti (2020) explain that adaptation is a realistic and responsible process of adjusting to environmental demands, including independence, emotional control, personal responsibility, and the ability to establish positive relationships.

Adaptation on campus involves understanding academic norms, managing emotions, and establishing healthy interpersonal relationships. Research in Indonesia reinforces the findings of Widihapsari & Susilawati (2018), who reported that social support significantly reduces stress levels among new students. Estiane (2015) found that students with high levels of social support demonstrated better adaptation, reflected in active participation in campus activities. Rizal & Herawati (2020), who studied students from Southern Thailand at the University of Islam Riau, found a significant negative relationship between social support and culture shock ($r = -0.276$; $p = 0.024$). Anjani et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of peer support, while Mawaddah & Yuliani (2021) highlighted that students with high perceptions of social support exhibit better emotional stability and academic adaptation. Susilo (2024) also demonstrated a significant negative relationship between social support and culture shock among first-year students outside Java at Muhammadiyah University of Malang. Cross-national studies provide a similar picture. Cui et al. (2024) show that support from local students reduces the intensity of culture shock among Thai

students in China (Zhang et al., 2022), adding that friendships with local students not only aid academic adaptation but also strengthen psychological and sociocultural adaptation.

Although some studies have addressed the adaptation of international students or new students (Zhang, 2022; Mulyadi et al., 2024; Safitri et al., 2024; Murwantono & Rinawati, 2021), research specifically exploring the role of social support in the context of culture shock in a campus environment remains limited. Furthermore, these studies have not sufficiently highlighted how social support from peers, lecturers, and professional counsellors in the Counselling Guidance program can facilitate the adaptation process of students more profoundly. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the influence of social support on the adaptation of Counseling Guidance students experiencing culture shock on campus.

This study aims to analyze the influence of social support on the campus adaptation ability of Counseling Guidance students at UIN Ar-Raniry who experience culture shock. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on students with moderate to high levels of culture shock, as well as testing the influence of campus adaptation on social support in a specific context that considers the cultural, academic, and learning environment characteristics unique to Aceh.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study uses a quantitative approach with a simple regression design. This approach was chosen because the study aims to determine whether there is an influence between social support as an independent variable (X) and campus adaptation as a dependent variable (Y) among students of Guidance and Counseling at UIN Ar-Raniry who experience culture shock. The correlational design allows researchers to analyse the influence and direction of influence between variables objectively through numerical data and statistical analysis techniques.

2.2 Research Subjects

The population in this study were all active students of the Guidance and Counseling Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training (FTK) UIN Ar-Raniry class of 2024 who met the research criteria. The criteria are: (1) active students of the 2024 intake of the Counseling and Guidance Program at FTK UIN Ar-Raniry; (2) from outside the region, such as outside Banda Aceh or outside Aceh; (3) living in Banda Aceh or its surroundings for the first time for academic purposes; and (4) experiencing culture shock during the adaptation process to the campus environment and local social culture. Based on the initial screening results, the 67 people were selected as research samples using purposive sampling. This technique was chosen so that the samples taken were truly relevant and in accordance with the research objectives.

2.3 Data Collection

The research instruments consist of three psychological scales: (1) the culture shock scale adopted from Cahaya Safitri's thesis (2024) and used as a screening tool to identify respondents experiencing culture shock. This scale measures three main aspects: affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects, reflecting an individual's reaction to a new environment; (2) a social support scale adopted from Indah Purwanti's thesis (2021), which measures four main aspects, namely emotional support or appreciation, instrumental support, informational support, and social network support; (3) a campus environment adaptation scale developed by the researcher, measuring five dimensions, namely physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and moral and values. This instrument has undergone content validity testing through expert judgment by two subject matter experts and validity and reliability testing using SPSS software to ensure its quality and suitability.

