THE CHOICE OF ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES: INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION OF FRENCH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES IN ONTARIO

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ABSTRACT

According to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (2019), the number of foreign students studying in Canadian public colleges and universities rose 16.25% in 2018 for an overall increase of 73% in the five years since 2014. The number of international students aspiring to obtain a degree in Canadian higher education institutions has been increasingly growing. Yet, attending post-secondary institutions in a culture different from one's own may result in challenges of cross-cultural adaptations. Black-African international students are not different in this regard. Based on a mixed methods research, the study draws from Berry's (1997) fourfold acculturation theory, Kim's (1988) integrative communication theory and LaFramboise et al. (1993) bicultural competence model to investigate the international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries choice of acculturation strategies as well as their overall intercultural adaptation in bilingual post-secondary institutions in Ontario. Results from the quantitative analysis revealed assimilation as preferred acculturation mode while qualitative analysis identified both integration and separation as preferred strategies. The participants reported support from academic staff but also a significant lack of information, and difficulties adapting to the teaching style.

RÉSUMÉ

Selon Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada ([IRCC], 2019), le nombre d'étudiants étrangers qui étudient dans les collèges et universités publics du Canada a augmenté de 16,25 % en 2018, ce qui représente une augmentation globale de 73 % depuis 2014. Les étudiants étrangers qui aspirent à obtenir un diplôme dans les établissements d'enseignement supérieur du Canada sont de plus en plus nombreux; cependant, faire des études postsecondaires dans une culture différente de la leur peut représenter pour les étudiants des défis d'adaptation culturelle énormes. Les étudiants internationaux africains, en particulier les étudiants noirs africains, ne sont pas différents à cet égard. Basée sur une méthode de recherche mixte, cette étude s'inspire de la théorie des quatre modalités d'acculturation de Berry (1997), de la théorie de la communication intégrative de Kim (1988) ainsi que du modèle de compétence biculturelle de LaFramboise et al. (1993) pour analyser comment les étudiants internationaux des pays francophones d'Afrique sub-saharienne choisissent leurs modes d'acculturation dans les établissements postsecondaires bilingues de l'Ontario. L'étude s'est aussi penchée sur leur adaptation interculturelle globale dans leur nouveau cadre éducationnel. D'une part, les résultats de l'analyse quantitative montrent que les participants ont un penchant pour l'assimilation alors que l'analyse qualitative indique que l'intégration et la séparation sont les deux modes d'acculturation préférés des participants. D'autre part, les participants ont rapporté qu'ils ont bénéficié du soutien du personnel universitaire dans leur processus d'acculturation. Mais ils ont aussi dénoncé un manque important d'information et des difficultés à s'adapter au nouveau style d'enseignement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On March 13, 2019, in Calgary, AB, Canada's government launched the new Francophone Immigration Strategy, "Meeting Our Objectives: Francophone Immigration Strategy." The main objective of the strategy is to reach 4.4% francophone immigration in francophone minority communities by 2023. To hit this goal, the Government of Canada is counting in part on attracting more international students from French-speaking countries to Canada and to encourage them to immigrate after graduation. In addition, to encourage more young African French speakers to choose to pursue their post-secondary education in Canada, the Government of Canada made the Student Direct Stream (SDS) available to international students from two African francophone countries, Senegal and Morocco, starting September 9, 2019 (Expansion of Student Direct Stream to support francophone immigration, 2019a). The SDS is an efficient system providing fast, reliable processing of study permit applications, with an average processing time of less than 3 weeks. The wait time for the study permit process and its obtention is one of the pre-migration challenges faced by international students (Caldwell & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2016). Overall, immigration officials refused 75 % of the study permit applications from Africa in 2019 (Global Affairs Canada, International Education & International Education Promotion, 2018; Toughill, 2019). The literature states that the process of applying for a student visa, in addition to being expensive and time consuming, is paved with challenges and uncertainty (Caldwell & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2016). The most common cause for visa refusal is the impossibility to convince the immigration agent of the ability to pay for school fees. Students have problems providing evidence of financial status (Caldwell & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2016). This should come as no surprise when only 55% of people with tertiary education have bank accounts in Africa in 2012 (Economist, 2012).

