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Cross-Cultural Challenges of Communication for African Students in Russian Academic Environment

MASTER'S THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays the process of globalization influences all the spheres of our life, including the academic world. Academic mobility today is rapidly growing as many students go to study abroad. Being a student in a foreign country is not easy. It may cause a lot of challenges and international students need to adapt to the academic environment. To be successful in a new academic environment an international student should know the rules and regulations of the country he studies at and at the same time he/she should safe the national identity.

The purpose of our research is to study the attitudes of African students to getting education in Russia and find out the ways they can adapt to a new education environment.

To achieve the purpose, we conducted surveys, interviews with African students studying at Russian universities, found out the challenges they have, analyzed the data obtained and made a set of recommendations on how African students can adapt to study at a Russian university.

In conclusion, the authors presented the main findings of the research made and discussed the possibilities of further research in the area of adaptation of international students to a foreign academic environment.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Communication is key and it has to do with the interaction between persons. Since we are dealing with cross-cultural communication, it is important to know what culture is. The word 'culture' derives from a French term, which in turn derives from the Latin 'colere,' which means to tend to the earth and grow, or cultivation and nurture. 'It shares its etymology with a number of other words related to actively fostering growth,' De Rossi said. Merriam Webster dictionary defines it as he customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group. Cross cultural communication on the other hand refers to how people from different customs and traditions, communicate across cultures with people whose cultural backgrounds are the same or different from theirs.

However, there are other definitions, theories and notions of cross-cultural communication and culture that will be discussed subsequently.

Many studies have said that cross-cultural communication is lacking on campuses in Europe, Asia, the Americas, Australia and New Zealand. Russian universities campuses of course are not left out.

The limitations of the study are: cross-cultural communication studies of African international students specifically, have not been conducted within a specific context such as the classroom, campus and hostel in a Russian academic environment by a good number of researchers. Advantages of understanding African international students specifically is related to the long-term gain domestic students and school authorities can gain as a result of engaging in early interactions. Therefore, paving the way for a good cross-cultural communication to prevail throughout a student's University life.

The ultimate goal of this study is to enhance cooperation between Russia and African educational institutions and tighten their diplomatic relations. Also, to improve on the quality of higher education through the promotion of internationalization and harmonization of programs

Our Objectives of the study: To study the theoretical background of the problem, to identify the most important challenges and aspects of the study and analyse the challenges of African international students.

To find out reasons for conflicts, misunderstandings and ways of adaptation, point out loopholes and come up with proposals or recommendations to avoid these conflicts so as to promote comprehension, cooperation and unity. To enable students, academics and staff to benefit linguistically, culturally and professionally from the experience gained in the context of mobility of international students as a whole and African student in particular.

Significance of the study: There has been a rapid increase in the enrolment of international students across schools in Russia even though not so much has been done to attract a good number of African international students .According to UNESCO, the goals of student exchange and international education are; the development of inclusive communities among international and domestic students, that warrants that international and domestic students relate with one another so as to learn , have respect for each other's cultural values in order avoid conflicts and live in harmony(UNESCO).

This study will enable intercultural communication skills among these international students as they interact with these foreigners and share their cultural values.

However, there is lack of cross- cultural communication among many African international and domestic students in a good number of campuses in the Europe, Australia, Asia and the Americas. These places are destinations for international students willing to further their studies. (Barron, 2006; Dunne, 2009; UNESCO, 2014; Wright & Schartner, 2013).

The focus of this work is on cross-cultural challenges of communication for African students within a given academic institution and its environment.

To the best of our knowledge, no work has been done on this topic yet. African students and Russian education environment had never been analyzed. Furthermore,

this work is important because it points out limitations on the part of the domestic students in particular, African students and the school's administrators at large.

These limitations will be like a wake-up call for them to be able to be conscious and make better policies that could be beneficial to both domestic, international and African students in particular.

The practical value to enhance cooperation between Russia and African educational institutions and tighten their diplomatic relations, as well as improve on the quality of higher education through the promotion of internationalization and harmonization of programs.

Research Questions:

1. How do African students and other international students interact with one another in the classrooms, on campus and in the hostel?

2. What factors influence communication decisions and behaviours of African international students and domestic students?

3. What are the main challenges faced by African international students and what can be done to help solve these issues?

4. What mechanisms can be put in place by the school authorities so as to attract African international students in particular and other international students as a whole to south Ural state university.

CHAPTER ONE: THEORETICAL PART

1.1. Literature overview of cross-cultural challenges of communication and adaptation

The word culture itself is derived from the Latin word 'cultura', which means cultivation. In general, culture refers to human activity. Different definitions of culture reflect different theories for understanding or criteria for valuing human activity. To a few persons, it is an appreciation of good music, good literature, art and food. For biologists it is likely to be a colony of bacteria or other microcosms growing in a nutrient medium in a laboratory.

However, for anthropologists and other behavioural scientists, culture is a full range of learned human behaviour patterns. It is important to note that the word culture was first defined by British born anthropologist Edward Taylor. Culture is that which is a complex whole that includes beliefs, knowledge, morals, customs, arts, law and other capacities acquired by man as member of the society. (Taylor, 1871).

Culture consists of patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting and demonstrated by symbols, making up the distinctive achievements of human groups including their embodiments in artefacts (Paul & Nkwi, 1986). It is important to note that culture is a powerful human tool for survival, but also a fragile phenomenon.

On the other hand, cross cultural communication refers to the one on one communication and interaction across different cultures. This has become an important issue in our age of globalization and internationalization. Effective cross-cultural communication focuses on conquering cultural dissimilarities across nationality, religion, borders,culture and behaviour. This term is generally used to describe comparative studies of cultures.

Adaptation involves the factors you take into consideration so as to better survive in a new or given environment.

Previous researchers did some work on cross-cultural communication in different spheres, but did not study cross cultural challenges of communication, for African students in a Russian academic environment Litterel and Salas (2005) researched best practices of cross-cultural training in organizations, Blodgett, Rose and Vitell (2001) studied the effect of ethical sensitivity of stake holders of different business ventures of different countries. Brown and Levinson (1978) offer the most comprehensive treatment of face language use to date.

From the above studies, one can see that it will be a good idea to talk on cross cultural communication in relation to African students in a given context because the previous writers mentioned above talked on different cross-cultural communication aspects. In fact, it will not be right to talk about cross cultural communication without talking about adaptation and ways of adapting in a new environment.

Generally, the notion of cross cultural adaptation is defined as the dynamic change process that happens to individuals upon their relocation to a new environment (Kim, 1988, 2001). According to other scholars, cross cultural adaptation is individuals' psychological and sociocultural adaptation to a new society (Searle & Ward, 1990). When one gets into a new environment, it is important for one to adapt (Shafei & Razak, 2016).

This also goes to international students at large and African students, in particular. They must be ready to blend in, look for ways to get themselves involved in activities organized by the host country, try to respect and understand their values and peculiarities so as to live comfortable in this new location.

Some cultures may appear very hostile or difficult for people to fit in but is important especially for African international students to derive ways that will enable them to have a pleasant stay in the host country.

The decision has to come from within, thus is to say they have to possess the willingness, desire and make a decision on being comfortable here, then look for different means of cooperation of course with the help of other international students

and the authorities. This is not to say that there would not be challenges coming their way. But if they are ready mentally, challenges would be things to overcome.

1.2 Cross cultural challenges of international communication

International communication has to do with sharing information, thoughts, ideas and sentiments across borders, with people from different cultures and even geographical location. Every step of communication has its own advantages, setbacks, difficulties and possibilities.

Every aspect of our everyday lives is affected by our communication with others (Littlejohn & Karen, 2008). One cannot not do without communicating. For Fernandez German Dario (2010), the common search for understanding enables people from different fields and social sectors to communicate and cooperate.

International students and African students in particular face another difficulty in their education abroad. It is the influence of the target language on the way of perception via source language, the interdependence of the language as an indicator of ethnic mentality and thinking. By recognizing obvious interrelation of language and thinking, it is important to acknowledge the existence of relationships between some languages and their perception.

There are many typologies of languages; one of the most significant is the classification by the method of expression of grammatical meanings by means of internal or external resources, that is, the synthetic / analytical dichotomy. Arabic and Russian are synthetic languages whereas English is of analytical nature.

The structural unit of English language is the sentence. If we divide the sentence into separate units, i.e. words, quite often the meaning can be quite vague. In contrast, the structural unit of the synthetic language is the word. When dividing a sentence into individual words, they, as a rule, retain their basic meaning.

While dealing with the course conducted in the English language, it should be remembered that the way of delivery of the course material, compiled in accordance with the norms of the English language, will inevitably influence the way

information is perceived by international students. English-speaking interlocutors think and comprehend information in separate and complete sentences-phrases.

This means the following:

a) The English-speaking person encodes the thought to the very end, and only then gives it to the listener ('first think, then speak'). The prime word, in some occasions even the first sounds of the sentence may require the finishing of the thought coding process. This explains why the speaker should take time and construct the message, especially if the phrase includes complex verbal forms, infinitive and participial constructions. Meanwhile, the more complex and sophisticated analytical construction is used by the speaker, the fewer opportunities remain to restructure the phrase if the need be.

b) The English-speaking listener gets the speaker's message to the end, and only then unravels it ('first listen, then think'). When a different word is got, the listener deals with preliminary understanding, as well as a partial rethinking of the words listened before.

So, having heard the second word of the message, the listener basically understands and, also, partially reinterprets the first word (in accordance with the previously meaningful second word). As a result, 'reception' of the third word and its preliminary understanding is followed by partial rethinking of the first and second words (in accordance with the previously meaningful third) and so on. And only after the perception of the last word, the listener has the opportunity to unravel the whole message and comprehend its correct meaning.

1.3. Cross cultural theories and basic notions of cross-cultural communication.

A theory is a set of ideas drawn from systematic study to explain a phenomenon. A theory is the set of ideas of systematic generalizations based on scientific observations and leading to further empirical observations. (Severin & Tankard, 1982 in Anaeto et al, 2012).

Baran Stanley and Davis Dennis (2012) quoted John Bowers and John Courtright (1984) saying that theories are set of statements asserting relationships among classes of variables. A theory is a set of interrelated propositions that brings about relationships among theoretical constructs that explain the relationships given in the propositions.

Communication theory is commonly understood as an act of giving and receiving information, which concerns interaction among participants. In communication, one party interprets the other party's meaning by observing their signs and symbols in use, no matter if they are the real intention of the senders or if the signs and symbols are being delivered without senders' conscious. In the cross-culture environment, communication has been viewed as the centre of culture discrepancy although language has a big portion of influence on people as well (Maureen Guirdham, 1999).

Basic communication elements include verbal and non-verbal communication, state, trait and style in communication, situations, messages and communication strategies. Communication doesn't exist without these attributes.

Verbal and non-verbal communication. Speech and writing belong to verbal communication. The benefit of language usage is clearly expressed information and intentions, exchanging thoughts and ideas directly. The weak function of using language is the difficulty of expressing feelings and relationships that is a common shortcoming in communication. Further, language has its limitation when the communication is conducted among people who speak different languages. Body language is typical in non-verbal communication and it is widely used in expressing feelings and attitudes. Human beings have general expressions with their body language but also differ across cultures. People from the same culture seem to show more similarity in behaviour than people from differing cultures.

State, trait and style in communication. Personal trait plays an important role in communication style that tends to be more sensitive to listeners. Sensitivity to listen means speakers are easily adjusting their communication way by listeners' despondence (Hart & Burks, 1927). These groups of people are considered to be

more flexible in cross-cultural communication. Assertiveness means fast and confident decision making without inference to others. Assertiveness is understood differently in different culture, positively it is efficient and negatively, it is aggressive. It is in close connection with culture background. Besides, Hofstede's cultural dimensions can give a good explanation of this effect. Therefore, communication style is concluded that under the influence of both individual personality and culture tendency (Gudykunst et al, 1996).

Situations. Situations mean the whole communicating environment when communication is conducted. Participants, subject, where and how it is communicated. People tend to adjust their communication style in certain ways depending on the situation. Different cultural background also shows different understanding of the same situation (Hall, 1981). In cross-cultural work-related communication context, people may have their own priority, value on work task with the influence of their culture.

Messages. Messages are the conveyed information in communication behaviour; it consists of messages exchanged and acquired meaning. It is argued that messages are to be sent and received, while meanings are not. It requires receiver's own interpretation and inference; thus, misinterpretation or inference may result in misunderstanding which leads to communication failure. (Guirdham, 1999). In cross-culture communication, the tendency of misunderstanding is higher due to the culture barriers.

Communication strategies. People choose appropriate strategy to communicate in order to attain expected goals. And goals work as the major motivation in choosing communication strategies. In work situations, power and position are seen as decisive factors in the strategy selection (Guirdham & Tannen, 1999, 1990). Meanwhile, culture has an influential impact on communication strategy application.

The progresses of world societies promote more cultural communication. The key issue becomes the question of how to solve the cultural conflicts issues during the national culture's communication. In this world between people, nations and

organizations there are conflicts, and their way of thinking and behaviours are different.

According to Hofstede et al. (2010), culture is a conditioning of people's minds; culture is a way to help people use their minds to distinguish people from different groups. The cultural differences are rooted in different nation's minds and are hard to be changed and influenced.

The cultural differences are one of the main factors that lead to the cross-cultural communication failure. Hofstede et al. (2010) cultural dimensions' theory is an important theoretical analysis of cultural differences. A survey was conducted in forty countries during the seventies of IBM employees' values based on the survey from the theory.

There are five important dimensions in Hofstede et al. (2010) theory that are *power distance, individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity versus femininity and long-term orientation versus short-term orientation*. The explanations and features of these five dimensions are given below. Furthermore, dimensions of Africans, Swedish and Chinese characteristics are presented.

Power distance. The first dimension is how people in the organization and society tolerate and handle hierarchy and distribution of power. Power distance is related to grade. Different countries have different understanding of power, so there are significant variations. Some cultures put more emphasis on authority, status, qualifications, but other countries do not emphasis that much.

According to Hofstede et al. (2010), power distance can be defined as less powerful people of institution and organization in countries that expect and accept the power is distributed unequally. This dimension is related to organization structure in which hierarchical level can be recognized. Power distance is measured from 0 to 100, where 0 represents a small power distance and 100 is a large power distance. In countries where the power distance is small, there are limited dependence between bosses and employees; there is interdependence between each other. In countries with a large power distance, employees are very dependent on

their bosses. Subordinates behaviour prefer this dependence, or they decline it entirely (Hofstede et al., 2010).

According to Hofstede et. al. (2010) research, China has a high rank of features of large power distance. In Chinese culture, Chinese people inherit Confucianism that have been there for centuries. This is the notion that in the society the relationships among humans are not the same.

Confucius has distinguished five relationships that are ruler versus subject, father versus son, older brother versus brother, husband versus wife, senior friend versus junior friend (Hofstede et al., 2010). During these relationships, Confucius maintains people need to respect their bosses, old generation and teachers.

Most African countries have a low power distance with a power distance index of 31. The African cultures are egalitarianism, hospitable and have an important role. People want equality in their life and in their work, participation and cooperation are necessary during their working process as well as their day to day life. In the African society a lot of initiatives are taken from subordinates, people are kind to one another, respectful and give everyone a sense of belonging. (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Individualism versus collectivism. In this dimension it emphasizes the connection between people and groups. The point is to focus on the relationship awareness in organizations and countries. The extreme ways of individualism and collectivism can be seen as the opposite side in the global culture.

According to Hofstede et al. (2010), individualism refers the relationship between individuals are loose; people want them or their families to be cared for by others. Collectivism is the opposite of individualism; it refers to that people in societies, from when they were born, are expected to integrate strongly in a group. In the individualistic countries like United States of America, Great Brittan people put their rights and privacy in front, they are more considerate of their personal time and freedom.

Individualistic thinking considers that individuals are inseparable from the collective community, when individuals are in constant pursuit of their interests and dreams, their achievements also promote the progress of society as a whole.

Collectivism emphasizes the importance of countries and organizations, which the values concept of collective interests should be higher than individual interests. This is usually the case in the African societies.