The Culture Shock instrument is designed in a 5-point Likert scale, with a score range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Meanwhile, the Social Support and Campus Environment Adaptation instruments use a 4-point Likert scale, with a score range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

The data collection procedure was carried out in two stages. In the first stage, the researcher distributed the culture shock instrument to the entire population, which met the general criteria for identifying respondents who experienced culture shock. In the second stage, only respondents identified as experiencing culture shock were given the social support and campus environment adaptation instruments. Before filling out the instruments, respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, data confidentiality, and instructions for filling out the scale. Data collection was carried out in a controlled manner within a period determined by the researcher.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out quantitatively with the help of the SPSS program. The analysis stage began with a data normality test to ensure that the data from each variable was normally distributed. The normality test was performed using the Shapiro-Wilk method because the sample size was less than 100 respondents. After the data were declared normally distributed, the analysis continued with a simple linear regression test to determine how much the social support variables influenced campus adaptation. This test was used to measure the strength and direction of the influence between variables and to test statistical significance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

This study used a quantitative approach involving 111 respondents who were counseling students from the 2024 batch. A culture shock scale was used to measure the level of culture shock. The measurement results were then classified into three categories, namely low, moderate, and high, with reference to the mean and standard deviation of the overall scores obtained by the respondents. This classification aims to determine the proportion of students in each level of culture shock.

Table 1. Distribution of Culture Shock Level Categories

| Category | Frekuensi | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| High | 44 | 39,63 |
| Medium | 23 | 20,72 |
| Low | 44 | 39,63 |
| Total | 111 | 100 |

Based on Table 1, the distribution of culture shock levels among respondents shows that the high and low categories have the same number, namely 44 people or 39.63%. The moderate category has 23 respondents or 20.72%. In this study, the researcher selected respondents from the high and moderate categories as the research sample to obtain a more in-depth description of the significant differences in the levels of culture shock. Next, the selected sample will be given a social support and campus environment adaptation scale to measure the influence of the level of culture shock, the social support received, and the ability to adapt to the campus environment.

a) Prerequisite Test (Normality)

| | Tests of Normality | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----|-------|--------------|----|------|
| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Social Support | .068 | 67 | .200* | .979 | 67 | .329 |
| Adaptation to the Campus Environment | .094 | 67 | .200* | .967 | 67 | .068 |

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on the results of the normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk method, which is more recommended for sample sizes under 200, the significance values for each variable are as follows: (1) Social support has a significance value of 0.329; (2) Campus environmental adaptation has a significance value of 0.068

Both significance values are greater than 0.05, indicating that the data for both variables are normally distributed. Thus, the normality assumption in linear regression analysis has been met. This allows simple linear regression to be used to analyse the influence of independent and dependent variables.

b) Simple Regression Test

| Model Summary | | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | | |
| 1 | .983 ^a | .967 | .967 | .69980 | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Adaptation to the Campus Environment

| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|--------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 934.079 | 1 | 934.079 | 1907.383 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 31.832 | 65 | .490 | | |
| | Total | 965.910 | 66 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Social Support

b. Predictors: (Constant), Adaptation to the Campus Environment

| Model | | Coefficients ^a | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 11.231 | .792 | | 14.183 | .000 |
| | Adaptation to the Campus Environment | .934 | .021 | .983 | 43.674 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Adaptation to the Campus Environment

Based on the Model Summary table results, the coefficient of determination (R^2) value obtained was 0.967. This means that the Campus Environmental Adaptation variable can explain 96.7% of the variation in the Social Support variable. In comparison, the remaining 3.3% is influenced by other variables not included in the model. Furthermore, the ANOVA test results show an F value of 1907.383 with significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that the built regression model is statistically significant, so Campus Environmental Adaptation simultaneously affects Social Support.

Based on the Coefficient table, a linear regression equation of 0.934 was obtained, indicating that every one-unit increase in Campus Environmental Adaptation will be followed by an increase of 0.934 units in Social Support. The p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.001$) for the independent variable indicates that the effect is highly statistically significant.

c) Research Hypothesis

Based on the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, which was used because the sample size was less than 200, it was found that the Social Support variable had a significance value of 0.329 and the Campus Environmental Adaptation variable had a significance value of 0.068. Both values are greater than 0.05, so the data is usually distributed. The fulfilment of this normality assumption is important because it allows simple linear regression analysis to be conducted validly, free from analytical bias, and the results can be generalised appropriately (Ghozali, 2021).

