

**ADAPTATION AND CULTURE SHOCK TO SOCIAL LIFE IN  
PARTICIPANTS OF THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT EXCHANGE  
PROGRAM (PMM) AT POLITEKNIK NEGERI BATAM**

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**Abstract**

This study investigates the influence of adaptation and culture shock on the social life of participants in the Independent Student Exchange Program at Politeknik Negeri Batam. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 100 respondents, selected via purposive sampling from a population of 123 students. Questionnaires served as the primary data collection tool, and the analysis employed descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression. Results show that adaptation significantly enhances students' ability to build social interactions, while effective management of culture shock mitigates adjustment challenges. Institutional support, such as cultural orientation programs, plays a critical role in facilitating students' social integration and improving their overall exchange experience. This research highlights the need for structured support systems to maximize the benefits of student exchange program.

**Keywords:** Adaptation, Culture Shock, Social Life, Independent Student Exchange Program, Student Exchange.

## 1. Introduction

The Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM) is a component of the Merdeka Belajar Merdeka Kampus (MBKM) initiative, providing students with the opportunity to participate in domestic student exchanges for one semester. This program allows students to experience different academic environments across Indonesia, fostering their understanding of cultural diversity and enhancing their communication skills across various ethnic groups. The PMM program was launched in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Culture and LPDP in 2022, aiming to provide students with exposure to ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity they may not have encountered before (PMM Socialization, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

One of the key challenges students face during the PMM program is culture shock, a phenomenon that occurs when individuals are exposed to unfamiliar cultural environments. Students often experience confusion and stress due to differences in daily habits, customs, and dialects, leading to difficulties in adjusting to their new surroundings. Mulyana (2006) described culture shock as a sudden state of confusion or anxiety experienced when individuals are confronted with a new cultural environment. This condition is common among students participating in the PMM program, as they must navigate new social and academic structures that differ from those in their home regions.

In 2022, the PMM program was developed to help students gain leadership skills, social sensitivity, and confidence, in addition to fostering their academic growth. The program encourages students to embrace the cultural diversity they encounter and build social networks in their host institutions. However, as students enter new environments, they must go through a self-adjustment process, which can be particularly difficult for those experiencing culture shock for the first time (Mitasari & Istikomayanti, 2017).

The Batam State Polytechnic (Polibatam) plays a significant role in the PMM program, having welcomed 128 students in 2023 and 123 students in 2024. Students from diverse regions, including Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Bali, and West Papua, participated in the exchange program. The welcoming event for PMM students at Polibatam was held in August 2023, introducing students to both the academic environment and the cultural atmosphere of Batam. The PMM program not only provides academic benefits but also promotes social integration, helping students establish friendships and understand the local culture (PMM Socialization, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

**Table 1.** Data On Independent Student Exchange Participants

Year	Exchange Participants Independent Students	College
2024	16.000	128 (Receiving College)

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

**Table 2.** Student Exchange Participant Data Independence at Politeknik Negeri Batam

Year	Student Inbound Program Independent Student Exchange
2024	123 students

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

Through this research, the author aims to explore the culture shock experienced by PMM students at Politeknik Negeri Batam and their adaptation to the cultural and social changes they face during the program. This study examines how students navigate their interactions with diverse ethnic groups, overcome the challenges of culture shock, and adjust to the new academic environment they encounter.

## 2. Theoretical Review

### 2.1 Adaptation

Adaptation refers to the process of adjusting oneself to a new environment. There are two types: autoplasmic adaptation, where personal behavior is influenced by the environment, and alloplasmic adaptation, where individuals actively influence the environment. Adaptation can lead to social changes and is essential for survival in differing social conditions. Scholars like Soerjono Soekanto emphasize that adaptation is a natural process for coexistence, while Robert K. Merton views it as a necessary adjustment to social environments.

### 2.2 Culture Shock

The sense of confusion and anxiety that comes with being in a new cultural setting is known as culture shock. Initially defined by Oberg, it involves confusion when familiar social norms and symbols are lost. According to Ward, culture shock affects individuals emotionally, behaviorally, and cognitively, often leading to anxiety and difficulty in adapting. Adler and Kim further explain it as an emotional reaction to

cultural differences, where individuals may feel helpless or overwhelmed by the new environment.