According to Hofstede et al. (2010), in countries like China the values have more characteristics of collectivism. Chinese history is strongly influenced by Confucianism, which indicates people are not living as individuals, they are related to everything. Everyone needs to consider everything universally. China is a socialist country where the ideology of chairman Mao Zedong impacts the societies' values, he identified individualism as selfishness aversion to discipline, he advocated that people should put group interests in first-hand (Hofstede et al., 2010). When working towards the group goal, Chinese collectivist participants represented best.

According to Hofstede et al. (2010) individualism index, Sweden has top position of individualism. This characteristic refers to that people are more considerate of their privacy and their own family and values. Individuals prefer to finish missions individually and have a general lack of team spirit. Individuals in Sweden focus on thinking about themselves and are independent of others. So is a similar case with Russians.

Masculinity versus femininity. This dimension focuses on the questions about values of females and males in societies. There are many clear differences between the gender roles in society, masculine approach confidence, to be strong, successful and challenging whereas the feminine approach humility, to be gentle and cooperative.

According to Hofstede et al (2010), femininity refers to that gender roles overlap in society, both men and women should be modest, caring of life quality and considerate. Masculinity refers to that in the society the gender roles are distinct; a man should be tough and focus on material success.

African communities have higher scores on masculinity, it also a measure of preference to use power to achieve their purpose (Dong & Liu, 2010). The African as a filial society has the top position in emphasizing masculine values. China has a strong awareness of social competition; the scale of success is wealth, fame, and

social status. Their values focus on emphasizing competitions, job performances and equality.

According to Hofstede et al. (2010) research, in masculinity-femininity dimension Sweden has the lowest values among the fifty countries. Sweden as a feminist country focuses on cooperation, social security and relationships just like African societies even though the African society is not typically feminist.

This can also be seen in the Russian society as women are more dominant than men. Women outnumber the men and as such occupy more work positions.

Uncertainty avoidance. This dimension emphasizes the uncertainty issues in unknown future. Uncertainty avoidance is defined as organizations or groups that encounter uncertainty, when threatened; they attempt to avoid the degree of uncertainty through safety rules and other facets of escape. People use three ways: technology, law and religion to resist the uncertainty of the future (Hofstede et al., 2010). Humans use these three ways to resist the uncertainty of nature, other society members and death. Uncertainty avoidance refers that the extent in unknown and ambiguous situation when one culture feels threatened (Hofstede et al., 2010).

The degrees of uncertainty avoidance in different nations vary. Uncertainty avoidance index is used to measure whether a culture has a strong or weak uncertainty avoidance. In strong uncertainty avoidance culture, members are encouraged to overcome and open up to the future, and in weak uncertainty avoidance members are instructed to accept risks, tolerate and accept different culture's behaviour.

It becomes very difficult to change the organization's structure in strong uncertainty avoidance cultures. Also, laws and regulations are necessary for strong uncertainty avoidance culture to control inconsistent behaviours (Hofstede et al., 2010). It is different in weak uncertainty avoidance culture; people are more adaptable and flexible. They think they can solve problems without rules.

Cultural Identity Negotiation Theory. Identity negotiation theory is developed from social identity theory, which is raised by Tajfel (1978). Social identity theory means people are used to trying to find positive social identities when they interact

with people from different cultures. Cultural identity negotiation theory explained how cultural identities are formed and how they are negotiated between encounters. It says in every process of a business operation, cultural identity negotiations are conducted. Cultural identity will be enriched in the case of successful business cooperation. Cross-cultural communication is considered as communication between people who represent their culture in order to show the different aspects to others. It is claimed that in communication, the participants own standpoint or values decide whether the underlying communication involves cultural dimensions or not. Cultural identities have a great influence on interpersonal communications.

Elin's Worth's adaptation theory. This theory presents which efforts participants make to adapt to another communication style in order to achieve effective communication among different cultures. The participants' responsibilities have an influence on their ways of communication. Participants may adjust their attitudes, communication styles and behaviours to the others depending on their purposes and undertaking responsibilities. It is argued that if both participants have the purpose of expecting positive results out of the communication, adaption is easily made. If the purpose is not shared, it will most likely be the one who expects a strong positive result that will put in the effort to adapt. The theory focuses on cross-cultural communication process. It is a dynamic process which means participants may adapt to another way of communicating through the whole communicating process. In this process, the behaviour of the one who takes initiative of adaption will not only cause influence on the other person, but also to him or herself. Because they will see the changes in themselves during their adaption, either they adhere more to their original cultural concepts or incline to learn from others' cultures as well. Their future way of communication in a cross-cultural background will also be affected from all their previous experiences.

To summarize the cross-cultural communication theories, it basically includes two major factors which are individual level and interaction process. It requires individuals to reduce the concern of uncertainty by positively seeking for participants' information before achieving successful communication.

Cultural identity negotiation theory reveals the relationship between cultural differences and the interacted communication process. Illingworth's adaption theory presents that participants may adjust their ways of communication by their purposes and responsibilities they hold to gain effective communication.

The above are considered the supporting theories to the subject of this thesis 'cross- cultural challenges of communication for African students in a Russian environment'. Communication theories are used in the analysis of language barriers, non-verbal, open discussion issues and the interviewees' reflections regarding communication obstacles.

Cross-cultural communication is a call for concern especially in this era where the world is a global village. Effective cross-cultural communication has to do with overcoming cultural dissimilarities across nationality, religion, borders, culture and behaviour. The term cross-cultural is generally used to describe comparative studies of cultures.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines culture as the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behaviour that depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. It further goes to say that it is the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious or social group'.

Culture not only dictates who says what, to whom, how, and why, but also helps to determine how communication proceeds, and how messages transmit the intended meanings. Cross-cultural communication needs the following:

a. Listening

The focus is on being a competent speaker, listening is that key skill that many do not exercise enough. For cross-cultural communication, attentive listening is very important so as to comprehend meanings and read between the lines.

b. Speaking Skills

Listening and speaking must go hand in glove for effective cross-cultural communication. Speaking well is not about accent, use of grammar and vocabulary.

Cross-cultural communication is enhanced through meaningful speech such as encouragement, agreement, recognition and expressing opinions sensitively.

c. Observation

A good number of cross-cultural information can be noticed in people's attire, body language, interaction and habits. Know there are differences with your own culture and try to understand the reason for people's actions. Asking questions expands your cross-cultural knowledge.

d. Flexibility

Adaptability and open-mindedness are the guidelines to a fruitful cross-cultural communication. comprehending, accepting cross-cultural differences leads to the breaking of cultural barriers, which leads to a better way of communication, mutual confidence and critical thinking.

If the above five points are considered, we will be able to improve lines of communication and better cross-cultural awareness and successful cross-cultural relationships.

Cross-cultural communication as a field of study is a combination of many other scholarly fields such as anthropology, psychology, linguistics, communication and cultural studies. Anthropologists most commonly use the term "culture" to refer to the universal human capacity to classify, to codify and communicate their experiences symbolically.

Linguistic anthropology is the comparative study of ways in which language reflects and influences social life. It explores the many ways in which language practices define patterns of communication, formulate categories of social identity and group membership, organize large-scale cultural beliefs and ideologies, and, in conjunction with other forms of meaning-making, equip people with common cultural representations of their natural and social worlds.

Psychology studies human behaviour. Psychological applications of cross-cultural multicultural communications work on the primes that all human beings essentially communicate on similar definable levels, and these definitions can be predictable and applied to cultivate a "Borderless Communication Foundation".

Psycholinguistics or psychology of language is the study of the psychological and neurobiological factors that enable humans to acquire, use, comprehend and produce language.

Language and our thought-grooves are inextricably interwoven, are, in a sense, one and the same. As there is nothing to show that there are significant racial differences in the fundamental conformation of thought, it follows that the infinite variability of linguistic form, another name for the infinite variability of the actual process of thought, cannot be an index of such significant racial differences.

Linguistics is the scientific study of human language. Linguistics can be broadly broken into three categories or subfields of study: language form, language meaning, and language in context.

Linguistics is concerned largely with finding and describing the generalities and varieties both within particular languages and among all languages that are powerful means of cross-cultural communications. There are two fields of linguistics, which are essential for cross-cultural communication. They are ethnolinguistics and sociolinguistics.

Ethnolinguistics or cultural linguistics is a field of linguistics, which studies the relationship between language and culture, and the way different ethnic groups perceive the world. It is the combination between ethnology and linguistics. The former refers to the way of life of an entire community i.e. all the characteristics which distinguish one community from the other. Those characteristics make the cultural aspects of a community or a society.

Communication studies is an academic field that deals with processes of communication, commonly defined as the sharing of symbols over distances in space and time. Communication is a fundamental process by which patterns in a medium move through time and space. Communication ensures continuity in the development of culture. Every new generation begins its work of learning from the point where the previous generation left off.

Cultural studies are an academic discipline which combines political economy, communication, sociology, social theory, literary theory, media theory, film/video

studies, cultural anthropology, philosophy, museum studies and art history/criticism to study cultural phenomena in various societies.

Communication arose and developed with the rise of man and the formation of society in the process of labour. Communication is a means, whereby information is put in a box, sent by the speaker to the listener by some medium. The listener then tries to understand the message and responds to the sender of that message.

Communication processes of information transmission are governed by three levels of semiotic rules: syntactic (formal properties of signs and symbols); pragmatic (concerned with the relations between signs/expressions and their users); semantic (study of relationships between signs and symbols and what they represent).

Communication is interactive, so an important influence on its effectiveness is our relationship with others.

Communication basically deals with social interaction between two or more persons or groups of people by word of mouth, body language, signs and actions so as to pass meaningful messages. We do most of our communicating using speech and our understanding of speech to greet people and tell them our news, to ask and answer questions, and to use the telephone.

Communication is extremely diverse in its forms. Communication as the art of transmitting information, ideas and attitudes from one person to another, may be verbal and nonverbal.

The various kinds of communication differ according to communication channels. These are means available to communicate with another person or group. They may include direct face-to-face communication, telecommunications (telephone, e-mail, written communications), or indirect communication – through third parties or the media, for example.

Direct Communication takes place when people say what they mean, when the idea of saving face is not of major consequence in most situations, when silence in conversations is viewed as uncomfortable and interruptions are common. Direct communicators believe that it is better to say what needs to be said. Groups that

prefer a direct style of communicating focus on the explicit meaning of words, similar to low context cultures.

The popular saying, 'You can take my words to the bank' conveys a belief that individuals say exactly what they mean. Americans, Germans, and Israelis are direct communicators, each having varying degrees of directness. People who are direct communicators use clear, definitive statements, participate actively in meetings, make their points with conviction. They tell others why their ideas should be adopted.

Indirect communication is when meaning is not only in the words, but also mainly in the surrounding context of a conversation. Indirect communication takes place when people imply what they mean; reading into things is the definitive way of communicating, when saving face and maintaining harmony is paramount, when silence in conversations is expected and appreciated and interruptions are to be avoided. Indirect communicators ask many questions.

They quietly observe in meetings, offer suggestions for consideration, like to get others involved in discussions, use words like 'maybe', 'possibly' and ask others to consider their ideas. There is an opinion that "Indirect communicators do not believe everything needs to be said.

They are often part of a culture that is more group-focused rather than individual-focused. Because of this, they live within societal norms that are different and less focused on individual needs. An important goal of their conversational style is to maintain harmony, or at least the appearance of harmony. Therefore, not everything is said, but rather, much can be implied.

Individuals who prefer an indirect communication style will avoid dealing directly with conflict. Examples of indirect communicators are most of the countries: in Asia; the Middle East; Africa; and South America.

Thanks to communication the individual's thoughts and aspirations not obliterated by time. They are in words, images; they survive in legend and passed on from century to century.

Language is a powerful means of communication. In life, communication does not exist as an isolated process or independent form of activity. It is included in individual or group practical activities realized within intensive and comprehensive dialogue with the help of language.

Language is the development of the basic form of communication between human beings, and in a society. Language may refer either to the specifically human capacity for acquiring and using complex systems of communication or to a specific instance of such a system of complex communication. Communication is unmanageable without primary language skills. We begin to learn the words when we need to express ourselves. We can understand words when we hear them and say them when we need to. We also learn the rules for putting words together into sentences as well as how to use letters and write them down.

According to Britannica Concise Encyclopaedia, language is a system of conventional spoken or written symbols used by people in a shared culture to communicate with each other. A language both reflects and affects a culture's way of thinking, and changes in a culture influence the development of its language. Language is fundamental to a huge range of human activities, whether you're sitting and thinking, interacting with others at a social event, reading a book, working out why an advert is funny and the rest. When language is used, ideas are shared, and important information is passed between individuals verbally

Culture as a basic concept of cross-cultural communication. It is a derivative of the verb Colo (infinitive colere), meaning 'to tend, 'to cultivate,' and 'to till,' among other things (Tucker, 1931). It can take objects such as ager, hence agricultura, whose literal meaning is 'field tilling.' Another possible object of the verb Colo is animus ('character'). In that case, the expression would refer to the cultivation of the human character. Consequently, the Latin noun cultura can be associated with education and refinement. The etymological analysis of 'culture' is quite uncontroversial. But in the field of anthropology, the situation is much more complex. Definitions of culture abound and range from very complex to very simple. For example, Culture is transmitted and created content and patterns of values, ideas,

and other symbolic- meaningful systems as factors in the shaping of human behavior (Kroeber and Parsons, 1958:583).

Culture, then, began when speech was present, and from then on, the enrichment of either means the further development of the other. A. L Kroeber (1923). The totality of the messages we exchange with one another while speaking a given language constitutes a speech community, that is, the whole society understood from the point of view of speaking. (Landi, 1973). Every child learns their language from their community, and during that time, they also get to know the culture and develop their cognitive abilities.

The real world is, to a large extent, unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever so similar that they represent the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct, not merely the same with a different label attached (Sapir, 1929). Thus, to talk is to affirm a culture, and to know a culture is similar with knowing a language. Language and culture are two mental realities that cannot live in isolation. They go together. Cultural values are representations and interpretations of the world that must be communicated in order to be lived.

The issue here is the things that take place during cross cultural communication as they are from different societies. Communication here is imperative for those who will have to deal with cultural traits different from theirs.

Cross-cultural competence refers to your ability to understand people from different cultures and engage with them effectively. And not just people from the one culture that you've studied for years. Having cross-cultural competence means you can be effective in your interactions with people from most any culture.

Being able to communicate and work with people across cultures is becoming more important all the time. People are traveling, reaching out, and mixing with different others like never before. They do it for fun, but they also do it for work. In all cases, success requires developing a relationship. And doing this means bridging a cultural divide.

Cross-cultural competence helps you develop the mutual understanding and human relationships that are necessary for achieving your professional goals. But what exactly makes up cross-cultural competence? What is the specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that make someone cross-culturally competent?

Louise Rasmussen and Winston Sieck (2015) conducted a study to address these questions. They described their model of cross-cultural competence in an article published in the International Journal of Intercultural Relations. Rasmussen was also granted an award from the Defence Language and National Security Education Office to further study and validate the model, which describes 12 elements of cross-cultural competence.

Rasmussen and her team interviewed cross-cultural experts about their experiences interacting in foreign cultures. These experts were military personnel who had a great deal of cross-cultural experience. They were also nominated by their peers as being especially effective in their interactions with members of other cultures.

The researchers did not ask about the opinions of the cross-cultural experts. Instead, they asked questions to get at the interviewees' actual, lived overseas experiences. From these experiences, Rasmussen and her team uncovered the skills and knowledge the experts drew on as they interacted with people from other cultures.

Rasmussen, Sieck, and their colleagues (2015) identified some core aspects of cross-cultural competence. These competencies were frequently found in the thought process of the experts. They are listed here as a set of principles that can help you be more effective on your next sojourn:

Keep focus on your objectives. If you're abroad for work, school or leisure then building intercultural relationships should be taken seriously. Establishing relationships will help you live comfortably.

Understand the culture within yourself. Note that the reason you perceive the world in a certain manner is because of your own background, personal history, and culture.

Manage your attitudes towards the culture: You don't always have to love the culture. But you do have to keep check on your reactions to values and customs that are different from your own. The first two principles can also help you manage your attitudes.

Direct your learning of the culture: Don't expect a book or training course to hand you the answers. Try to make sense of the culture for yourself, using the information you come across as clues.

Develop reliable information sources: Find two or three locals to get answers from about the culture. Build the relationships so you feel comfortable asking about most anything. Check with more than one and compare their answers in your head.