The simple linear regression analysis results show a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.967, meaning that Campus Environmental Adaptation can explain 96.7% of the variation in Social Support. In comparison, other factors outside the model influence the remaining 3.3%. The model significance test (ANOVA) yielded an F value of 1907.383 with a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the regression model is statistically significant. The regression equation obtained is: $Y = 11.231 + 0.934X$

where Y = Social Support and X = Campus Environmental Adaptation. The positive regression coefficient of 0.934 indicates that every one-unit increase in the Campus Environmental Adaptation score will increase the Social Support score by 0.934 units, which is highly significant ($p < 0.001$).

3.2. Discussion

Social support significantly influences the ability of counseling and guidance students at UIN Ar-Raniry to adapt to the campus environment when experiencing culture shock. This finding is consistent with research (Gulo & others, 2025), which revealed that social support is important in reducing culture shock among students from other regions. Support provided by friends, family, and the university helps students overcome feelings of alienation, confusion, and psychological pressure when entering a new environment. Additionally, (Gulo & others, 2025) also emphasise that social adaptation skills mediate between social support and reduced culture shock, meaning that students with better interpersonal skills, relationship-building abilities, and understanding of campus norms adapt more quickly.

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Habiballah & Baarii (2024), which indicate that social support functions as a protective factor for the mental health of students experiencing culture shock. Adequate emotional and informational support can reduce stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms, enabling students to

maintain emotional stability during the adaptation process. In this context, peer social support is important (Andre & Huwae, 2022). They found that peer support has a greater influence than family support in helping adaptation in the campus environment. This is because peers are in the same situation and can directly assist in academic and social activities, thereby accelerating students' adjustment.

Another finding that supports this research is a study (Dhuha et al., 2023), which reveals that social support contributes to increasing the resilience of migrant students. Resilience is an important factor that enables students to bounce back from pressure, face academic and social challenges, and minimise the negative impact of culture shock. Adapting to the campus environment can be more effective and sustainable with good resilience. Additionally, (Agestia et al., 2024) added that active adaptation strategies, such as joining organisations, utilising counseling services, and building social networks on campus, can facilitate the adaptation process. These strategies will be more effective if supported by a responsive and inclusive social environment, enabling students to feel accepted and valued in their new environment.

The significance of these findings is substantial, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research reinforces the view that student adaptation is not merely an internal issue but depends on a supportive ecosystem from social networks and institutional policies. Practically, these findings guide strategies for academic programs, such as the Counseling Guidance Program at UIN Ar-Raniry, to implement a biopsychosocial mentoring and counseling system: focusing on providing structured emotional, informational, and instrumental support.

The main finding of this study is that social support not only directly influences academic adaptation but also shapes meaning-making and psychological resilience among new students. Institutional support designed effectively can serve as a bridge between cultural pressure and academic performance (San & Guo, 2023). The main implication of these findings is that the campus environment needs to become a supportive arena for adaptation, not only in material terms but also in terms of empowering students through social networks, intercultural training, and emotional mentoring. This is important because good adaptation in the first year of college positively impacts academic achievement, psychological well-being, and student retention in the long term. The results of this study are consistent with the current literature, which shows that student adaptation is a dynamic process that requires multilevel support. As discussed in the study, informal and formal forms of support work synergistically to facilitate new students' academic and cultural integration.

Culture shock refers to the disorientation experienced by someone when exposed to a culture that is very different from their own (Mulyadi et al., 2024). For new counseling students entering the campus environment, especially those from different cultural backgrounds, culture shock can affect their academic and social life adaptation. This adaptation process involves adjusting to the campus environment's new norms, rules, and customs. In facing these differences, social support plays a vital role in helping students overcome anxiety and alienation and improving their ability to function effectively in a new environment (Lam, 2018).