The visa can also be refused for a simple reason, such as a migration agent assuming that the student did not have the right intention to come study in the host country (Caldwell & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2016). The French-speaking international students sample coming to Canada was diverse in the region of origin (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada [IRCC], 2019b). France, among the top four of the countries of origin for international students studying in Canada, remains the most important source country of French-speaking international students, with more than 22.7 thousand French students coming in Canada in 2018 (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2019). But the growth in the francophone international students is sustained by those coming from Sub-Saharan and Northern African countries (Cooper, 2017). This appears to follow with the growth of the middle class in developing countries such as Nigeria, Cameroon, etc. (Cooper, 2017). As their economies undergo an income shift, students from Sub-Saharan francophone countries represent one of the fastest growing international student populations currently in Canada (Cooper, 2017).

With the new opportunity to have the study permit application processed in less than three weeks, the number of international students coming from African francophone countries, to enrol in Canada's post-secondary institutions, is expected to surge in the coming years. However, the opportunity to study abroad comes with challenges associated with the process of acculturation. Many studies have discussed difficulties and adjustment problems international students encountered during the transition to Western higher education institutions (Constantine et al., 2004; Dantakos et al., 2017; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). International students noted that they experience a lot of acculturative stress caused by discrimination, language barriers, lower academic adaptation, loss of social support, etc. (Constantine et al., 2004; Dantakos et al., 2017; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). In the increasingly competitive

market, governments as well as higher-education institution are developing strategies to make these students experience positive, since it not only for their wellbeing but also for economic reasons (Andrade, 2006).

1.1 International Education Landscape in Canada

1.1.1 International Students

Citizenship and Immigration Canada defines international students as temporary residents with study permits or refugee status (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2013). According to Skinkle and Embleton (2014), international students are those who want to study in another country to obtain a high-quality education and international experience. The past decades have seen a considerable change in the landscape for higher education internationalization in Canada. This results in the development of branch campuses, joint degrees, and the use of English as a global teaching and research language. However, the international higher education industry remains very Eurocentric (Stein, 2018). The majority of students come from developing and emerging countries in Asia and Africa, to study in Northern European countries. This on the presumption that the West holds the most advanced knowledge and that studying there opens up desirable opportunities (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014; Irungu, 2013). International students constitute an important source of revenue for universities as domestic enrolment declines (Trends in Higher Education, 2006; Lewison & Hawes, 2007). International students contribute greatly to local and national economies. The 721,205 international students registered in Canada in 2018 spent more than $21.6 billion on tuition, accommodation and other expenses. They also have preserved some 170,000 jobs in 2016 (Global Affairs, 2019). For the past decade, Canada has invested increasingly marketing efforts in the enormous and profitable industry of higher education to globally impose its brand (Lewison & Hawes, 2007).

1.1.2 Canadian History of the Internationalization of Education

At the beginning of the 1980s, there has been a shift in Canada's approaches and values to internationalization of education over the century. In the 60s, Canada's policy of international education was to encourage justice and support an equal world order by providing aid and knowledge to help enhance the socioeconomic conditions in the developing countries (Stein, 2018). Canada relies on two different ways to reach this goal: by either funding international students or making them pay the same fees as Canadian students (Sharlandjieva, 2015). In the 1970s, the Canadian government brought significant changes to its development policy, reducing funding to most of the development agencies, including support for international students. Following the recommendations of the Commission on Canadian Studies' publication, "Some Questions of Balance: Human Resources, Higher Education and Canadian Studies," the Canadian provinces introduced differential fees to international students based on a full fee-paying model for foreign students studying in Canada (Symons & Page, 1984). Since then, international students' tuition fees have continually increased. Today, international students pay three to four times more than domestic students in some Canadian universities, depending on other provincial restrictions (Universities Canada, 2018).

With the implementation of the EduCanada brand in 2008, the government's new policy started to approach education as an industry (Kizilbash, 2011; Lewison & Hawes, 2007). In 2014, Canada introduced the Federal International Education Strategy, "Canada's International Education Strategy: Harnessing Our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity." The document considered international education as an important component of Canada's economic well-being, putting the recruitment target of international students at 450, 000 by 2022 (Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development [FATD], 2014).