Learn about the new culture efficiently: You can't learn everything about the culture before your trip. It's unrealistic. Focus on learning a few things that fit your interests and use those to make connections and learn more while you are abroad.

Cope with cultural surprises: No matter how much you prepare in advance; you will find yourself faced with people acting in ways that you find puzzling. When you do, try to find out why. Doing so will often lead to new insights.

Formulate cultural explanations of behaviour: Routinely try to explain to yourself why people act as they do in this culture, differently from your own. Using things, you know about the culture to explain behaviour will help you build a deeper understanding of the culture overall.

Take a cultural perspective: Try to see things from the point of view of the people from the other culture. By taking a cultural perspective, you may create a whole new understanding of what's going on around you.

Plan cross-cultural communication: Think ahead of time about what you have to say and how you want the other person to perceive you. Use what you know about the culture to figure out the best way to get that across.

Control how you present yourself: Be deliberate about how you present and express yourself. Sometimes you'll be most effective if you're just yourself. Other times you have to adapt how you present yourself to the culture you are in to be most effective

Reflect and seek feedback: Continue to reflect on and learn from your interactions and experiences after they occur. After an interaction you can think about whether you got the messages across you intended. You can even ask a local how they think you did.

These principles give you some pointers about how to think about the experiences you have in new cultures. They are essential to cross-cultural competence. Reading through the principles you may be asking yourself "do I really need to do this much thinking when I go abroad? Rasmussen consistently found this thoughtful approach among those with high cross-cultural competence. Keep these principles in mind and use them. You will be more capable and confident engaging people from any culture.

Aspects of cross-cultural communication. It is inevitable to talk about some aspects of cross-cultural communication without raising the issue of culture. This is because culture is the key thing when dealing with cross cultural communication. Culture is the mental programming of a members of a group to which includes their ways of doing things making them different from other groups.

It could vary from values., artefacts, arrowheads, superstition, concepts, beliefs and behavioural patterns put into practice.

Cross cultural communication on this end is the attempt of one group from one culture to recognize other groups inside or outside the culture. It is also an attempt of one group to express itself to members of other groups. Jan Smith et al (1992) say it is an attempt by members of one group to respect the differences expressed by members of the second group.

It is of utmost importance to understand cross cultural communication in Russian classrooms so as to increase the ability to of increasing relations, to help in communication with minimal loss or distortion and to achieve a high level of compliance among those involved .That is why it is important for international students to ask questions often when in doubt, show interest and active participation be able to go out of your comfort zone and speak slowly so that people can better understand you .

Russian students on their part should be able to also speak slowly and try to explain key points, be friendly and show interest, avoid complicated words and be more friendly, jovial and get to know internationals and Africans in particular. Communication may be complicated a times especially in a multicultural classroom. As such, it will be a good idea to speak slower and clearer, use plane language, have benefit of the doubt, appeal with variety of learning styles, be descriptive more than judgmental, listen, observe and learn. Surviving in a multi-cultural classroom has never been an easy task. Therefore, one has to respect various cultural values/identity, not confuse avoidance of uncertainty with avoidance of risk and shy away from stereotyping.

Verbal and nonverbal aspects of cross-cultural communication. Communication is a dynamic process composed by multiple elements and steps: a sender, encoding, messages, channels, noises, a receiver, decoding, the receiver's response and feedback, and context. It may be intentional or unintentional and it is always influenced by factors such as time, topic and circumstances as well as one's cultural background (Jandt, 1998: 27).

Verbal communication is composed by sounds, words and language which has a direct relationship with culture, as affirmed by the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Nonverbal communication is defined as those actions and attributes that have socially shared meaning, are intentionally sent or interpreted as intentional, are consciously sent or consciously received, and have the potential for feedback from the receiver (Burgoon, Boller & Woodall, 1988, as cited in Jackson, 2014: 124). These two types of communication are learnt over time and can be understood in different ways according to culture.

There is a strong connection between language and nonverbal codes in order to create an effective communication, since they both share symbols and behaviours learnt over time since primary socialization. Albert Mehrabian affirms that 93% of meaning is conveyed through nonverbal communication channels. (Mehrabian, 1982, as cited in Jackson, 2014: 101).

The percentage is overestimated, but surely nonverbal codes have a fundamental role in communication. According to Charles Darwin in his book 'The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals,' facial expressions are biologically determined and cannot be taught. Recent researches show that there are seven facial expressions that are universally displayed, regardless of one's cultural background.

These are anger, disgust, happiness, fear, sadness, and surprise. (Ekman et al., 1987, as cited in Jackson, 2014: 114). What is culture-specific is the meaning and to what extent we show such expressions. For example, in some cultures like a majority of African cultures, smiles can communicate not understanding but apprehension. These codes can be categorized as it follows:

Proxemics is that space or comfort one needs for his privacy. For example, Latin Americans have a more intimate contact since the very first socialization process (they kiss on both cheeks) while Northern Americans tend to shake hands (Jackson, 2014: 118).

Kinesics are body movements, gestures and facial expressions and can be intentional or unconscious. A sign can have several meanings according to culture and sometimes it can lead to misunderstandings. Body language also includes posture and affective displays: smiling is universal, but it may mean different emotions in some cultural contexts. For example, in Japan and South Korea people smile or giggle when facing award or overly personal situations (such as a mistake at work or the news that a close friend has died (Jandt, 2010:106).

Chronemics: how people use, perceive and structure their time. It can be monochronic (doing one thing at a time) as in Western countries and Japan in which the concept of "time is money" is a key factor; or polychronic (multiple tasks at once) as in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Arabic countries. (Jackson, 2014:123).

Paralanguage: includes vocal qualifiers, characterizers' and segregates. "hey" is accepted in Cameroon to call a waiter. Tonal language in English can express emotions, such as sarcasm. Finally, accent can be considered as paralanguage: in English one's accent can reveal educational background. (Jandt, 2010:111). Even silence can have different meanings according to culture: Northern Canadian

indigenous people and Africans at large are not used to being silent among a group of friends for a long period, while in India it is used to promote harmony, cooperation, and other collectivistic values. (Jain & Matukumalli, 1993, as cited in Jandt, 2010: 112).

Clothing and physical appearance: specific pieces of clothing, colours or brands communicate aspects of one's identify to the others, and often are culturally specific. Good examples are thawabs in Saudi Arabia, saris in India and Bangladesh, Igbos of Nigeria, Masais of the Kenyan communities and the Douala of Cameroon. Colours are highly symbolic and important to convey a message: red is good luck in China but evil in central and east Africa; white is purely for Westernized countries but means sorrow and funerals in China. On the other hand, black is the colour used in Western countries when mourning.

In North America is common to look into the eyes when people talk, while in African culture this is considered disrespectful.

Nonverbal communication plays different functions in order to convey personal identity, express relationships, replace, emphasize or repeated a statement, help to relay awkward messages, regulate interactions, displaying emotions and finally it is used in rituals. (Jackson, 2014:102) This communication is intentionally used to convey a message and sometimes it is so culturally specific that can create or reinforce a national stereotype (for example Italians are known to use their hands to accompany their speech).

In conclusion, as shown by several examples, culture plays a fundamental role in communication. Nonverbal communication can be a cultural barrier as well as language, and often it may lead to misunderstanding, especially when people are not familiar with other cultures and contexts. culture cannot be known without a study of communication, and communication can only be understood with an understanding of the culture it supports. (Jandt, 2010:25).

1.4 Elements of culture; values/beliefs, norms, symbols/language

Values and beliefs. Values are generally those things a culture considers to be right and should be applicable in the society. Values are deeply embedded and critical for passing across and teaching a culture's beliefs. Beliefs are doctrines that people have accepted to be true. People in a society have particular beliefs, but they also have common values. To illustrate the difference, Africans commonly believe in the oneness and unity of all blacks across the world no matter your nationality. That is why any black person on this planet is considered African regardless of your beliefs, identity and geographical location. This belief is the African value that unity and oneness is good and important.

Values help shape a society by proposing what is good and evil, right and wrong, beautiful and ugly, sought or avoided. In the United States, children represent innocence and purity, while a youthful adult appearance represent sexuality. This explains why, individuals spend millions of dollars each year on cosmetic products and surgeries to look young and beautiful.

Russia also has an individualistic culture, meaning people place a high value on individuality and independence. In contrast, African cultures are collectivist, meaning the welfare of the group and group relationships are a primary value.

Living up to a cultural value may not be easy. Valuing good health may be easy to handle but quitting alcohol may be very hard. monogamy is valued in a country like Russia while polygamy is seen as prowess and pride in the African society though many wives are still promiscuous in both societies. Equal opportunities for all people are valued in the United States, yet the country's highest political offices have been dominated by white men.

Values usually guide people on how they should comport themselves, but they do not reflect how people do behave. Values portray an ideal culture; the standards society would like to embrace and live up to. But ideal culture differs from real culture, the way society actually is, based on what occurs and exists.

In an ideal culture, there would be no traffic accidents, murders, poverty, or racial tension. But in real culture, police officers, lawmakers, educators, and social workers constantly strive to prevent or repair those accidents, crimes, and injustices.

When people observe the norms of society and uphold its values, they are often rewarded. A boy who helps an elderly woman board a bus may receive a smile and a 'thank you.' He will receive blessings from that elderly person as is the case in the African society. Punishment usually awaits defaulters.

It is rare to see two male friends or co-workers holding hands in African countries where that behaviour often symbolizes romantic feelings. But in many nations, masculine physical intimacy is considered natural in public. This difference in cultural values came to light when people reacted to photos of former president George W. Bush holding hands with the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia in 2005. A simple gesture, such as handholding, carries great symbolic differences across cultures.

Norms. Norms define how people act in relation with what a society has defined as good, right, and important, and most members of the society adhere to them. Formal norms are established written rules. They are behaviours worked out and agreed upon in order to suit and serve the most people. Laws are formal norms, but so are employee manuals, college entrance exam requirements, and "no running" signs at swimming pools.

Formal norms are the most specific and clearly stated of the various types of norms, and they are the most strictly enforced. But even formal norms are enforced to varying degrees and are reflected in cultural values.

For example, money is highly valued in Russia, so monetary crimes are punished. It's against the law to rob a bank, and banks go to great lengths to prevent such crimes. People safeguard valuable possessions and install antitheft devices to protect homes and cars. A less strictly enforced social norm is driving while intoxicated. While it's against the law to drive drunk, drinking is for the most part an acceptable social behaviour. And though there are laws to punish drunk driving,

there are few systems in place to prevent the crime. These examples show a range of enforcement in formal norms.

There are plenty of formal norms, but the list of informal norms casual behaviours that are generally and widely conformed to is longer. People learn informal norms by observation, imitation, and general socialization. Some informal norms are taught directly: bow down when greeting a very high authority.

This is so common in the most African countries. while others are learned by observation, including observations of the consequences when someone else violates a norm. But although informal norms define personal interactions, they extend into other systems as well.

Norms may be further categorized as either mores or folkways. Mores are norms that embody the moral views and principles of a group. Violating them can have serious consequences.

The strongest mores are legally protected with laws or other formal norms. In African societies, for instance, witchcraft is considered immoral, and it's punishable by law (a formal norm). But more often, mores are judged and guarded by public sentiment (an informal norm). Violators are seen as shameful. They can even be shunned or banned from some groups. The mores of the African culture are disrespect for the elderly and lack of hospitality which is usually seen as a taboo. Defaulters are usually dealt with by anyone who even passes around and notices the act.

In Canada, women can smile and say hello to men on the street. In Egypt, that's not acceptable. In Russia people guard their privacy and value time efficiency. One can live with his next-door neighbour without ever seeing him or caring about his or her welfare. They care more about their pets. (cats and dogs)

In Africa, it is totally unacceptable. You must know who your next-door neighbour is and be concerned about him or her and value humans more than pets or animals in general.

Symbols and Language. Humans, consciously and subconsciously, are always striving to make sense of their surrounding world. Symbols such as gestures, signs, objects, signals, and words help people understand that world. They provide clues to understanding experiences by conveying recognizable meanings that are shared by societies.

The world is filled with symbols. Sports uniforms, company logos, and traffic signs are symbols. In some cultures, a gold ring is a symbol of marriage. Some symbols are highly functional; stop signs, for instance, provide useful instruction. As physical objects, they belong to material culture, but because they function as symbols, they also convey nonmaterial cultural meanings. Some symbols are valuable only in what they represent. Trophies, blue ribbons, or gold medals, for example, serve no other purpose than to represent accomplishments. But many objects have both material and nonmaterial symbolic value.

A police officer's badge and uniform are symbols of authority and law enforcement. The sight of an officer in uniform or a squad car triggers reassurance in some citizens, and annoyance, fear, or anger in others.

It's easy to take symbols for granted. Few people challenge or even think about stick figure signs on the doors of public bathrooms. But those figures are more than just symbols that tell men and women which bathrooms to use. They also uphold the value, in most African countries, that public restrooms should be gender exclusive. Even though stalls are relatively private, most places don't offer unisex bathrooms. Symbols often get noticed when they are out of context.

Used unconventionally, they convey strong messages. Stop signs on the doors of a corporations makes a political statement, as does a camouflage military jacket worn in an anti-war protest. Together, the semaphore signals for "N" and "D" represent nuclear disarmament and form the well-known peace sign (Westcott 2008). Today, some college students have taken to wearing pyjamas and bedroom slippers to class, clothing that was formerly associated only with privacy and bedtime. Though students might deny it, the outfit defies traditional cultural norms and makes a statement.

Even the destruction of symbols is symbolic. Effigies representing public figures are burned to demonstrate anger at certain leaders. In 1989, crowds tore down the Berlin Wall, a decades-old symbol of the division between East and West Germany, communism, and capitalism.

While different cultures have varying systems of symbols, one symbol is common to all: language. Language is a symbolic system through which people communicate and through which culture is transmitted. Some languages contain a system of symbols used for written communication, while others rely on only spoken communication and nonverbal actions.

Societies often share a single language, and many languages contain the same basic elements. An alphabet is a written system made of symbolic shapes that refer to spoken sound. Taken together, these symbols convey specific meanings. The English alphabet uses a combination of twenty-six letters to create words; these twenty-six letters make up over 600,000 recognized English words (OED Online 2011).

Rules for speaking and writing vary even within cultures, most notably by region. Language is constantly evolving as societies create new ideas. In this age of technology, people have adapted almost instantly to new nouns such as "e-mail" and "Internet," and verbs such as "downloading," "texting," and "blogging." Twenty years ago, the general public would have considered these nonsense words.

Even while it constantly evolves, language continues to shape our reality. This insight was established in the 1920s by two linguists, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf.

They believed that reality is culturally determined, and that any interpretation of reality is based on a society's language. To prove this point, the sociologists argued that every language has words or expressions specific to that language. In the United States, for example, the number thirteen is associated with bad luck. In Japan, however, the number four is considered unlucky, since it is pronounced similarly to the Japanese word for "death."

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is based on the idea that people experience their world through their language, and that they therefore understand their world through the culture embedded in their language.

The hypothesis, which has also been called linguistic relativity, states that language shapes thought (Swoyer, 2003). Studies have shown, for instance, that unless people have access to the word "ambivalent," they don't recognize an experience of uncertainty from having conflicting positive and negative feelings about one issue. Essentially, the hypothesis argues, if a person can't describe the experience, the person is not having the experience.

In addition to using language, people communicate without words. Nonverbal communication is symbolic, and, as in the case of language, much of it is learned through one's culture. Some gestures are nearly universal: smiles often represent joy and crying often represents sadness. Other nonverbal symbols vary across cultural contexts in their meaning.

A thumbs-up, for example, indicates positive reinforcement in a good number of African communities, whereas in Australia, it is an offensive curse (Passero, 2002). Other gestures vary in meaning depending on the situation and the person. A wave of the hand can mean many things, depending on how it's done and for whom.

It may mean "hi," "later," "no thanks," or "I'm royalty." Winks convey a variety of messages, including "We have a secret," "I'm only kidding," or "I'm attracted to you." From a distance, a person can understand the emotional gist of two people in conversation just by watching their body language and facial expressions. Furrowed brows and folded arms indicate a serious topic, possibly an argument. Smiles, with heads lifted and arms open, suggest a light-hearted, friendly chat.

In summary, we should be able to understand from the above explanation of culture every culture has its elements, be it values, norms and other peculiarities. We are different in our ways so understanding this and respecting one's cultural values is paramount.