Social support theory, first developed by Nguyen et al. (2016) states that the social support individuals receive from family, friends, and community positively impacts their psychological and physical well-being. In the context of students experiencing culture shock, social support can come in various forms, such as emotional, informational, or instrumental. Emotional support provides comfort and acceptance, while informational support helps students better understand their new environment (he et al., 2023). Instrumental support in the form of practical assistance is also essential, such as helping students find relevant resources or campus orientation.

Previous research shows that students with strong social support networks tend to adapt more quickly and experience less stress due to cultural differences. This social support helps students feel more accepted and better overcome challenges. Conversely, students without adequate social support are more vulnerable to feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and even depression, which hinder their adaptation process. Thus, social support is a crucial factor that can accelerate the adaptation process of counseling students experiencing culture shock, enabling them to function optimally in the campus environment and achieve academic and social success.

4. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The theoretical implications of this study strengthen the foundation of guidance and counseling, particularly in relation to adaptation models for new students during the educational transition period. In the context of guidance and counseling, these findings can serve as a reference for developing social support-based interventions to prevent and address adaptation difficulties, especially for students experiencing culture shock. Practically, the research results guide campus counselors to integrate adaptation counseling services into new student orientation programs through strategies such as peer mentoring, cross-cultural social skills training, and support groups. Counseling services can focus more on strengthening coping skills and empowering students to manage academic

and social stress, in line with findings that emphasize the effectiveness of community-based interventions. From a managerial perspective, the implications of this research can be used as a basis for universities to develop policies that support an inclusive campus climate, such as providing student service centres, cultural sensitivity training for academic staff, and creating spaces for interaction across backgrounds. Implementing these policies will increase student retention, reduce dropout rates, and create a conducive learning environment. Methodologically, this study contributes by integrating a quantitative approach to analyze the influence of social support on students' adaptation levels. Further research is recommended to use mixed methods to explore the qualitative dimensions of adaptation experiences, including students' perceptions of counseling and guidance services. Comparative studies across universities and cultures are also recommended to expand the generalizability of findings and strengthen the external validity of the research.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has tested and proven that social support plays an important role in improving the ability of new students to adapt to the campus environment, especially those experiencing culture shock. In line with the hypothesis outlined in the introduction, the results show that students with high levels of social support have better academic, social, and emotional adaptation abilities than those with low social support. The prospects for enriching the findings of this study lie in expanding the study to include other factors that influence student adaptation, such as emotional intelligence, coping strategies, and learning technology support. Future research can use a mixed methods design or cross-cultural comparative studies to increase external validity and broaden the generalization of the findings.

Social support significantly influences the adaptation of counseling students experiencing culture shock in the campus environment. Social support, whether from family, friends, or the campus community, helps students overcome feelings of disorientation and anxiety arising from cultural differences and accelerates their adjustment to academic and social life. Students who receive emotional, informational, and instrumental support can better adapt, feel more accepted, and experience improved psychological well-being. In contrast, those who receive less support tend to face difficulties in adapting. Therefore, campuses must provide a strong social support network so students can undergo their academic experiences more smoothly and successfully.

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that policymakers in higher education strengthen social support-based guidance and counseling services, develop peer mentoring programs, provide cross-cultural social skills training, and establish inclusive and responsive campus policies that accommodate student diversity. These strategic steps are expected to create a conducive academic environment, minimize the negative impact of culture shock, and enhance the academic success of international students.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank the supervisor for providing guidance, direction, and valuable input throughout the research process and the preparation of this article. Special recognition is also extended to the university, particularly the Counseling and Guidance Program, for providing the necessary facilities and opportunities to conduct this research. The author would also like to express gratitude to all respondents who kindly took the time to participate and provide the required data, enabling this research to be completed.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript. Aisy contributed to the writing - original draft, data collection and interpretation of the results. Muslima contributed to the review and editing.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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