In the intensely competitive global knowledge economy, where higher education has become a lucrative industry, universities have increasingly looked at marketing strategies to distinguish themselves from competitors (Andrade, 2006; Sidhu, 2006). Institutions make major investments in marketing and branding campaigns to earn name recognition and to increase enrolments of international students (Andrade, 2006; Sidhu, 2006). Through marketing, the host countries make significant promises about the various kinds of advantages that students can get from their pursuit of international education (Stein, 2018). While higher education institutions and governmental services are intensifying their marketing campaign to attract international students, they pay little attention to how internationalization discourses produce representations of Canada, and the effects of these representations on international students' expectations and experiences (Lewison & Hawes, 2007; Stein, 2018). The Canadian Government's education branding, the federal Edu-Canada pilot program, illustrates the country's dynamics of internationalization and marketization (FATD, 2014, Kizilbash, 2011). International students choose Canada, based on information received through both formal and informal channels before or right after they arrive in the host country and their adaptation in the new environment might be affected by their expectations and the reality they face. Yet, usually international students have to lower their expectations about the host country (Constantine et al., 2005).

1.1.3 International Students and the Canadian Immigration Policy

In accordance with Canada economically oriented immigration system, the 2014 Canadian international education strategy points out the significance of international students, seen as highly skilled immigrants in the future workforce growth (FATD, 2014). This will lead to different policies introduced to facilitate the process of application for permanent residency for candidates who hold Canadian degrees and work experience. One example was the initiation of a special post-graduation work permit in 2008 for international graduates of Canadian post-secondary education

institutions (Citizenship Canada, 2008). Later in 2015, the Express Entry Immigration system was introduced (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2015b). This new immigration policy eliminated the requirement that students have to find jobs in their field of study in order to get a work permit. It also increases the length of the work permit. Some researchers found that the Express Entry Immigration system doesn't give international students more chances to access permanent residency because it doesn't give them any extra points (Chiose, 2016), and the Canadian immigration system is a point system whereby applicants earn points depending on their profile, skills and experience (IRCC, 2015b; Scoot et al., 2015). The Express Entry system permits international students to get into the pool of candidates who may be eligible to immigrate to Canada permanently. The selection is based on the information on their profile, including skills and experience through the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) (IRCC, 2015b). The CRS is the Canada points-based system used to assess and score candidates in the Express Entry pool to later determine their eligibility to immigrate to Canada permanently. Several factors including English and/or French skills, education and work experience, age, and a valid job offer influence the assessment of the CRS (IRCC, 2015b). To earn points for education, candidates have either to prove that they earned a Canadian diploma or certificate or show that their foreign diploma is valid and equal to a completed Canadian credential. In the second case, the foreign diploma must be assessed by an agency approved by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC, 2015b). After all, a Canadian diploma is as valid as a foreign diploma and the same importance is attributed to both the Canadian diploma or foreign diploma. In November 2017, the government brought new changes to the program, giving more points to permanent residency candidates who carried a degree from Canadian post-secondary institutions and who had family in Canada, with high proficiency in English or French (IRCC, 2017). According to Ahmed Hussen, the Federal

Minister of Immigration for Refugees and Citizenship in Canada, Canadians international students are “the cream of the crop in terms of future” (Polestar Immigration Research, 2017).

According to the Bureau for International Education, one of the top reasons international students choose Canada to study in is the possibility to apply for permanent residency if they have a Canadian degree and work experience (Canadian Bureau for International Education [CBIC], 2015b). As reported by the CBIE in 2015, 51% of international students intend to apply for permanent residency after graduation, and for more than two thirds of them, the possibility of post-graduation work opportunities guided their decision to study in Canada (CBIC, 2015b). Unfortunately, according to an Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada internal report, most of the former international students employed through a work permit performed low-skilled jobs in the service sector, with median earnings less than half of other recent university and college graduates (Chiose, 2016). A former reporter of the Globe and Mail, in 2010, claimed that international students with a work permit earned a median wage of $19,291 compared to $41,600 for 2013 domestic college graduates and $53,000 for Canadian university graduates (Chiose, 2016). The IRCC report also suggested that, contrary to international students with work permits, those who become permanent residents earn close to those what domestic students earn (Chiose, 2016). For international students coming from Africa, job opportunities after graduation and a promise of a better life compared to their home country are the primary reasons for choosing Canada (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2004). With Canada presented as a multicultural and open society, most of these black international students are not prepared for the struggles they might encounter in adapting to their new environment. They have to adjust their perception to the reality of being in a new environment where they have to learn new patterns, codes, and behaviour. (Boafo-Arthur, 1993; Constantine et al., 2005; Houshmand et al., 2014).