Ways of adaptation of African students. Ever since the first camel caravan, people have been crossing cultural boundaries. What is different today is the historically unprecedented speed and magnitude of such occurrences. Let us take a look at the number of immigrants and refugees who change homes each year, looking for a new and better life.

Many foreigners relocate in a foreign land to serve as diplomats, military personnel, and other governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental agency employees on overseas assignments, along with missionaries and employees of multinational corporations. Researchers, professors, and students visit and study at foreign academic institutions, while individual accountants, construction workers, athletes, artists, musicians, and writers find employment in foreign lands on their own.

Adding to this list are the numerous domestic migrants who leave the familiar surroundings of their home subculture and resettle in a significantly different cultural environment within the same country, such as Native Americans who leave a tribal home to pursue economic and professional aspirations in a large city.

As these resettles strive to carry out their daily activities in the host environment, they find that many of the habitual behaviours useful in the old setting may prove ineffectual in the new setting. Even relatively short-term temporary sojourners are at least minimally concerned with building a level of proficiency in the host culture that is necessary for their daily functioning.

The degree to which individuals undergo such cross-cultural challenges varies widely, depending on the situations involving international migration and motives for relocating to another culture. Different reasons for crossing cultures accompany different degrees of commitment one feels toward the new environment. Abrupt and involuntary moves, for instance, are typically experienced by refugees who, owing to the sudden nature of their departure, have little chance to prepare themselves for life in the host country. At least during the initial phase, they may suffer from a

severe psychological dislocation and sense of loss (Chan & Lam, 1987; David, 1969).

Although unique in individual circumstances and varied in scope, intensity, and duration, all strangers in a new and unfamiliar environment embark on the common project of cross-cultural adaptation.

In the face of challenges from the host environment, they are compelled to learn to detect similarities and differences between the new surroundings and the home culture. Over time, through continuous interactions with the host environment, they become increasingly proficient in handling situations they encounter. Although the tribulations of crossing cultures can be staggering, each adaptive challenge opens an opportunity to learn and grow beyond the perimeters of the original culture.

Despite, or rather because of, the hardship and stress, most re-settlers are able to find their way and survive acquire in the host environment. Given enough time, even those with the intention of confining themselves to only superficial relationships with the host environment will find themselves having been changed by the experience. (Taft, 1977:150).

Cross-cultural adaptation has been investigated extensively across social science disciplines since the 1930s in the United States, a nation that has dealt with a large and continuous influx of immigrants (e.g., Spicer, 1968; Stone Quist, 1937). More recently, significant research attention has been given to adaptation-related phenomena in European countries, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Israel, among others.

Couched in various terms such as culture shock, acculturation, adjustment, assimilation, integration, and adaptation, this field is divided by different views Researchers typically isolate segments of the adaptation phenomenon specific to disciplinary and individual interests, which have resulted in the dichotomous distinction drawn between macro- and micro-level processes and between short- and long-term adaptations.

The need for a conceptual integration of this field of study is addressed in Becoming Intercultural: Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-

Cultural Adaptation (Kim, 1988, 2001, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2015). Grounded in an open-systems perspective, Kim's theory offers a "big picture," a broadly based and systemic insight into what happens over time when someone crosses cultural boundaries and what factors facilitate or impede his or her adaptation to the host culture.

It does so by identifying common themes addressed in the existing social scientific approaches, concepts, and models, as well as the reciprocal influences between and among them. The core term, cross-cultural adaptation, is introduced for the first time in this theory as a way to consolidate the various other terms used to highlight specific facets of the experiences sojourners and immigrants alike go through in an unfamiliar culture.

Acculturation, for example, refers to the process by which individuals acquire at least some aspects of the host culture. Coping and adjustment are terms often used to indicate the psychological responses to cross-cultural challenges, whereas integration points to an individual's social participation in the receiving community. Acculturation, is the process of becoming communicatively competent in a culture we have not been raised in (Hall, p. 270). This is related to other important words: enculturation that has to do with the learning of one's own culture as he or she brought up; deculturation that has to do with the process of unlearning our original culture, leaving behind its patterns when we move to a new culture.

In addition, the term assimilation indicates a more comprehensive psychological, social, and cultural change whereby individuals become mainstreamed into the host society.

Kim incorporates these and related terms into cross-cultural adaptation, a superordinate concept describing the entirety of the dynamic process by which individuals, upon relocating to new, unfamiliar, or changed cultural environments, establish (or re-establish) and maintain relatively stable, reciprocal, and functional relationships with those environments (Kim, 2001:31). At the core of this broad conception of cross-cultural adaptation is the goal of achieving an overall "fit"

between an individual cultural stranger's internal conditions and the conditions of the host environment for maximization of his or her life chances.

Given its comprehensive and integrative nature, Kim's theory is employed in this article to survey the broad and complex cross-cultural adaptation phenomenon as it has been investigated across social science disciplines.

In doing so, it should be pointed out that the objective, value-neutral, normative, and representational epistemological stance of the social scientific studies, in general, and Kim's theory in particular, has been contested by a number of scholars (Curtin, 2010; de la Garza & Ono, 2015; Kraidy, 2005; Kramer, 2008). Reflecting the ideological shift in the United States and European societies toward pluralism and multiculturalism, these scholars question, among others, the legitimacy of the concept, "assimilation," as the ultimate direction of change in individuals undergoing an extensive and long-term process of cross-cultural adaptation that has been documented in numerous empirical studies of immigrants and long-term residents (Waters, 2014).

Factors to be considered for a better Cross-Cultural Adaptation in a new environment. The stress-adaptation-growth dynamic driving the cross-cultural adaptation process is influenced by a set of factors that facilitate or impede the cross-cultural adaptation process leading to differential adaptation rates, or speeds, at which cross-cultural adaptation occurs in individual cases.

Bringing together a broad range of factors investigated in the social science literature into a single framework, the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 1988, 2001, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2015) identifies the following dimensions of factors as working together and interactively to facilitate or impede an individual's adaptation to a host cultural environment. For international students to be able to adapt in a new environment, there are a number of things they should consider.

Communication Factors. At the heart of the structure of cross-cultural adaptation is host communication competence, the individual's capacity to communicate in accordance with the host cultural norms and practices, and to participate host social communication processes in host interpersonal and mass communication activities.

Host communication competence refers to the overall internal capacity of a stranger to decode and encode information in accordance with the host cultural communication practices.

It comprises three interrelated subcategories: cognitive, affective, and operational. Cognitive competence includes the knowledge of the host language and culture, history, social institutions, and rules of interpersonal conduct. Knowledge of the host language, in particular, serves as the primary conduit for adaptation, enabling strangers to access to access the accumulated records of the host culture, including an understanding of how to communicate with native speakers in ways that are appropriate in local contexts. Affective competence refers to the emotional and motivational capacity to deal with the various challenges of living in the host environment.

A positive, willing, and flexible self-other orientation engenders greater openness and lessens unwarranted negativism toward new cultural experiences. Also included in affective competence is the development of a capacity to appreciate and participate in the local people's emotional and aesthetic sensibilities, thereby making it possible for strangers to establish a meaningful psychological connection with the natives.

The cognitive and affective capabilities work side by side with the operational competence, the capacity to express outwardly by choosing a "right" combination of verbal and nonverbal acts in specific social transactions of the host environment.

Host communication competence is directly and reciprocally linked to participation in the social processes of the host society through interpersonal and mass communication channels. Host interpersonal communication activities involving cultural natives offer opportunities for "corrective exchanges" with respect to the use of the host communication system, including its verbal and nonverbal codes. Through active and continuous participation in host interpersonal communication activities, no-natives can begin the process of constructing a set of potentially satisfying and supportive relationships with natives. Host

communication competence further facilitates, and is facilitated by, participation in host mass communication activities.

Through a wide range of mediated communication systems such as radio, television, newspaper, magazine, movie, art, literature, music, and drama, non-natives interact with the host cultural environment without direct interpersonal involvements. Such mass communications activities help broaden the scope of new cultural learning beyond one's immediate social context.

In many societies and communities today, non-natives' social communication activities involve their co-ethnics or co-nationals and home cultural experiences, as well. Some form of ethnic interpersonal communication activities through ethnic mutual-aid or self-help organizations, including religious organizations, may be available to render assistance to those who need material, informational, emotional, and other forms of social support.

In addition, opportunities to participate in ethnic mass communication activities through ethnic newspapers, radio stations, and television programs may be accessible via the Internet or in pre-recorded audio- and videotapes and computer disks. Participation in ethnic interpersonal and mass communication activities can be helpful to the initial phase of the cross-cultural adaptation process when newly arrived strangers lack host communication competence and access to host interpersonal resources. Beyond the initial phase, however, excessive and prolonged reliance on co-ethnics is likely to be either an insignificant influence on, or an impediment to, the long-term adaptation process with respect to the host society at large.

Environmental Factors. The adaptive function of the individual's host communication competence and social engagement through interpersonal and mass communication activities cannot be fully explained in isolation from the conditions of the host environment. Since different societies and communities present different environments for cross-cultural adaptation, an African international student can be more successful in adapting to a certain environment than to others.

Of various environmental characteristics, three key factors are identified in the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 1988, 2001, 2005) as the most significant influences on an international student's adaptation process: host receptivity, host conformity pressure, and ethnic group strength.

Host receptivity refers to the degree to which the receiving environment welcomes and accepts strangers into its interpersonal networks and offers them various forms of informational, technical, material, and emotional support.

Host receptivity incorporates other similar terms, such as "interaction potential" (Kim, 1976) or "acquaintance potential" (Cook, 1962), that have been employed to refer to the stranger's access to host social communication networks. Societies and communities offer different degrees of receptivity for different groups of strangers. Ethnically homogeneous and geographically isolated societies (such as Japan) generally offer fewer opportunities for strangers to develop close interpersonal relationships with local people. Within a society, members of certain groups are more warmly received than others.

For instance, European students on exchange programs or visitors arriving in Africa are likely to find a largely receptive environment, whereas the same European students and visitors may show less receptivity toward visitors and students from these same African countries.

Along with receptivity, international students at large and African students in particular face differing levels of host conformity pressure, the extent to which the host environment challenges them, implicitly or explicitly, to act in accordance to the normative patterns of the host culture.

Rooted in the expectations or assumptions that the natives routinely have about how newcomers should think and act, host conformity pressure shapes the extent to which the host environment challenges them to adopt its communication norms and practices.

While much of such pressure is subtle, in the form of social expectations that the natives have toward cultural strangers, it can be communicated more explicitly through expressions of confusion, disapproval, or even prejudice and discrimination.

Different host environments show different levels of tolerance for international students and their ethnic characteristics. In general, people in ethnically and strong cultural value societies such as that of Africa, tend to hold more intolerant attitudes toward ethnic differences, thereby exerting more pressure on strangers to change their habitual ways.

Likewise, within a country, more heterogeneous and cosmopolitan urban areas tend to exhibit less host conformity pressure.

The degree to which a given host environment exerts receptivity and conformity pressure works side-by-side with the overall ethnic group strength, that is, the collective status and power of the group of which the re settler is a member. One way to gauge the strength of an ethnic group is to assess its "ethnolinguistic vitality," a combination of the status of a language in a community, the absolute and relative number of its users, and the institutional support (e.g., governmental services, business services, schools, mass media) for the language (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977; Giles & Johnson, 1981).

Individual Predispositions. In addition to the host environment, the cross-cultural adaptation process is affected by the internal dispositions new international students bring with them. Every cultural stranger begins his or her adaptation process with unique temperament and sensibilities.

Some may be filled with determination to succeed in the host society, while others may find themselves bitterly resenting the struggle that is required. Some may be open to, and enthusiastically embrace, new cultural experiences, while others may feel they are too old to make changes in their lifetime habits.

Some may find themselves blending well, while others may stand out oddly against the mainstream ethnicity of the native population. These predispositions serve as a kind of blueprint for what follows, serving as an individual's adaptive potential.

Among the key predispositions influencing cross-cultural adaptation is differing levels of preparedness, or readiness to learn and adapt to the life in that environment,

including the extent of cultural learning (including language learning) individuals have had prior to relocation.

The new international students who are better prepared for the host society are likely to begin their adaptation process with more realistic expectations (Black & Gregersen, 1990; Searle & Ward, 1990). An international student's preparedness is closely linked to the circumstances under which their cross-cultural moves take place. A particularly relevant circumstantial factor is whether their move is voluntary and carefully planned or involuntary and unplanned.

Voluntary immigrants are likely to enter the host environment better prepared for relocation than those who are reluctant and forced to do so by circumstances (David, 1969).

Along with preparedness and ethnic proximity, an African international students' adaptive personality for instance, plays a role. Personality traits serve as the basis upon which the individual pursues and responds to new experiences with varying degrees of success. Of particular interest here are those personality resources that would help facilitate adaptation by enabling the individual to withstand challenges and maximize new learning.

One of the adaptive personality attributes is openness, the psychological tendency to be receptive to new information and to minimize resistance to changed circumstances (Caligiuri, Jacobs, & Farr, 2000; McCrae & Costa, 1985). It is this openness that clearly gives African international students an adaptive advantage. Openness enables them to perceive and interpret various events and situations in the new environment without ethnocentric judgments. The term openness incorporates other more specific terms such as flexibility, open-mindedness, and tolerance for ambiguity.

Along with openness, personality strength facilitates the adaptation process. Defined as the internal capacity to absorb shocks from the environment and to bounce back without being seriously damaged by them, personality strength is a concept that integrates various related concepts pertaining to "stress-buffering traits"

(Zee & Oudenhoven, 2014) such as resilience, risk-taking, hardiness, persistence, elasticity, and self-directed locus of control.

Both openness and strength of personality are closely associated with the third adaptive personality attribute, positivity. Positivity refers to an affirmative and optimistic outlook, or the internal capacity to defy negative prediction (Dean & Popp, 1990).

People with a positive personality can better endure many stressful encounters with a belief that things will turn out as they should. It is a kind of idealism, a belief in possibilities and a faith in the goodness of life and people in general as opposed to being overcome by unwarranted defeatist cynicism. Positivity thus encourages acceptance of others despite differences, and is reflected in self-esteem, self-trust, or self-efficacy.

Together, openness, strength, and positivity present a psychological profile of international students who possess inner resources with which to facilitate their own adaptation. Those who are open, strong, and positive are less likely to give up easily and more likely to take risks willingly under challenging situations in the host environment.

They are better equipped to work toward developing host communication competence, as they continually seek new ways to handle their life activities. In doing so, they are better able to make necessary adjustments in themselves and facilitate their own intercultural transformation. A serious lack of these personality attributes, on the other hand, would handicap the adaptive capacity of a student re settler.

Intercultural Transformation. Through the interactive workings of the above-described factors of personal and social communication, of the environment, and of the student's backgrounds, the process of cross-cultural adaptation unfolds.

Emerging in the adaptation process are three interrelated facets of adaptive change and intercultural transformation of the individual: (a) increased functional fitness in carrying out daily transactions; (b) improved psychological health in dealing with the environment; and (c) emergence of an intercultural identity

orientation (Kim, 1988, 2001, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2015). These three facets are interrelated developmental continua, in which individual international students can be placed at different locations reflecting the different levels of adaptive change at a given point in time.

Most newcomers who find themselves in an unfamiliar environment instinctively strive to "know their way around." Through repeated activities resulting in new learning and internal reorganizing, they achieve an increasing functional fitness in the host environment. Well-adapted individuals would be those who have accomplished a desired level of effective functional relationship with the host environment particularly with those individuals with whom they carry out their daily activities.

Each African student as well as others also needs the ongoing validation of his or her social experience, thereby maintaining a satisfactory level of psychological health, a term that integrates related concepts such as culture shock and psychological adaptation.

In the absence of adequate host communication competence, engagement in host social communication activities, and functional fitness, international students are subject to frustration, leading to the symptoms of maladaptation such as marginalization and alienation. Conversely, those individuals who have acquired high-level host communication competence, who actively participate in host social processes, and who are proficient in their daily transactions in the host society, are likely to enjoy a greater sense of fulfilment and efficacy.

Adaptive changes further include the emergence of an intercultural identity, a gradual and largely unintended psychological evolution beyond the boundaries of childhood enculturation, an orientation toward self and others that is no longer rigidly defined by either the identity linked to the home culture or the identity of the host culture.