### 2.3 Social Life

Social life is built on interactions between individuals in a community. For migrant students, new social environments introduce challenges in communication, behavior, and lifestyle, often leading to culture shock. Mitasari & Istikomayanti (2017) explain that students who fail to adjust may experience stress, while those who adapt successfully enjoy better social relationships. External factors such as language, food, and homesickness play a significant role in this adjustment process.

### 2.4 Participants of the Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM)

The Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM) is an activity to exchange students between one cluster to other regional clusters (inter-island) for one semester. The PMM program is also a program which provides a diversity, cultural experience with a maximum credit transfer system of +/- 20 credits. The PMM program is the new face of the PERMATA-SAKTI (Indonesian Student Exchange Nusantara) Program Credit Transfer System with Information Technology) year 2020.

## 3. Methods

This study utilized a quantitative research method aimed at testing hypotheses related to the adaptation and culture shock experiences of participants in the Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM) at Politeknik Negeri Batam. The population in this study included 123 students, and the sample size was determined using the Slovin formula, yielding 100 respondents for the questionnaire distribution (Sugiyono, 2013) sampling technique used was Purposive Sampling, ensuring that only students who had undergone PMM and experienced culture shock were included. Data collection was done using questionnaires, which were distributed to respondents. The survey used a 7-point Likert scale, from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," to measure social life, culture shock, and adaptation-related factors.

The analysis began with descriptive analysis, This method was employed to classify and tabulate the responses based on the variables such as adaptation and culture shock. Sugiyono (2017) stated that descriptive research helps establish relationships between independent variables and their impact on the dependent variable, which in this case was social life. The respondents' answers were analyzed to verify the

hypotheses posed in the study.

Descriptive Statistical Test, Multiple linear regression analysis was utilized to assess the influence of the independent variables (Adaptation and Culture Shock) on the dependent variable (Social Life). According to Ghozali (2018), the F-statistical test shows whether the independent variables have a collective influence on the dependent variable. The equation for multiple linear regression used in this study was:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta X1 + \beta X2 \quad (1)$$

Description

Y= Social Life in Participant of the Independent Student Exchange Program

$\partial$ = Nilai Konstanta

b= Koefisien Regresi

X1= Adaptation

X2= Culture Shock

To ascertain if the independent factors had a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable, hypothesis testing was done. The comparison of significance values helped researchers decide whether to accept or reject the hypotheses, thus measuring the influence of Adaptation and Culture Shock on Social Life.

The independent effects of both adaptation and culture shock on the dependent variable (social life) were assessed using the t-test. If the significance value was greater than 0.05, the hypothesis was accepted, indicating a meaningful effect.

The overall impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable was evaluated using the F-test. This simultaneous test helped confirm whether both Adaptation and Culture Shock significantly impacted Social Life, based on the formula provided for the test.

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The results of descriptive analysis were analyzed by showing the Mean Value as output and categorizing the output in the context of the social life of participants of The Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM). The Adaptation variable (X1) gets a Mean value of 4.21 which is included in the "very good" category. Culture Shock (X2) variable gets a Mean value of 4.19 which is included in the "good" category. The class interval is sought using the following formula:

$$\text{Class Intervals} = \frac{\text{highest Score} - \text{lowest score}}{\text{number of classes}}$$

$$\text{Class Intervals} = \frac{5 - 1}{5}$$

$$\text{Class Intervals} = 0,8$$

Using a class interval of 0,8, the criteria for evaluating the average respondent's answer are presented in Table below:

**Table 3.** Class Interval

Interval	Category Variable X
$4,21 \leq X \leq 5$	Very Good
$3,41 \leq X \leq 4,20$	Good
$2,61 \leq X \leq 3,40$	Neutral
$1,81 \leq X \leq 2,60$	Bad
$1 \leq X \leq 1,80$	Very Bad

Sources: (Ghozali, 2005)

**Table 4.** Statistics Descriptive Adaptation

No	Variable	Mean	Category
1	X1.1	4,17	Good
2	X1.2	4,22	Very Good
3	X1.3	4,10	Good
4	X1.4	4,26	Very Good
5	X1.5	4,30	Very Good
6	X1.6	4,22	Very Good
7	X1.7	4,18	Good
8	X1.8	4,13	Good
9	X1.9	4,13	Neutral
10	X1.10	4,26	Very Good
11	X1.11	4,21	Very Good
12	X1.12	4,28	Very Good
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>4,21</b>	

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

From table 3 above, the results show that the average (Mean) on the adaptation dimension is 4.21. This value falls into the "Very Good" category, which indicates that PMM participants are able to adapt well to the new social environment. And from the results of the study, it shows that the highest average is 4.30. This value is included in the "Very good" category according to Ghozali research: 2005, for the lowest average is 4.10. This value is included in the "Good" category according to Ghozali 2005 research.