1.1.4 Internationalization of Education in the Province of Ontario

Of the 494,525 international students in Canada, 48% are in Ontario, 24% are in British Columbia and 12% are in Quebec (CBIE, 2019). International students represent over 15% of all students enrolled in public postsecondary institutions in the province of Ontario (Government of Ontario, 2018). The goal is for international students to make up 20% of the total Ontario postsecondary student population by 2022 (Government of Ontario, 2018). According to a Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (2018) document, the Ontario International Postsecondary Education Strategy 2018, Educating Global Citizens, the province strategy is to strengthen international student recruitment and retention in higher education institutions (Government of Ontario, 2018). International students contribute to Ontario highly qualified workers reservoir and form vital connections between Ontario and the world (Government of Ontario, 2018). As indicated in the document, international education is a fertile ground for a diverse workforce and an essential source of growth of the French-language education system in Ontario (Government of Ontario, 2018). Ontario offers the opportunity to study in French at one of its French language or bilingual postsecondary institutions. This gives international students a competitive advantage in the labour market while further enriching and contributing to the growth of francophone communities in the province. To help Ontario's higher education institutions in developing programs and services which will better suite international students' needs, *Avantage Ontario*, a consortium of Ontario French-language and bilingual colleges and universities, developed six online training modules on internationalization. The programs are delivered by experts in the field (Government of Ontario, 2018). In the way to promote Ontario as a French-language and bilingual education destination, *Avantage Ontario* assists the Ontario educational institutions to organise recruitment fairs in key French-speaking markets, including North and West Africa and parts of Europe. They support the different French-

language and bilingual education in the province. (Government of Ontario, 2018). Today, higher education institutions in Ontario have developed an academic success plan to assist international students. Basic information on the services offered to international students is generally available on the website of each institution. However, students feel that the information found on the institution website is not always reliable or does not fit foreign students' needs (Austell, 2013; Lee & Opio, 2011).

1.1.5 University Services for International Students

To overcome the challenges faced by the increasing population of international students, Ontario universities have developed services to support these students in their transition process and assist them in their social and educational adaptations (Montsion, 2018). Several studies have investigated the services offered by the institutions to help the international students during their journey in the new academic settings (Montsion, 2018; Poteet & Gomez, 2015; Robertson et al., 2015). Academic services or student services are developed to provide information and promote social contact through extracurricular activities for international students to ease their transition (Montsion, 2018). Most of the programs developed by higher education institutions to support international students' adaptation generally focus on enhancing their linguistic competence and academic skills by offering English courses, tutoring and academic skill training; but do not address the difficulties imposed by the new learning system and environment (Andrade, 2006). Existing support programs do not emphasize learning pattern impacts on international students' wellbeing (Andrade, 2006). While programs offered by institutions are successful in certain domains, their effectiveness in others is questionable (Andrade, 2006). According to the literature, general student affairs staff are not well trained to provide the appropriate service to meet international students need on campus (Andrade, 2006; Lee & Opio, 2011). International student