As an individual's cultural identity evolves toward intercultural identity, that person's definitions of self and others become simultaneously less restricted by rigid cultural and social categories and more broadened and enriched by an increased

ability to, at once, particularize and humanize his or her perception of each communicative event.

One of the two key elements of intercultural identity development is individuation of one's self-other orientation. This development involves a solidified sense of self, authenticity, and a feeling of certainty about one's place in the world, and a differentiated and particularized definition of others as singular individuals rather than as members of conventional social categories such as culture and ethnicity. Individuation fosters a mental outlook that exhibits greater cognitive differentiation and particularization (Oddou & Mendenhall, 1984). Accompanying the individuation of self-other orientation is a parallel development of universalization of one's mental outlook a synergistic cognition "of a new consciousness, born out of an awareness of the relative nature of values and of the universal aspect of human nature" (Yoshikawa, 1978:220).

These two interrelated processes of intercultural identity development define the nature of the psychological movement toward an identity orientation that is no longer bound by conventional cultural categories. Through individualization and universalization, then, individuals undergoing the process of intercultural transformation are able to cultivate a mindset that integrates, rather than separates, cultural differences with an understanding of the cultural differences between and among human groups and of the profound similarities in the human condition.

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The cultural base of an individual identity is not going to disappear until the end of one's life, even if one wanted to remove it. What does happen in the process of intercultural transformation is a juxtaposition of deculturation and acculturation one loses some and gains some, and, in doing so, one becomes someone else.

Globalization has made cross-cultural adaptation and intercultural transformation the bone of contention of our time. Whether at home or on foreign soil, numerous people the world over undergo at least some degree of acculturation, deculturation, and the experience of the stress-adaptation-growth dynamic.

Despite, and because of, the many unpredictable vicissitudes of the new and changing milieu, people around the world are challenged to undertake the task of acquiring and integrating new experiences into a creative new life taking into account that there exists only one race which is the human race.

Most people in most circumstances are able to find creative ways to reconcile at least some of the old cultural habits of the internal world that are at variance with the external cultural environment. In so doing, they are able to follow the trajectory of the internal transformation that leads to greater functional fitness and psychological health vis-à-vis the changed and changing environment, as well as an emerging intercultural identity and personhood beyond conventional cultural categories. It is not an easy task, but it is achievable.

The very engine driving the cross-cultural adaptation process is an active and continuous communicative engagement with a new and unfamiliar environment. Should international students choose to become successfully adapted, they will benefit from being prepared and willing to face the stressful experiences that are part-and-parcel of the adaptation process.

We will need to concentrate on acquiring new cultural communication practices and putting aside some of the old ones, recognizing that host communication competence is the fundamental mechanism driving our own adaptation process. They must be engaged in the interpersonal and mass communication processes of the host community and society.

Through active participation, and through cultivating the adaptive personality of openness, strength, and positivity, they will be better able to overcome temporary setbacks and attain a level of functional efficacy we need to pursue our personal and social goals.

Although the path to becoming intercultural cannot be completed, one step at a time could bring a new transformation of life. This goal is not one that only extraordinary people can reach. Rather, it is something we all can do by thinking out of the box and changing some old ideas.

The dynamic nature of cross-cultural adaptation points to an alternative way of living in the world. It shows us that we can strive to embrace and incorporate seemingly different cultural elements into something new and unique rather than split. It shows the real possibility of cultivating a special kind of mindset.

Present history shows cases of international students, newcomers, and domestic migrants whose transformative adaptation experiences bear witness to the remarkable human spirit and capacity for self-renewal beyond the constraints of a single culture. Their words give appropriate insights into the process in which foreigners battle through the difficulties, learn from them, and evolve progressively into self-integration.

Long-Term Adaptation. The most imposing and consistent insight into the long-term adaptation process gotten from an extensive body of work conducted among many immigrant groups in the United States is the progressive taking a different dimension and cumulative nature within individuals and their relationship with the host country.

A similar directionality of change toward assimilation has been amply demonstrated in many other subsequent studies (example., Kim, 1976; Nagata, 1969; Preston, 2015; van Oudenhoven & Eisses, 1998).

Deviating from the above-described traditional progressive-cumulative perspective on a long-term trend toward assimilation, Berry (1980, 1990) proposed a more pluralistic way of understanding long-term adaptation from a psychological perspective.

This theory is built on two central issues that are likely to confront immigrants or other long-term residents: cultural maintenance and contact and participation in the host society and its culture.

The question concerning cultural maintenance is: "Are cultural identity and customs of value to be retained?" With respect to contact and participation in the host society, the question is: "Are positive relations with the larger society of value and to be sought?" By juxtaposing the response types (yes, no) to these two

questions, each individual student is identified with one of the four acculturation strategies: integration, assimilation, separation and marginality.

What distinguishes pluralistic models such as these from the traditional models is the implicit assumption that cross-cultural adaptation is essentially a matter of choice by individual international students and that this choice hinges on their identity orientations with respect to their original cultural group and the receiving society.

In contrast, in the traditional progressive-cumulative conceptions of adaptation in the direction of assimilation are grounded in the assumption that adaptive change in individuals is not a matter of choice based on group identity, so much as a matter of a natural human drive to survive and a capacity for functional efficacy in an unfamiliar cultural environment.

Short-Term Adaptation. By and large, studies of short-term adaptation have investigated the experience of culture shock and the processes of psychological adjustment during a relatively limited period of temporary sojourn. Oberg (1960) coined the term 'culture shock' to describe the zeal that results from doing away with our familiar signs and symbols of social interaction (p. 177). Subsequently, a number of alternative conceptions of culture shock have been offered. Adler (1975) and Bennett (1977), expanded the meaning of culture shock, and regarded it as part of the general transition shock, a natural consequence of individuals' inability to interact with the new environment effectively. Zaharna (1989) added to the discussion the notion of self-shock, emphasizing "the double-binding challenge of identity" (p. 501).

Although culture shock is typically associated with negative psychological impacts, many investigators have highlighted that most sojourners eventually achieve satisfactory adjustment.).

Comprehensive reviews of culture shock research (e.g., Anderson, 1994; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001) have concluded that support for the U- and W-curve hypotheses is limited and that evidence for the theories' claims tends to be inconclusive. Arguments have been also made that the cultural shock experience

must be viewed in a broader context of learning and personal development. Adler (1987), for example, explained that culture shock should not be viewed as a disease for which adaptation is the cure, but is at the very heart of the cross-cultural learning experience, self-understanding, and change (p. 29). Consistent with this view, Ruben and Kealey (1979) reported that, among Canadian technical advisors and their spouses on two-year assignments in Kenya, the magnitude of culture shock was positively related to the individuals' social and professional effectiveness within the new environment.

To sum it all up, if we take a closer look at the circumstances, factors as well as the suggestions given above by various scholars on adaptation as a whole in a new milieu, one will discover that we will only do ourselves justice by considering all that has been said and putting it into practice.

1.5 Peculiarities of identity, cultural and national values of African international students

Having looked at the concept and meaning of culture and having established the place of values in a culture, we want to bring this down to the African context. A culture is an embodiment of different values with all of them closely related to each other. That is why one can meaningfully talk about social, moral, religious, political, aesthetic and even economic values of a culture. Let us now look at these values piece-meal, as this would give us an understanding how they manifest in an African culture and the importance being attached to them.

Social values. 'Contemporary African societies are in the betwixt and between of sitting on the deposition of tradition, values and life set-up, and in the invasion of the Western values of materiality over humanity value system.… Yet the African values are still consciously present. Most of them are still real in today Africa. They stand as witness to African development'.

Africans have a sense of good human relation. This is because they believe there is only one race called the human race and we are all citizens of the world. So, it is just rational to treat every human equally.

There is a sense of hospitality in the African society. This explains the love Africans have for strangers who visit them. A warm welcome is usually given to them accompanied by gifts. A typical African will cook the best meal for a stranger and give him the most comfortable place to sleep.

Respect for seniors and authority is that thing Africans take very serious.it is believed that a child who does not respect an elder, is only bringing curses upon himself. An African child will get up and give his seat to an elderly person.

Attention is also given to the extended family. Brothers children, aunts, uncles, sister's children are also considered to be one. That is even why a man will call his brother's wife his own wife and his brother or sister's child his own child. There is that unity and bond. It takes a village to raise a child as said by African ancestors.

Religion is what Africans do not joke with. They believe in a supernatural being called GOD that they pray to and worship. They believe the supernatural being is

their creator who created the world, and everyone has to look up to him. That is why there are so many churches and mosques in Africa unbelievers are usually seen as devils.

Figure 1(African hospitality) prince Charles in Africa.
A Royal visit to the land of princes and chiefs.Bbc.com

Moral values. African societies have strong moral values. There are beliefs and customs which every individual ought to keep in order to live long and to avoid bringing curses on them and others.

Disrespect, theft, adultery and other forms of abnormal behaviour are prohibited. whenever a suspected offender denies a charge brought against him, he would be taken to a soothsayer or made to take an oath for proof of innocence. In Ibibio land

of Nigeria and other parts of Africa for instance, there is are ways to detect crime. For example, a soothsayer who specializes in it, holds the edges of two brooms together and tells you to walk pass the brooms in the middle. If you can open the brooms stocked together then you are innocent. But in the case where they broom are stocked and would not open up, then you are guilty.

African idioms and wise sayings have a lot of wisdom.

African culture prohibits irrational behaviour towards strangers and evil to a fellow relative. Respect for the elderly, kindness to your neighbour and believing in a supreme being are key. Defaulters are usually well punished.

Figure 2, (gross insubordination) shows a child being

punished by the community for insulting his mother

equinox.com.

Religious values. Religion is what Africans do not joke with. They believe in a supernatural being called GOD that they pray to and worship. They believe the supernatural being is their creator who created the world, and everyone has to look up to him. That is why there are so many churches and mosques in Africa Unbelievers are usually seen as devils. This does not exclude the deity worshiping of Africans on different occasions since it was a habit that existed even before the introduction of the bible to Africans.

Figure 3 (praise and worship)

Zambian conference 2016.grace missions.ggwo.org

Seers, magicians, soothsayers and sorcerers help to shape African people's behavior in the society. These people instill fear in those people who want to commit crimes and taboos to think well of the consequences before acting.

Political values. Even before the coming of the Europeans to colonize African, there was already leadership in Africa. This usually began from the family where the man was the head. different villages had their leaders too as well as clans. there was then a general ruler who was the paramount chief. This is how the ladder of hierarchy went. Anita (2005: 145) writes that "such checks and balances were enforced by the existence of secret societies, cults, societal norms, traditional symbols and objects, various classes of chiefs who performed different functions on the different aspects of life".

Hence, with respect to political values, we can see that it is inextricably linked with religious, social, moral values and so on. It is because of political value that the masses give respect to their political institutions and leaders.
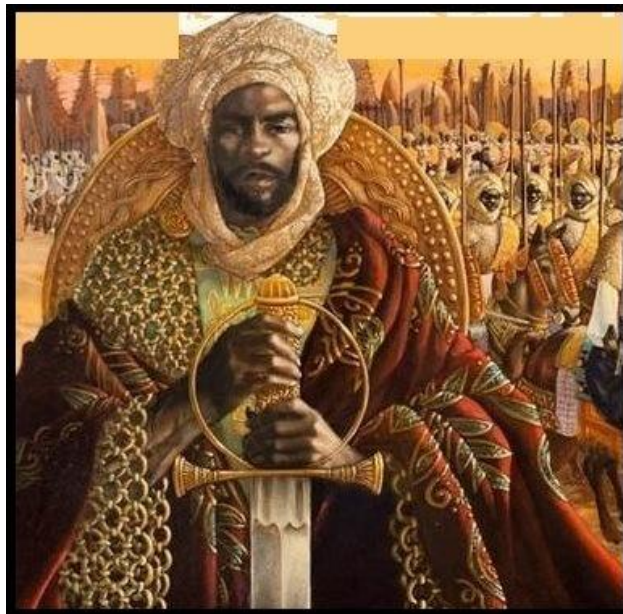
Figure 4 (power and respect) shows the picture of the ruler of the

Mali empire in Africa called Mansa Musa who has been documented to be the richest man who ever lived and gained a lot of respect from his people in the whole empire and across Africa. Apapapunshare.com

Economic values. Economic values of the typical traditional African society are seen in the unity amongst them. Farming, fishing and hunting usually made up the traditional economy.

Relatives would come and helping out with some work because they found joy in doing so and because there was unity amongst them. It is the products from the farm, the fish and the animals hunted that families will feed on and sell some so as to have some little money. Kids had to join their parents in the work especially the boys. That is the reason it was a pride for a man to have many male children as kids.

'Family spirit' is the moto for the typical African society because it is believed that we rise by lifting others. This system played a major role in constructing the African society. People made sure they helped each other in achieving their goals and also help build the society together.

Thus, we can say without strong conviction that economic values of the traditional African society were rooted in their hard work and togetherness.

It is of utmost importance to note that African economic values are bound together and are to be understood absolutely as African cultural values. Today a country like Ivory Coast, is the number one supplier of cocoa in the world and Ghana, Congo and sierra Leone have more gold, diamond and other minerals combined than the rest of the world.

To conclude, our first chapter provided us with a knowledge culture, its elements and competence, communication as a process, basic notions and theories, cross cultural challenges, ways of adaptation, how to avoid cultures shock and some values to be considered when dealing with Africans. This broadened our scope on what cross cultural challenges of communication in a new academic environment in particular and a strange environment as a whole is.

CHAPTER TWO: ANALYSIS

2.1 Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative method was used so as to understand the problems faced by African in students in the Russian academic environment. Our methods were empirical ones. Observations, interviews and online surveys. Qualitative research methods were important for this work, as it focuses on the practical knowledge of the real-life situations faced by these students. Participants were selected as international students who studied in undergraduate, graduate programs as well as those who undertook Russian language courses and those who had already graduated from the university.

To better ensure good results, we had to use demographic variables. For example, participants from different countries, such as China, Africa and Mongolia were selected. Similar background helped to establish the necessary trust-based relations with research participants.

Interview sessions took place on school campus, classrooms, at their place of residence, the streets, game arenas and even at shopping malls. Each interview lasted a couple of minutes. Some interviews were recorded on video or a voice recorder. The interview questions were based on experiences of African students studying presently in this new academic environment as well as previous students.

Thus, each participant answered similar questions with different options. This was done so as to have more detailed information based on their answers. The advantage of this method is to get concrete information on the students' views, rather than generalize on their actions. The value of the interview of this type lies in the fact that it opens a new field of research (Bondareva et al., 2014). Interviews were conducted mainly in English and Google translate was used for those who did not speak English. Observations, thought starters, crossing researcher's mind during the interview, were recorded, later to be compared with interview transcripts.

Analysis of the data was mostly inductive. During the analysis, we were guided by numerous qualitative studies and available literature. Individual interviews were

analysed. We put them into different categories (1) problems encountered by these students in different environments, be it academic, social and cultural issues. (2) Ways to overcome these challenges and (3) proposals for higher educational institutions. In each category, there is a theme, accompanied by a presentation of good ways used and proposed by the participants.

RESULTS

Our findings show that African students faced a couple of challenges in this Russian academic environment. The results gotten from the interviews, will be catalogued in terms of academic, socio cultural aspects and psychological aspects. Other barriers ranged from the group of academic difficulties included; four themes related to the difficulties of international students in learning and academic achievement. These were the themes of interaction with teachers, segregation from schoolmates, language barrier and burden from parental expectations. social barriers had as theme that of 'communication models.' As for the cultural barrier, we saw the theme of; 'the notion of punctuality', theme of **'**Using Educational Resources as the Problem-Solving Strategy',' hostel and student activities', 'language support' and the theme of 'psychological support'. Below is how our one on one interview unfolded.

Academic Barriers. During the interview, participants spent considerable time discussing issues related to the study. All participants, regardless of their cultural background, argued that their teachers were good, professional and easy going with students. Nevertheless, they noted difficulties in communicating with their teachers because of cultural differences which sometimes caused some little tension because they had different expectations. This complaint came from African students from China, Algeria, Nigeria, Cameroon, Morocco).

Theme 1. Interaction with Teachers.