**Table 5.** Statistics Descriptive Culture Shock

No	Variable	Mean	Category
1	X2.1	4,48	Very Good
2	X2.2	3,06	Good

No	Variable	Mean	Category
3	X2.3	4,66	Very Good
4	X2.4	4,79	Very Good
5	X2.5	4,64	Very Good
6	X2.6	4,62	Very Good
7	X2.7	2,89	Neutral
8	X2.8	4,58	Very Good
9	X2.9	2,89	Neutral
10	X2.10	4,65	Very Good
11	X2.11	4,56	Very Good
12	X2.12	4,43	Very Good
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>4,19</b>	

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

From table 4 above, the results show that the average (Mean) on the Culture Shock dimension is 4.19. This score falls into the "Good" category, which indicates that the participants experienced a moderate level of culture shock during the exchange. The highest mean score was 4.79. This score is included in the "Very Good" category according to Ghozali research: 2005. The lowest score was 2.89. This value is included in the "Neutral" category according to Ghozali research: 2005.

**Table 6.** Statistics Descriptive Social Life

No	Variable	Mean	Category
1	Y1.1	3,73	Good
2	Y1.2	3,61	Good
3	Y1.3	3,66	Good
4	Y1.4	3,72	Good
5	Y1.5	3,55	Good
6	Y1.6	3,57	Good
7	Y1.7	4,23	Very Good
8	Y1.8	4,26	Very Good
9	Y1.9	4,17	Good
10	Y1.10	4,24	Very Good
11	Y1.11	3,02	Neutral
12	Y1.12	2,83	Neutral
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>3,72</b>	

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

From table 5 above, the results show that the average score (Mean) is 3.72. This score falls into the "Good" category, which indicates that the participants generally had a positive experience in the Independent Student Exchange Program. The highest mean score was 4.26. This value is included in the "Very Good" category according to Ghozali research: 2005. The lowest mean score is 2.83. This is categorized as "Neutral" according to Ghozali:2005.

## 4.2 Validity Test

The validity index of the questionnaire using Product Moment Correlation for 96 respondents using a 95% confidence level, in the label table of 0.202. The results of the validity test in the table are seen in the table below:

**Table 7.** Validity Test

Indicator	r-value	r-table	Description
X1.1	0,620	0,202	Valid
X1.2	0,690	0,202	Valid
X1.3	0,745	0,202	Valid
X1.4	0,694	0,202	Valid
X1.5	0,737	0,202	Valid
X1.6	0,724	0,202	Valid
X1.7	0,576	0,202	Valid
X1.8	0,610	0,202	Valid
X1.9	0,745	0,202	Valid
X1.10	0,693	0,202	Valid
X1.11	0,683	0,202	Valid
X1.12	0,669	0,202	Valid
X2.1	0,506	0,202	Valid
X2.2	0,741	0,202	Valid
X2.3	0,388	0,202	Valid
X2.4	0,506	0,202	Valid
X2.5	0,409	0,202	Valid
X2.6	0,373	0,202	Valid
X2.7	0,702	0,202	Valid
X2.8	0,386	0,202	Valid
X2.9	0,702	0,202	Valid
X2.10	0,421	0,202	Valid
X2.11	0,506	0,202	Valid
X2.12	0,409	0,202	Valid
Y1	0,489	0,202	Valid
Y2	0,554	0,202	Valid
Y3	0,498	0,202	Valid
Y4	0,537	0,202	Valid
Y5	0,437	0,202	Valid
Y6	0,523	0,202	Valid

Y7	0,464	0,202	Valid
Y8	0,388	0,202	Valid
Y9	0,343	0,202	Valid
Y10	0,437	0,202	Valid
Y11	0,478	0,202	Valid
Y12	0,515	0,202	Valid

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

From the table above, it shows that all of the variables used in this research have a correlation value above 0.202. This means that all indicators used to measure all variables in this research are stated to be valid.