services staff generally focus on visa procedures but not on students' need for intercultural adaptation (Andrade, 2006). This confirms that universities are giving more importance to administrative procedures than to student well-being. Montsion (2018) research on the services delivered to Indigenous and international students in southern Ontario higher education institutions thoroughly investigated university services to satisfy the basic needs of these students (Montsion, 2018). The researcher stated that the services offered by Ontario universities take a different look depending on the ideas these institutions hold about the students (Montsion, 2018). The activities and programs accessible to international students mostly focus on their adaptation to the host culture system. However, they are generally designed in a way to speed up the adaptation of students to their new environment (Montsion, 2018). Despite the development of international service desks in every higher education institution to improve participants' adjustment, it is difficult to assert that the institutional services provided bring a significant change to students' academic experience (Poteet & Gomez, 2015; Montsion, 2018). It was demonstrated that most service desks have a simple role to convey general information to international students ignoring that international students have different information needs and behaviours compared to their national student counterparts (Montsion, 2018). Although Ward and Kennedy's (1999) research on the adjustment during cross-cultural transitions of secondary students overseas and at home have shown that international students who receive the appropriate institutional assistance are well integrated are more likely to succeed academically, and stay in school, international students service desks lack usually the essential these students need to adjust to their academic life and successfully complete their degrees.

1.2 This Study

1.2.1 Research Problem

Language barriers are known as one of the fundamental reasons for acculturative stress experienced by international students during their intercultural adaptation (Constantine et al., 2004; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). Research revealed that having self-confidence in communicative abilities increases positively sociocultural adjustment (Kim, 2001; Yang et al., 2006). By choosing to study in a bilingual higher education institution, the international students from Sub-Saharan African countries (ISSAFC) intended to lessen one of the distinctive acculturative stressors, namely language barrier. Language barriers may have profound negative effects on their well-being and consequently on their overall educational experience (Mori, 2000; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1998). Because these students come from francophone countries, the perspective of a bilingual environment in Canada may constitute an important factor in the choice of their higher education institution. Several authors suggested that Black international students choose where to study based on the historical connections to particular countries or on language heritage. The ultimate choice will usually be the historical colonizer (Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014; Maringe & Carter, 2007). However, finding themselves in Ontario universities where the majority of courses are offered in English, where most of the literature is in English, and where they are surrounded with a majority of English-speaking students, francophone students may suffer a greater acculturative stress due to their inability to interact with a new socio-cultural and linguistic environment effectively. Several researchers have demonstrated the relationship between the contact with the host community members and higher level of intercultural adaptation (Berry, 2001; Kim, 2001; Yang et al., 2006). Based on a mixed method research design, the thesis will draw from the Berry's (1997) acculturation model, Kim's (1988)

integrative communication theory and LaFramboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993) bicultural competence to analyze the factors which influence the ISSAFCs' choices for different acculturation strategies and their overall intercultural adaptation in their new socio-cultural environment. Chirkov and colleagues (2007) in their studies with Chinese international students in Belgium and Canada have investigated the international students' motivations for studying abroad in relation to their level of adaptation, based on the "push/pull factors." The research was set to explore whether international students' specific goals and intentions pursued by choosing to study abroad are either "preservation goal," avoiding prejudices in their home country, or "self-development goal," pursuing a good education and better career opportunities abroad (Chirkov et al., 2007). The research shows that self-determination is a predictor of the students' cultural adaptation (Chirkov et al., 2007). Pursuing on their investigation, they had also analysed the behaviour of students from three Canadian Universities. They found that self-determined students may be more willing to have contact with the host community by participating in social activities (Chirkov et al., 2008). To build on these initial findings, the present thesis investigated how self-determined motivation and the goal of studying abroad affect ISSAFCs' intercultural adaptations.

To give insight to the overall adjustment of the ISSAFC this study was guided by four questions:

1. What are the preferred acculturation strategies of international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries?
2. How well do international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries adapt in their new educational and social environment?
3. What are the struggles international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries face when adapting to their new environment?
4. What are the coping strategies used to overcome acculturative stress?

Since this research has two parts, with both quantitative and qualitative analysis, for quantitative analysis the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1. Most international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries will choose integration as their preferred acculturation strategy, by keeping their ethnic cultural values while adopting the host country's mainstream culture (Berry, 1997).

H2. International students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries' greater intercultural communication competences will be associated with the better intercultural adaptation.

H3. Language barriers will enhance conflicts with the new culture and lead to greater acculturative stress and lower sociocultural adaptation.

H4. Permanent residency intention will significantly predict International students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries' acculturation orientation, increase sociocultural and intercultural adaptation, and reduce acculturative stress.

H5. International students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries studying in Montreal, a francophone environment, will undergo less acculturative stress than the participants studying in Toronto, an anglophone environment.