Difficulties of interaction and communication took place in the classroom. Students both from collectivist and individualistic cultures came across these situations. For example, a student named Malek from Libya said that from his point of view, it is considered disrespectful, ill-mannered for the teacher to say false things about Africa without doing proper research. In addition, international students also worried about the fact that they were treated as international students. There are some courses only studied by Russian students. International students are not allowed to study it. This raised eyebrows and kept international students in a state of confusion as to why they cannot study any course they want.

Theme 2. Segregation from schoolmates.

It usually happens when you try to adjust to a new group and find new friends, but they are most of the time away. international students faced different types of isolation both in the classroom and in their day to day life. Usually these students take a more passive from the start but end up demonstrating different methods to take part in social activities or in the classroom discussion.

When it came to selecting players for the school football team, African students were left out. When they tried to find out why, they were not it is meant only for Russians. They said it was an act of racism because they do not understand why they will be in the same university and cannot be part of the school teams.

Theme 3. Language Barrier.

 Language is a big issue in participants' academic adaptation. Many students admitted that the Russian language was a problem for them even those who had studied it before getting to Russia. Many participants have to spend extra time on improving their Russian. Some even undertook language Russian courses in their home country, but it is still hard them to get when these Russians speak. They said these Russians talk very fast, and Sometimes in moments when they mispronounce words, their classmates make a mockery of them.

Others claimed they lacked Russian language skills when going to the bank or call the internet company. They barely get what they say. They forced to tell them to speak slowly and repeat many times.

Those studying in Russian language at the university, said they barely understand lessons. Reading is very difficult. They do not understand a lot of words. When lecturers give tasks to discuss in groups, they are usually lost. Their classmates probably do not want them to join their group as they said. They talk fast and loudly. Sometimes they find it hard to follow them.

Theme 4. Burden of Parental Expectations.

African parents sending their children abroad have a lot of expectations. These expectations vary from, high degree of proficiency, completing undergraduate or master's course of study, financial support and future career. Usually, studies abroad are costly, so Africa international students feel more pressure, because of their parents' undue expectations, which are to be justified in a short period of time, and also the fact that there are no jobs for them as international students and their parents except the to earn some little income even as students.

A good number of them spoke to their parents on phone and they were asking them how good their Russian language is and how studies are going. These students complained that their parents felt bad when they told them they needed more time. The aim is to graduate with good grades and have at least some little job that can fetch me income even while studying so as to make parents proud and relief their stress. Most African parents do not really feel happy when their children abroad tell them that they do not work. They get very surprised because they know it will really be hard for their children to keep up and it will make them lazy.

Social Barriers

Theme 5. Communication Models.

The participants, say that when they visit social events, they have to deal with different ways of interaction. For example, there is a radical difference in the behaviour of people in Russia and other countries when they receive gifts. In Western culture, one is required to open the gift immediately to show your

appreciation and delight. However, with Africans, it is a choice to open it there or not. so sometimes western conduct pattern causes inconvenience to African international students. Participants said that because of differences in communication patterns they experience some awkwardness behaviour on the part of Russians.

A good number of students spoke about their experiences of social isolation and loneliness. It was especially difficult for students who did not have relatives or friends in Russia. Many of the statements were related to difficulties of establishing friendly relations with the Russian students which was to a greater extent a problem and language and different mentality and no jobs.

Cultural Barriers

The participants were from other cultures, which differed from the Russian culture. Thus, the participants experienced culture shock due to differences in views and values. When entering into a new culture, they had to deal with different systems of values, models of communication, signs and symbols of social communication and patterns of interpersonal relations. For example, foreign students faced behavioural norms to the concept of "time" in separate societies. This may sometimes lead to misunderstanding and emotions. More specific topics associated with this are discussed below.

Theme 6. The Notion of Punctuality.

Students who had rendezvous with teachers and the teachers ended up coming late complained that they did not find it good. Some had to wait for long and ended up going angrily without even meeting the teacher. Others complained about the lateness of sporting events as it usually did not start at the allocated time. This was frustrating to them.

Theme 7. Unfair behavior towards International Students.

African International students noted that there was some kind of bias in the educational and social life. For example, less was given to them in the classroom during activities. Participants of the survey claimed that their Russian classmates tried to maltreat them and ignoring their cultural backgrounds. Also, these

respondents said that they were willing to share information about their culture, to help Russians get to know them better. These words show that these African students are ready to take an active role in improving mutual understanding between students from different cultures.

Adaptation Strategies

According to statistics, most international students in Russia come from Kazakhstan (53,809 or 28.8%), followed by Belarusians (17,724 or 9.4%), Ukrainians rank third (15,978 or 8.5%), the top-five is closed by representatives from Turkmenistan (15,631 or 8.4%) and Uzbekistan (15,025 or 8%). The top-ten also includes Azerbaijani, Chinese, Tajiks, Moldavians and representatives of India (Gel bras, 2002). African international students make up only (5%) unfortunately.

International students' study in more than half of the today's 950 educational public and private higher education institutions in Russia. They contribute to the diversity and internationalization of academic and public activities.

For example, these students bring different perspectives to problems in the classroom, enhance the mutual understanding and appreciation of the differences found around the world. Therefore, it is important to accept international students in Russian universities, because of their contributions to the student society on so many various levels. These levels include academic prestige, cultural exchange and financial income.

To begin with, international students are extremely important to the higher education of any country for both academic prestige and financial advantage. Thus, for example, it is found that students demonstrate a lot more interest in their studies, if they attend an academic institution enrolling a number of international students (Calleja, 2000).

Russian students have more incentive to study the subject, which spurs a sense of competition with international students (Knyazeva et al., 2010). Thus, international students in some way enhance the academic performance of universities in which they study, because they show a good level of academic training. Especially, when the student's country sends him to study abroad, then

there is quite a rigorous selection of candidates. Not only the applicant's performance in basic subjects is taken into account, but also his common cultural competence. In this case, the Russian university gets decent, academically prepared students. Even if they have a high rating in their countries, international students, however, must meet the requirements in language training.

Secondly, African international students make up a high level of ethno-cultural diversity. They enrich the cultural diversity with their cultural traits and ethnic understanding, by interacting with people from different socio-cultural backgrounds, they will instil the skills for a better intercultural communication. "As one's experience of cultural difference become more complex and sophisticated, one's potential competence in intercultural relationship increases". Hammer et al (2003). In addition, when a person is exposed to a variety of cultures, he or she has a lot of opportunities to compare and build a more diverse world picture.

Thirdly, international students make an important investment in the economy and international relations through their tuition fees and living expenses. Teaching foreign citizens can become, according to UNESCO experts, one of the most lucrative exports of the twenty first century. For example, China alone pays one billion US dollars annually for teaching its students, trainees, graduate students abroad (Bras, 2002). As a whole, according to the US Department of Commerce expenditures of international students enrolled in all 50 states contributed more than $30 billion to the US economy in 2014 (Open doors, 2015).

However, many international students face challenges as they get higher education outside their home countries especially in a country like Russia that is very closed and has harsh climatic conditions. They face obstacles such as different food, unfamiliar living conditions, financial problems, finding balance between studies and no jobs. They have to fit themselves to the schedule of classes, learning styles, other possible difficulties related to language, culture, personal barriers. A student may encounter a number of difficulties of the transitional period from everyday situations in daily life and to cultural adaptation. And if the institution is going to enrol international students, these issues should be considered and taken

into account. Below are the challenges that African international students usually encounter.

Research has examined several cross-cutting themes in relation to adaptation and adjustment problems experienced by international students. Adaptation challenges a person's sense of well-being and may cause homesickness, loss of support systems, loneliness, culture shock, lack of relationships, perceived discrimination, financial difficulties, etc. (Russell et al., 2010). Several journals express the importance of looking at sociocultural adaptation. Sociocultural adaptation problems may include struggling to learn about the foreign country's norms and culture, difficulties in language, and issues in racial and ethnic discrimination (Sam, 2001).

These issues also include academic issues related to level of proficiency in English, or the host country's language difficulties in understanding new concepts or language barriers. Problems may also rise if the student is unable to participate in university programs and involvement with their professors or advising staff (Russell et al., 2010).

Another theme related to adaptation and adjustment problems include problems with physical and psychological health. Physical health problems may be related to change in diet, activity level, and sleep patterns. In general, domestic students face changes as they enter a university setting. Domestic students may eat their own cooked meals or eat buffet style food from their residence halls, continue in activities they enjoyed previously before college and may have a change in their amount of sleep.

In relation, African international students may need to adjust to a new lifestyle, activity level, and diet from their home country creating stress on their body and mind (Russell et al., 2010). Psychological health is the most commonly mentioned adaptation and adjustment concern among international students. African International students may experience depression, anxiety, and higher levels of stress while studying at a foreign university.

Other areas of concern include feelings of helplessness, paranoid feelings, and irritability which may also be as a result of harsh climatic conditions. These

psychological health issues are correlated with physical problems including sleep disturbances, loss of appetite, reduced energy level, greater vulnerability to illnesses, and persistent somatic complaints.

Constant staring of people at school or at on the streets when walking could be so annoying sometimes interrogations and wanting to take pictures most of the time becomes so boring. African international students usually face this problem especially in the city of Chelyabinsk -Russia and other cities in Russia that only saw the influx of black people some years back.

At the level of hostels, most international and domestic students often have problems with the Chinese students. This is because the Chinese students always lither the place with dirt, cook with strange spices that usually irritate and get people coughing and do not see anything wrong with what they are doing. As a result, there is always conflict between them and even other international students.

Some African international students also face bias, hostility and to an extend racism from apartment owners.in most cases, these students have to look for agents or Russian friends who will help them or vouch for them to the house owners in order for them to rent out houses to these African students. Most African international students who tried dealing with house owners directly, were usually turned down.

Studying abroad is not without difficulties, and we can confidently say that foreigners have a lot of problems with adaptation, which can affect their studies and the general impression of living in another country.

While universities often offer a variety of support services for international students, it will be helpful for them to learn how to identify the problem in time and to get acquainted with the strategies to overcome it. The following sections will provide examples that the educational organization plays an important role in the adaptation of foreign students.

Theme 8. Using Educational Resources as the Problem-Solving Strategy.

According to the research results, participants need special services, organizations such as student associations, centres and departments of foreign

students' adaptation, international clubs and various student organizations for their successful adaption in another country. Members of these organizations note that these support centres help to cope with stress, find like-minded people and learn to deal with various problems. For example, many foreign students take books from the scientific library, study in a relaxed atmosphere or visit the computer room, which is a multimedia classroom for several dozen workplaces, equipped with modern technology: personal computers with modern high- performance black-and-white and colour printers, and high-performance A3 copier. One of the respondents said that he made an appointment with the curator at the hostel, being tired of the stressful learning environment at the university and interaction with teachers.

Theme 9. Dormitory and Student Activities.

To cope with these problems, the students tried to learn more about the new society and culture. For example, to improve their knowledge of Russian, some participants looked for a native Russian speaking roommate. One interviewee joined different students' communities. Socializing, she shares her culture and wants to improve relations with the Russian-speaking students through total immersion in their culture. Students participate in activities to expand the circle of acquaintances.

Some of these students also had conflicts with hostel directors, care takers and cleaners. This is because these workers lacked politeness when addressing issues that concern us. They said that they were usually spoken to with such disrespect as if we were little children. Arguments also popped up between Chinese students and African students. This is usually due to the fact that they always mess up the bathrooms and kitchen. When these students want to call them to order, it becomes a problem and the hostel workers always come and favour the Chinese in most cases. (Africans)

Theme 10. Language Support.

Although few foreign students showed an understanding of written and spoken Russian speech on entering Russian universities, they encountered some difficulties in oral communication in the university environment. Studying their major subject, students expect more language support. The Russian language courses said and not

effective and it feels like only the bases of the Russian language are being taught in the Russian language institutes. Thus, when students start their main courses in the university, they do not understand anything even after undergone Russian language courses.

In addition, it is useful to carry out a complex of measures aimed at familiarizing international students with the rules and regulations of their stay in Russia, with the city sights and the university, to solve the problems of psychological nature (Kravet, 2013). Educational system in Russia is very different from what international students got used to. Different programs and standards, education with its own specific features. Therefore, orientation, information sessions will facilitate foreign students' desire to live and study in Russia.

Furthermore, African students were embarrassed when they noticed that in the immigration department and hospital that deal with international students, there is no one who can speak fluent and proper English .Even though we are in Russia , English still remains the number one language of instruction .plus, in a university milieu that welcomes international students, when English language is not taken seriously , it feels like that institution or country is just neglecting it. The world has evolved in terms of communication and we should evolve alongside it.

Theme 11. Psychological Support.

Some participants missed her parents and friends, so sometimes felt lonely especially in a faraway country like this with a hostile history and harsh climate. They had to make several appointments with a psychological services specialist to discuss their stress. The consultant provided psychological support on the issue of personal adaptation and favourable sociological, psychological and pedagogical conditions of educational activity.

To conclude, it will be just to say that with the plight of these students mentioned above, we strongly believe that measures could be taken to make the academic environment a more conducive one.

We set questionnaires in the Google Disk (Google-forms format) sent the hyperlink to all our previous and present students. 22 students willingly answered

the questions out of 24 and we better explained the responses with the use of graphs below.

Count of Assess the level of satisfaction with the University course for African students in Russian Universities
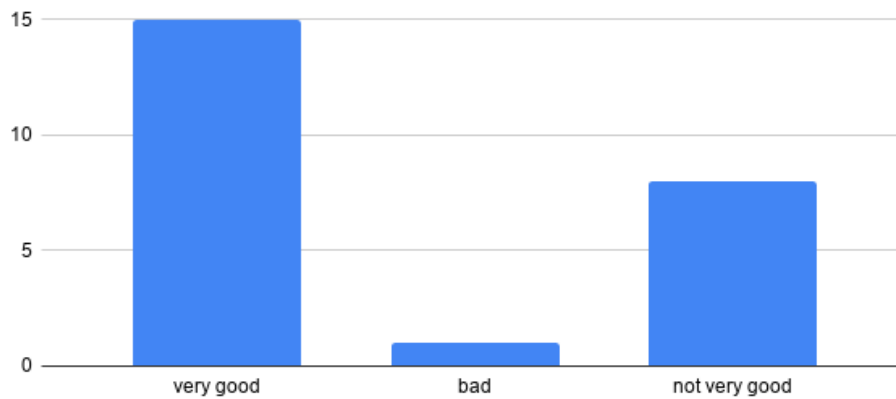
Count of Assess the level of satisfaction with the University course for African students in Russian

As for the academic aspect, looking at the graph above 62.5% of students said the university taught courses, were very good, 33% said not very good and just a minor percentage of 4.2% said it was bad.
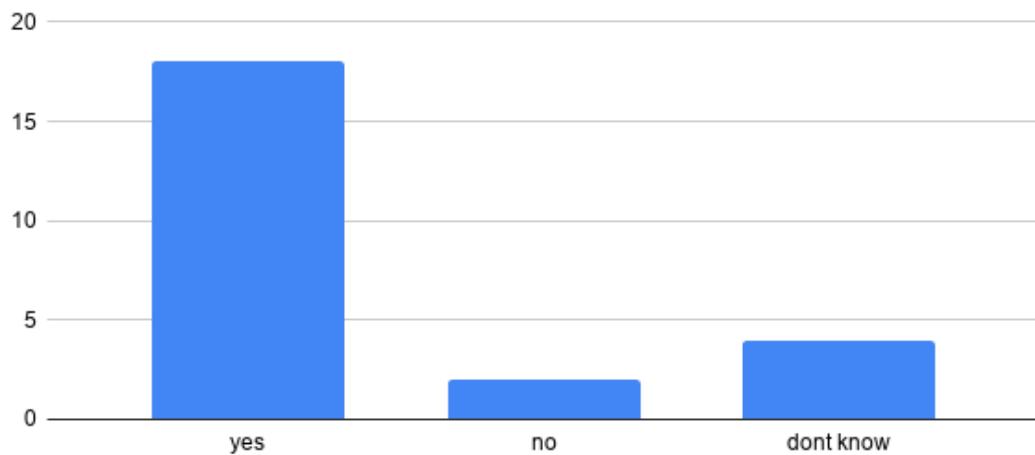
Count of Evaluate the quality of teaching
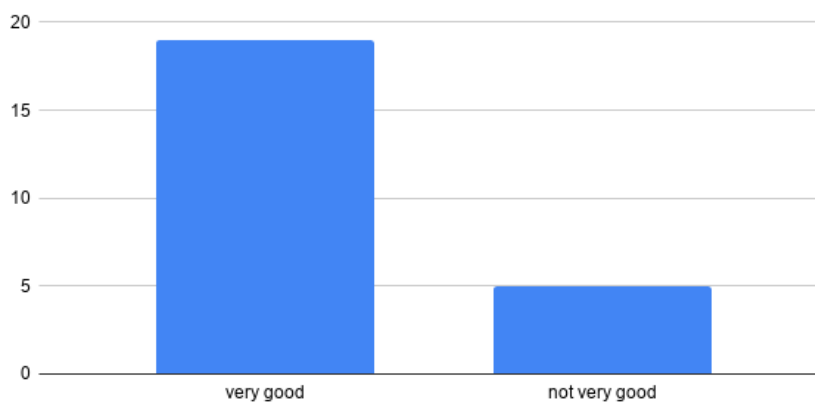
Count of Evaluate the quality of teaching

As for the quality of teaching, 79.2% said it was very good while 20.8% said it was not very good.