### 4.3 Reliability Test

The results of the reliability test can be seen in the following table:

**Table 8.** Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Minimum	Description
Adaptation (X <sub>1</sub> )	0,894	0,60	Reliable
Culture Shock (X <sub>2</sub> )	0,763	0,60	Reliable
Social Life (Y)	0,674	0,60	Reliable

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

According to table 4 above, the test results for the questionnaire's reliability showed that all variables had Cronbach's Alpha values more than 0.6. This condition means that all variables are reliable and can be used in further analysis.

### 4.4 Multiple Linier Regression

To ascertain the extent to which independent variables impact dependent variables, multiple linear regression analysis is used. Table 7 below displays the multiple linear regression analysis's findings:

**Table 9.** Result Multiple Linier Regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	
1 (Constant)	10.470	7.439	.163

Adaptation	.368	.081	.000
Culture Shock	.297	.124	.018

a. Dependent Variable: Social Life

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

The regression equation generated in this regression test, as shown in table 5 above, is

$$Y = 10,470 + 0,368X1 + 0,297X2$$

The model can be interpreted as follows: The constant value of 10.470 indicates that if both Adaptation (X1) and Culture Shock (X2) are constant, the Social Life (Y) is valued at 10.470. Adaptation (X1) has a coefficient of 0.368, showing a positive and unidirectional influence on Social Life—meaning that a one-unit increase in Adaptation will raise Social Life by 0.368 units. Similarly, Culture Shock (X2) has a coefficient of 0.297, indicating a positive effect on Social Life. A one-unit increase in Culture Shock will lead to a 0.297-unit rise in Social Life. This suggests that both Adaptation and Culture Shock positively contribute to improvements in Social Life.

#### 4.5 Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)

To determine the strength of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, and the extent of the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable, we can refer to the values of the correlation coefficient and the coefficient of determination as shown in the table below:

**Table 10.** F-Test

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.474 <sup>a</sup>	.225	.209	4.013

a. Predictors: (Constant, Adaption, Culture Shock

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

The correlation coefficient (R) = 0.474, indicating that the influence of the variables Adaptation and Culture Shock on Social Life among Participants of the Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM) at Politeknik Negeri Batam is 47.4%.

Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) is 0.225 or 22.5%. This means that the independent variables have an influence of 22.5% on the dependent variable, while the remaining 77.5% is influenced by other factors outside the variables of this study.

#### 4.6 Hypothesis Tests (t-Test)

The independent variables, Culture Shock (X2) and

Adaptation (X1), are tested for their partial effects on the dependent variable, Social Life (Y), using the t test.

**Table 11.** t-Test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	10.470	7.439		1.407	.163
	Adaptation	.368	.081	.408	4.558	.000
	Culture Shock	.297	.124	.215	2.397	.018

a. Dependent Variable: Social Life

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

a. Dependent Variable: Social Life

Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

From the calculation results, the t-count value for the Adaptation variable is 4.558 with a resulting significance level of 0,000. Because the t-count value (4,558) > t-table (1,407) and the resulting significance value of 0,000 is smaller than 0,050, Ha is accepted, but H0 is refused. This indicates that Social Life is significantly impacted by the Adaptation variable to some extent. From the calculation results, the t-count value for the Culture Shock variable is 2,397 with a resulting significance level of 0,018. Because the t-count value (2,397) > t-table (1,407) and the resulting significance value of 0,018 is smaller than 0,050, Ha is accepted, but H0 is refused. This indicates that Social Life is significantly impacted by the Culture Shock variable to some extent.

#### 4.7 F-test

The test is used to determine the influence of the independent variables, Adaptation(X1), Culture Shock (X2) on the dependent variable Social Life (Y) simultaneously.

**Table 12.** F-Test

Model		Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	226.895	14.092	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	16.101		
	Total			

a. Dependent Variable: Social Life

b. Predictors: (Constant), Adaptation, Culture Shock  
Sources: Primary data processed, 2024

The results of testing the model simultaneously above obtained an F-count value of 14.092 with a significance of 0.000. Because the F-count value ( $14.092 > F\text{-table } (2.32)$ ) and the resulting significance value of 0.000 and this value is smaller than  $\alpha = (0.05)$ , It is clear that  $H_a$  is accepted and  $H_0$  is refused. This indicates that Social Life is significantly impacted by both Culture Shock (X2) and Adaptation (X1) at the same time.