Count of on correcting your errors by detailed explanations and continuous support

Count of on correcting your errors by detailed explanations and continuous support

79% of students want teachers to correct their error by giving detailed explanation and continuously supporting them.16.7% said they do not know and 8.3% said no.

Count of intensive and hard academic and research work
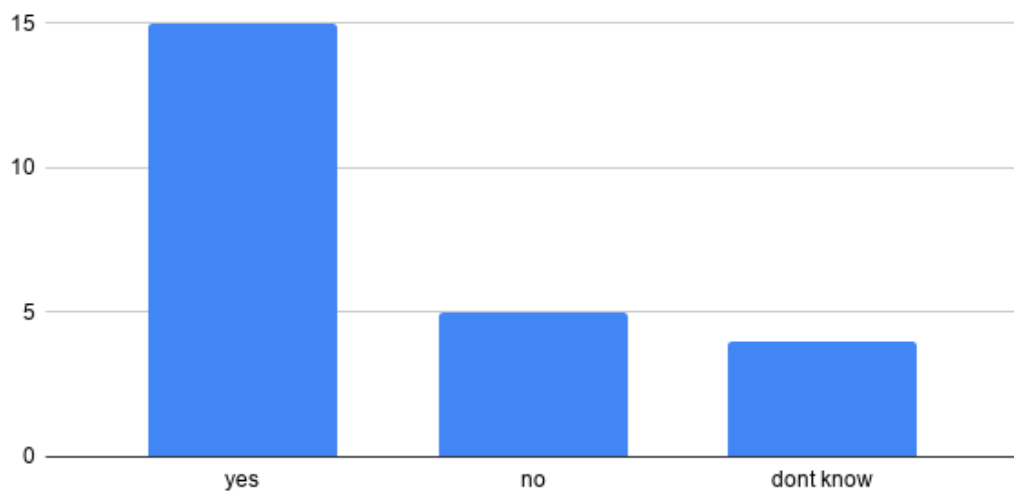
Count of intensive and hard academic and research work

A good percentage as 62.5% said they were ready for intensive and hard academic and research work.20.8% said they are not ready while 16.7% do not know.

Count of the educational expectations and learning outcomes

Count of the educational expectations and learning outcomes
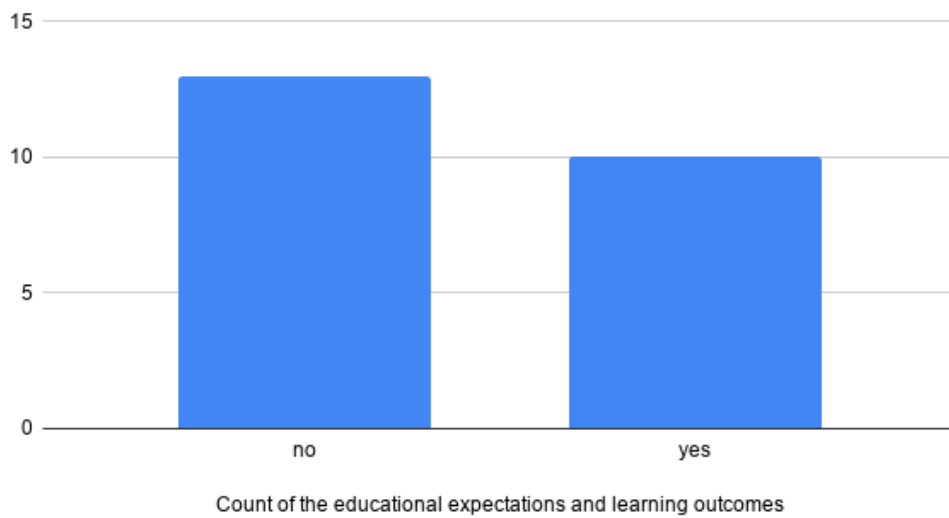
58% said there is no gap between their educational expectations and learning outcomes and 43% there is.

Count of academic success meaning in Russian Universities

Count of academic success meaning in Russian Universities
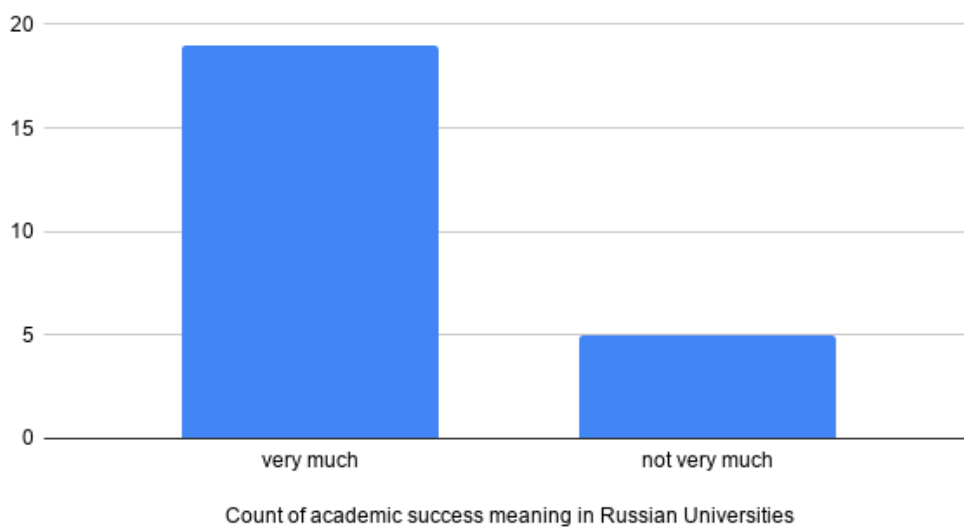
When asked how much their academic success means to them as they study in Russian universities, 79.2% said very much while 20.8% said not very much .

Count of Russian teacher to admit personal success and emphasise it in front of other International students
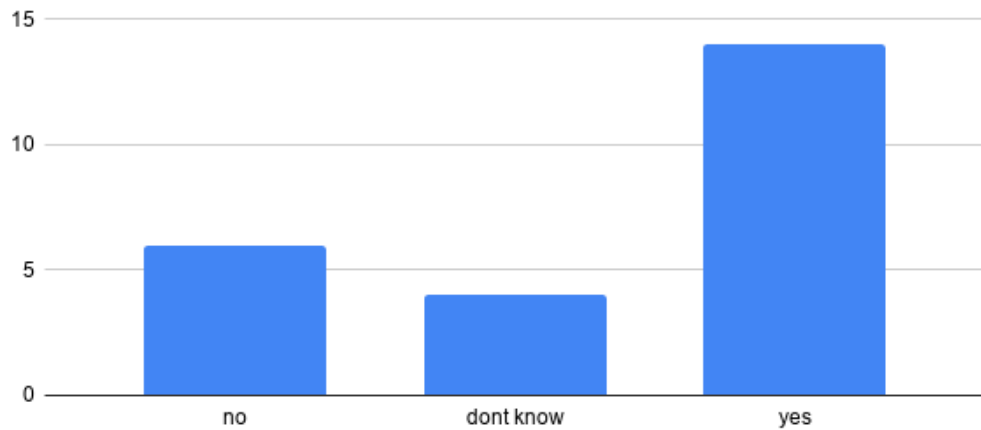
Count of Russian teacher to admit personal success and emphasise it in front of other International

58.3% want teachers to admit their personal success and emphasize it in front of other group of students 25% do not want and 16.7% do not know.

**Count of academic experience in Russian Universities**
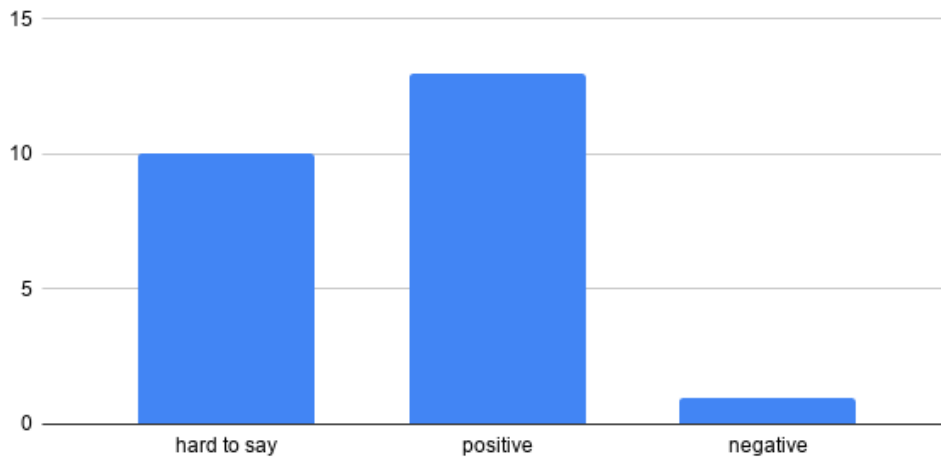
Count of academic experience in Russian Universities

54.2% of these students said were positive about their academic experience in in Russian universities, 41.7% said it was hard to say while 4.1% were negative
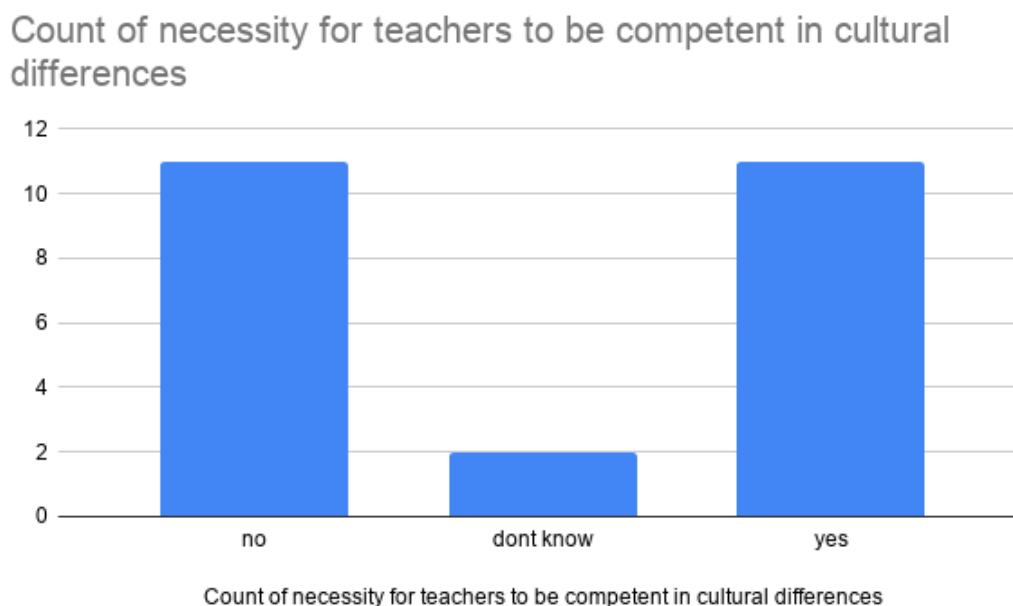
Count of susu as world class universities

Count of susu as world class universities
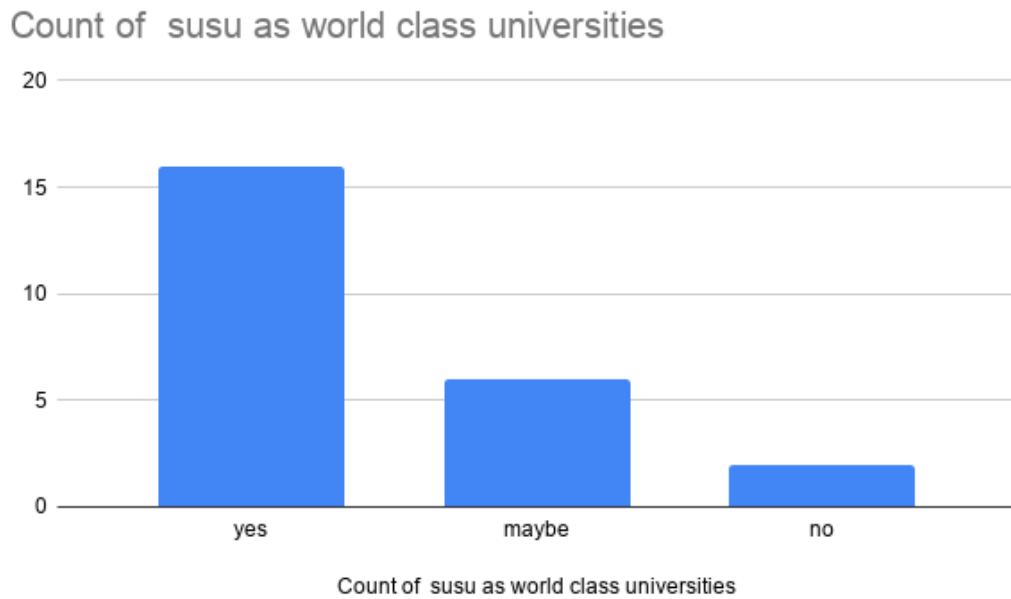
66.7% agreed that south ural state university could compete with world class universities.25% said maybe and 8.3% said no.

Count of assesment of students by Russian teachers

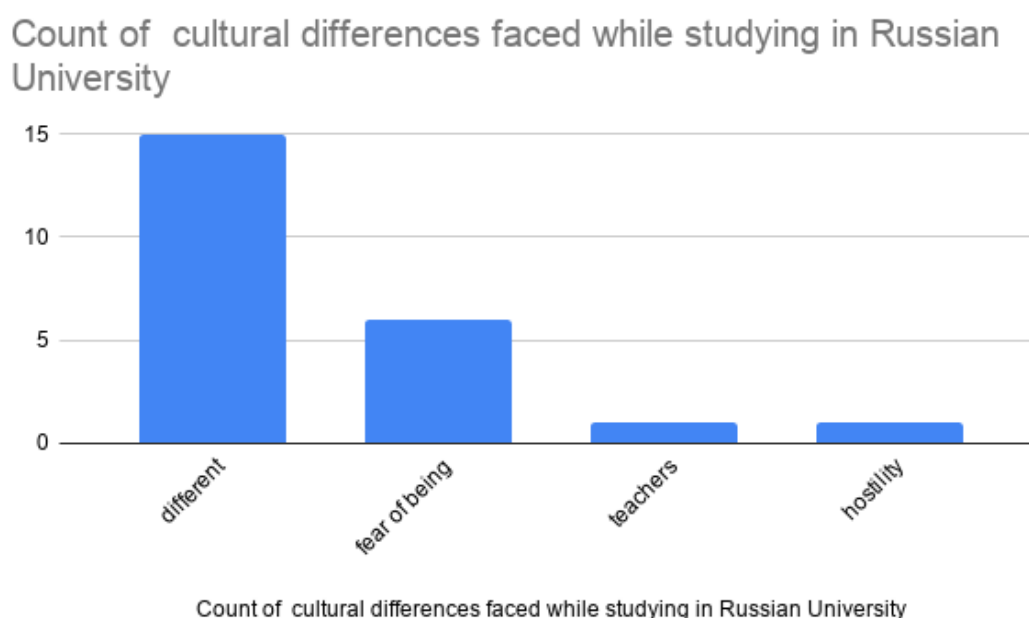Count of assesment of students by Russian teachers
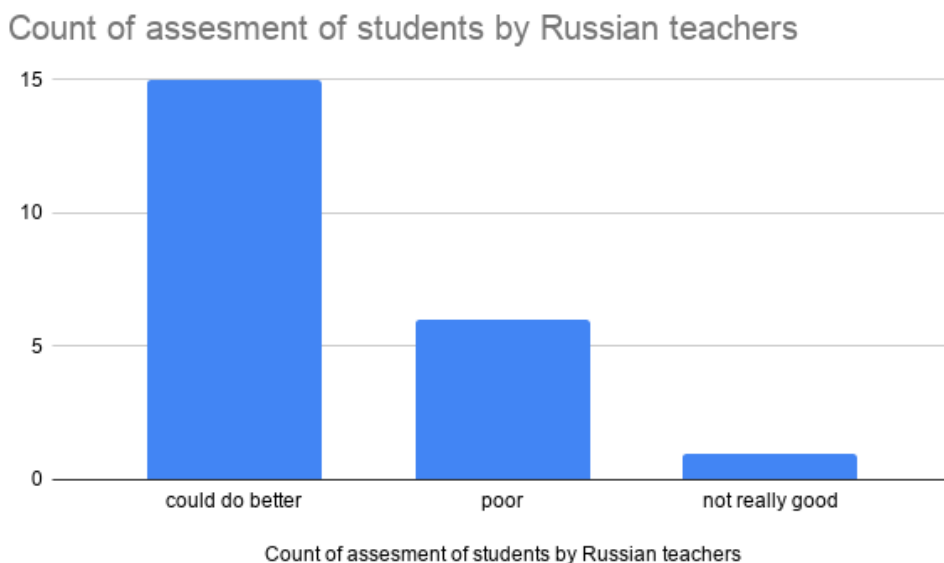
68.2% of students said teachers could do better in the way they asses' students, 27% said their methods of assessment is poor and 4.8% said not really good.

To conclude, it will suffice to say that the above results show that a majority of African international students are positive about the level of studies at south Ural state university (SUSU).

The socio-cultural aspects will also be demonstrated and explained in the graph below

Count of necessity for teachers to be competent in cultural differences

Count of necessity for teachers to be competent in cultural differences

45.8% of students want teachers to be competent in cultural differences,45.8% do not want and 8.3% do not know.

Count of cultural differences faced while studying in Russian University

Count of cultural differences faced while studying in Russian University

65.2% of students faced the problem of different mentality, 26.1% feared of being misunderstood or ignored in front of other international and domestic students.4.3% faced hostility and the other 4.3% faced teacher's dominance.
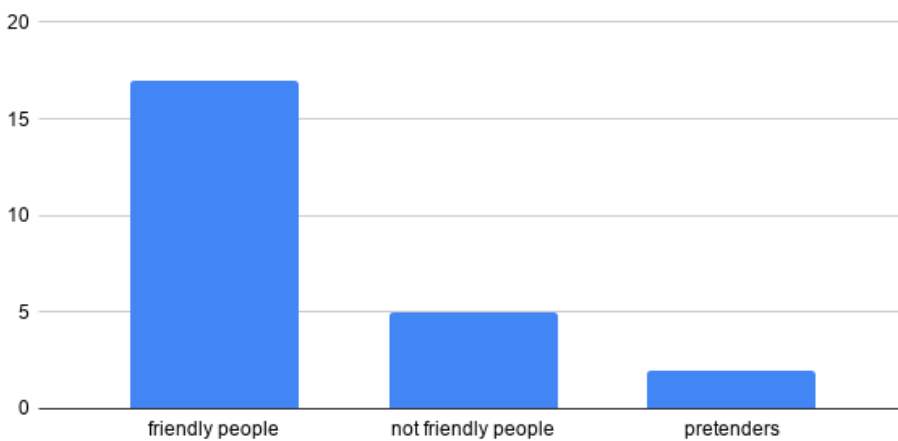
Count of cross-cultural and communicative experience in Russian environment
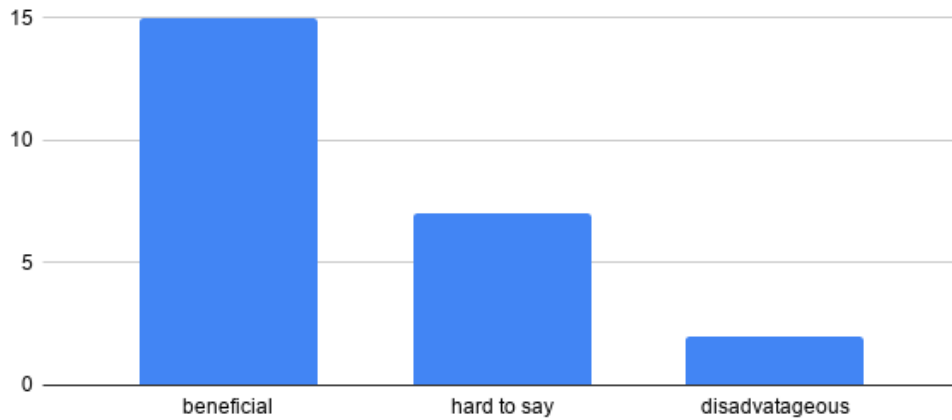
Count of cross-cultural and communicative experience in Russian environment

62.5% said their cross-cultural communicative experience was beneficial, 29.2% said it was hard to say while the rest said it was disadvantageous for them

Count of social behavior about the Russian people

Count of social behavior about the Russian people

70.8% said Russians were friendly people, 20.8% said not too friendly while 8.3% termed them pretenders.

To conclude looking at the above statistics, it will be right to say that though these students faced some cultural challenges like that of different mentality and fear

of being misunderstood, a good number of them found the Russian people friendly which to them was very beneficial.

Psychological aspects; students experiences in a new environment also play on their psyche , so much so that they may want to leave that place and never return ,leave and return, not wanting to leave , recommend the place to others by speaking positive about the place and not recommend it to others by speaking ills about the place. Our results tell us that 41.7% did have embarrassing moments, 37.5% did not have while 20.8% had most of the time.

Count of embarrassing moments in russian academic environment

Count of embarrassing moments in russian academic environment

Count of recommendation of SuSu by african students
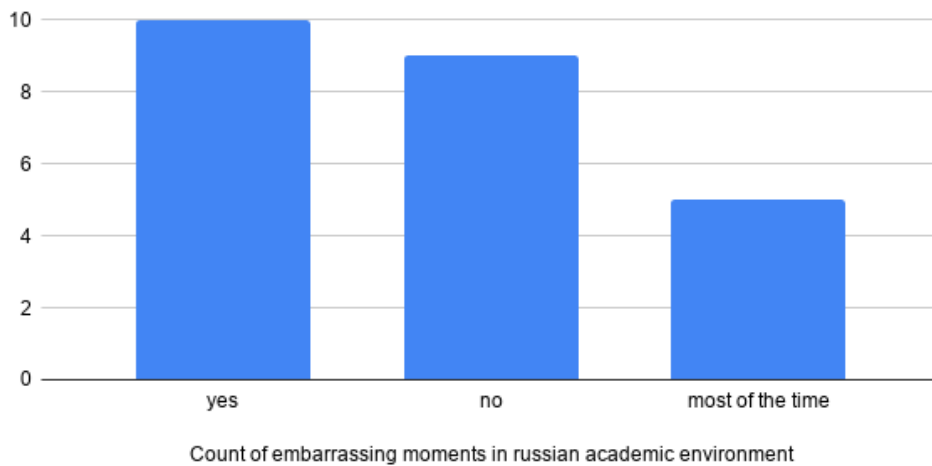
Count of recommendation of SuSu by african students
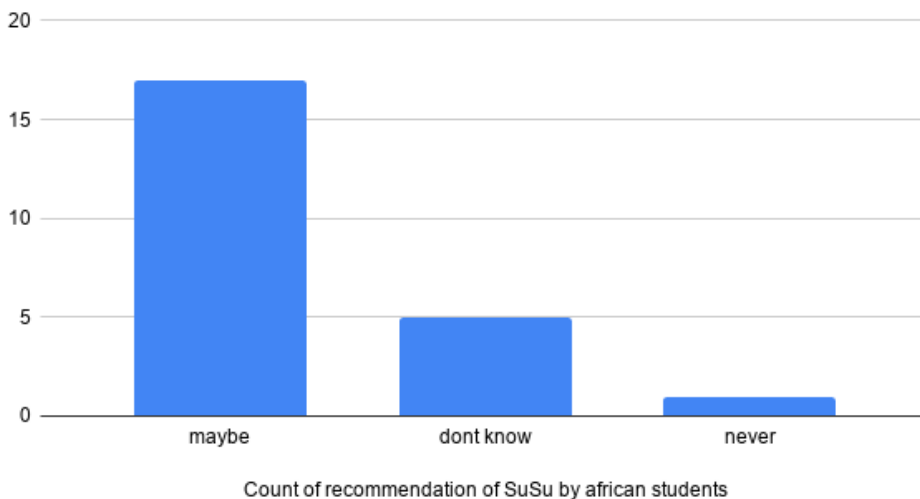
73.9% said they may recommend south Ural Ural State Univeristy to their fellow Africans back home, 21.7% said they do not know and the rest of them said never.

Count of willingness to revisit Russia

Count of willingness to revisit Russia
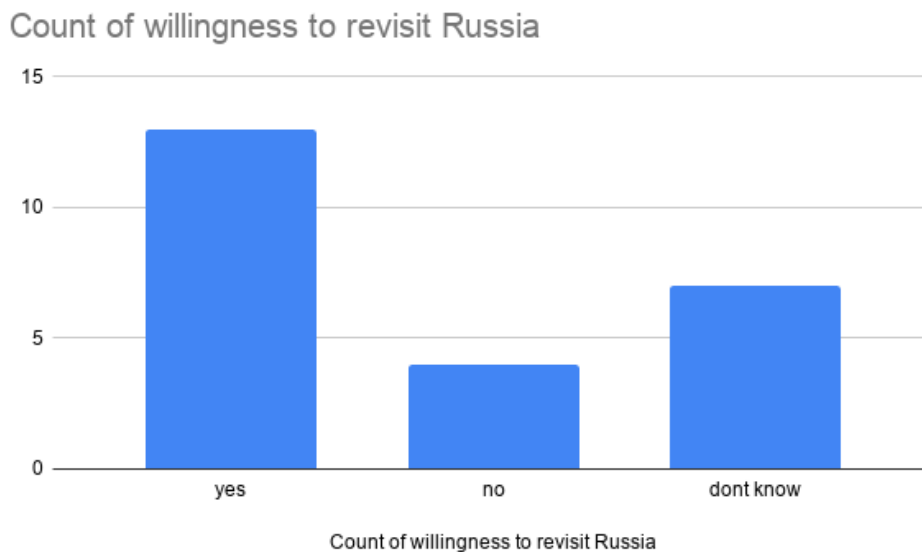
54.2% said if given the opportunity to revisit Russia, they will willingly do so.29.2% said they don't know while 16.7% say they would not.

In conclusion of our second chapter , with the information and results gotten from our participants it will suffice to say that even though there were some setbacks that made these students to be a little bit uncomfortable with their stay in this new Russian academic environment , a good number of them had very positive comments to give about this academic environment.it is just left for the authorities to see into these few uses and put in place good mechanisms that can may the place conducive for all and also for these students to have an open mind.

CONCLUSION

We may then conclude from our data gotten from our two chapters that, we were enlightened by some scholars on culture, cross-cultural communication, communication as a process, some African values and peculiarities, challenges of adaptation to a new environment, how to adapt and avoid culture shock. With the results gotten from one to one interviews and online surveys we can say that the complains of few students did not stop a number to say this new Russian academic environment is favorable to them even though there are some adjustments to be made. Haven said all these, we strongly believe that for this environment to be conducive for all, we recommend; (1) Courses on intercultural communication to be taught in all schools and faculties so as to ease interaction and create awareness. (2) Creating menial jobs for these international students on campus and if possible off campus so they can earn some income during their studies here because the already contribute enormously to the economy of the country and educational system of thr university. (3) Ensure that students have a proper knowledge of Russian language and English language before admitting them into various fields of studies and not focus on those who have the money to pay fees even if they are illegible. (4) Employ competent workers who master English language to work in international offices, immigration, school banks, hospital and hostel. English is the first international language of the world and so with the influx of international students here, it is important that those departments do more. (5) Have counselling meetings with the hostel staff, other workers and international students from other countries on how to deal with international African students because most of them have never seen blacks so they may turn to be biased.   This also applies to apartment owners. (6) Organize meaningful and beneficial activities, that will make everyone want to get involved, not feel home sick and miss their families too much see the need to indulge in these activities. Learn international students' policies from other top-rating universities across the globe and not limit yourselves only to the Russian system and milieu if at all you want to have high ratings and have more African international students in your university in particular and other students as a whole.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

1. Tools used in research

1.1. Tape recorder

1.2. Notebook and pen

1.3. Google forms

Appendix B

2.Interview questions

2.1. Academic barriers
a. What is your relationship with your teachers?
b. Do you face any issues at school with your schoolmates?
c. Is language a problem to you?
d. What do your parents worry about?

2.2. Social barriers
e. Do you face any interaction problems and embarrassments when invited for events?

2.3 Cultural barriers
f. Have you had any problems with punctuality?
g. Was there any kind of hostility you faced from other international students
what may be done to increase quality of life of students?
I. What are some problems you encounter in hostels?
j. Are you satisfied with the way the Russian language is being taught?
k. Is your mind psychologically stable?

Appendix C

Online survey questionnaire

Untitled form

SURVEY . QUESTIONS FOR AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT SOUTH URAL STATE UNIVERSITY

1. Assess the level of satisfaction with the University course for African students in Russian Universities

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ very good
   ◯ not very good
   ◯ bad

2. Evaluate the quality of teaching

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ very good
   ◯ not very good
   ◯ bad

3. Do you expect your Russian teacher to spend a lot of time on correcting your errors by detailed explanations and continuous support

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ yes
   ◯ no
   ◯ dont know

4. . Are you ready for intensive and hard academic and research work?

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ yes
   ◯ no
   ◯ dont know

5. Is there any gap between your educational expectations and learning outcomes?

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ yes
   ◯ no
   ◯ dont know

6.   . Did you have any cross-cultural challenges while learning in Russia?

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) yes
- ( ) no
- ( ) dont know

7.   What cultural differences did you face, while studying in Russian University? Tick the necessary

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) different mentality
- ( ) hostility(racism)
- ( ) gender inequality
- ( ) teachers dominance
- ( ) fear of being misunderstood or ignored in front of the international students and students of the same nationality

8.   Do you find it urgent for a teacher to be competent in cultural differences

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) yes
- ( ) no
- ( ) dont know

9.   . Should the Russian teacher admit your personal success and emphasise it in front of the group of other International students

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) yes
- ( ) no
- ( ) dont know

10.   . How much is your academic success vital to you in Russian Universities

Mark only one oval.

- ( ) very much
- ( ) not very much
- ( ) i dont care

11. Did you have any embarrassing moments here?

Mark only one oval.

◯ yes

◯ no

◯ most of the time

12. Was your academic experience in Russian Universities

Mark only one oval.

◯ positive

◯ negative

◯ hard to say

13. Was your cross-cultural and communicative experience in Russian environment

Mark only one oval.

◯ beneficial

◯ disadvatageous

◯ hard to say

14. What was the most interesting thing you learned about the Russian culture

Mark only one oval.

◯ not friendly people

◯ friendly people

◯ pretenders

15. would you recommend SuSu to any of your fellow africans back home

Mark only one oval.

◯ never

◯ maybe

◯ dont know

16. Do you think susu can compete with world class universities

Mark only one oval.

◯ no

◯ yes

◯ maybe

17. if you were given an opportunity to return to Russia , will you be glad

Mark only one oval.

◯ no

◯ yes

◯ dont know

18. What can you say about the way teachers asses students

Mark only one oval.

◯ poor

◯ not really good

◯ could do better

Appendix D

Settings/Days/Time

SETTINGS	DAYS	Time/Hours
School campus	Fridays	12:00pm-1:00pm
Hostels	Sundays	4:00pm-6:00pm
Sports Arenas	Anytime there is a competition	Before and after the game
Public places (malls & magazines)	Saturdays	10:am-12:00:pm