#### 4.8 Discussion

The outcomes of testing with previously conducted data analysis techniques, it is found that the variables Adaptation (X1) and Culture Shock (X2) on Social Life In Participants Of The Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM) are:

##### **The Effect Of Adaptation on Social Life**

The study found that Adaptation (X1) significantly influences the ability of students participating in the Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM) to adjust to their new social environment at Politeknik Negeri Batam. This finding is in line with Erturk and Luu (2022), who found that international students in Hungary and the United States with strong adaptability experienced smoother social adjustments due to factors like mental readiness and social support. Therefore, these findings support the importance of adaptability in determining the success of PMM participants in living socially in a new environment. Efforts to prepare students to be more adaptable to different social environments can be considered to enhance their experience during the program. This finding suggests that, despite facing cultural challenges, students managed to build positive social relationships. These results emphasize the importance of support in helping international students to adapt quickly.

##### **The Effect of Culture Shock on Social Life**

Culture Shock (X2) was also found to significantly affect students' ability to adapt to their new social environments. Students experiencing severe culture shock face greater challenges due to differences in culture, language, and social norms, which hinder their social interactions. This is supported by Febrianty et al. (2022), who observed that students from different regions studying in Yogyakarta experienced anxiety and isolation, making it difficult for them to adjust socially. Therefore, these results emphasize the importance of institutional support to help students

overcome culture shock and facilitate better social adaptation. Providing cultural orientation and psychological support can help students adapt faster and reduce the negative impact of culture shock during the exchange program. Although they faced some challenges in adjusting to new cultural norms, the overall score indicates that they managed to cope with this experience effectively. These findings highlight the resilience of the students in dealing with cultural differences and adapting to their new environment.

##### **The Effect of Adaptation and Culture Shock on Social Life**

When considered together, Adaptation (X1) and Culture Shock (X2) have a combined significant effect on students' social life. The ability to adapt and manage culture shock directly influences students' capacity to build social relationships. This finding aligns with Mufidah and Fadilah (2022), who highlighted that students who manage culture shock successfully are more likely to engage positively in their host environment and build meaningful relationships. The significant combined effect of adaptation and culture shock underlines the importance of a holistic approach in supporting students during the exchange program, facilitating their social adaptation and overall success in a new cultural setting.

## 5. Conclusion and Suggestion

### 5.1 Conclusion

Based on the research conducted, it can be concluded that:

1. Adaptation has a positive and significant effect on Social Life. This finding indicates that when students effectively adapt to a new cultural environment, their social interactions improve.
2. Good adaptation allows students to understand social norms, build meaningful relationships, and feel less isolated.
3. Support from educational institutions is crucial in helping students adapt and enjoy a positive social experience during their exchange program.

Furthermore, the study reveals that Culture Shock also has a significant effect on Social Life. This indicates that students' experiences of culture shock can impact their interactions with others. While culture shock is often viewed as a challenge, effectively managing it can help students adjust to new situations and engage with the local community. Thus, understanding culture shock and providing appropriate support can enhance students' social interactions.

### 5.2 Suggestion

Based on the above conclusions, the author will

provide useful suggestions as follows:

1. Batam State Polytechnic, especially the PMM coordinator, should develop effective support programs to assist students in the adaptation process. These programs may include cultural orientation sessions and social skills training.
2. The PMM coordinator should organize activities that encourage interaction between exchange students and the local community.
3. Providing workshops on managing culture shock can equip students with skills to overcome the challenges they face. This training can help students turn challenges into learning opportunities.
4. Implementing feedback mechanisms can help Batam State Polytechnic and PMM coordinators evaluate the effectiveness of their support programs. Surveys and focus groups can provide insights into student needs.
5. PMM coordinators should collaborate with local organizations to create a supportive environment for exchange students. Partnering in various events can enrich their experience.
6. Future research should examine the long-term impact of adaptation and culture shock on students' academic outcomes. Understanding this impact can help improve exchange program policies.

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