1.2.2 Objectives of the Study and Expected Value

Despite the myriad of studies on acculturation and adaptation of international students, the unique challenges and issues of ISSAFC are rarely investigated. Most of the literature towards international students in the field of cross-cultural contact in the present day has been conducted to explore either Asian or South American people (Dana & Berry, 1994; Wilton & Constantine, 2003; Zheng & Berry 1991; Zhou & Zhang, 2014); and focus on factors that facilitate or disrupt their sociocultural and psychological adaptations (Berry, 2005; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006; Zhang & Goodson, 2011; Zheng & Berry, 1991). Few studies have talked about international students from francophone countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa; and choices of acculturation strategies received little attention from scholarly work (Fu, 2015; Scott et al., 2015). This study is intended to fill this gap by exploring the factors that influence the choice of this specific group of

students for different acculturation strategies. Even with the extensive research on international students' acculturation and cross-cultural adaptation today, further research on this topic is plausible because of the uniqueness of this study's population and the environment in which it is being researched. Most previous studies were conducted in major universities where the majority of students are Anglophone. This study portrays an environment in which there is a large number of international students from Sub-Saharan francophone Africa (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Chirkov et al., 2007; Constantine et al., 2005; Hyams-Ssekasi, 2012; Mushibwe & Caldwell, 2014; Dantakos et al., 2016).

The adaptation of international students cannot be done without an adaptation of the host community and particularly the adjustment of the higher education institutions. Universities must be able to meet students' needs to facilitate cultural integration to a successful educational integration. The objective of this study is to give a greater understanding of ISSAFCs' acculturation process. It will provide the data to enable higher bilingual education institutions to develop more appropriate programs to enhance social support and coping strategies, in various ways, to promote integration and lessen acculturative stress experienced by this international student group.

1.2.3 Positionality

Working in a bilingual higher education institution in Ontario and rubbing shoulders with many international students, I have witnessed several experiences related to these students' adaptation in their new environment with great interest. Being in contact with the anecdotal reports of student acculturative process, has awakened my curiosity to data driven understanding of this process. In the case of my Master Thesis, I have decided to investigate to bring the discussion out of the realm of conjecture and supposition. It is through a combination of scientific curiosity and a personal dedication to participate to the increasing development of services to Black international

students that I have undertaken this research. My everyday contact with these students and my own background pushed me to realize that I am potentially sensitive to researcher bias and subjectivity reporting my findings (Bourke, 2014). Since it is crucial to not allow unfounded preconceptions to influence the direction or interpretation of my inquiry, I must question my personal assumptions and verify that they are challenged by statistical analysis. As suggested by Bourke (2014), the same way participants' experience are key factors in the research it is true that the researcher's beliefs, cultural background or political compass are as many factors that may influence the research process and findings dissemination.

1.2.4 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis is composed of six chapters among which the present chapter, Introduction, relates the story of the development of internationalization of education in Canada and in Ontario. The section also situates our study in context. The Literature Review presents the literature related to international students' acculturation and intercultural adaptation. First, it reviews the research that conducted in the field of cross-cultural adaptation that looks at the immigrant's acculturation process in the host community; how people choose to organise their lives in the new society. Secondly, it assesses the literature that examined various issues that facilitate or undermine the abilities of international students to increasingly adjust to their university settings and overall to the culture in their host communities. This literature review demonstrates how to assess international students' experience during the cultural transition.

The literature review chapter is followed by the Theoretical Ground chapter in which the three theoretical models the thesis would like to consider for this analysis are discussed. Berry's (1997) acculturation model permits to determine the research subjects' acculturation strategies; Kim's (1988) integrative communication theory helps analyze the participants intercultural

communication attitude while LaFramboise, Coleman & Gerton (1993) bicultural competence gives the path to ISSAFC bicultural competence.

Then, the Method and Procedure chapter outlines the mixed method for this study. It describes in detail the information related to data collection, the measuring instruments, interviews, group discussions and data analysis. The whole processes around the recruitment of participants, and the method of inquiry was outlined.

Then follows the General Results chapter, which addresses the research questions as well as different hypotheses. It presents the results of both statistical analyses and qualitative inquiry. The students preferred acculturation strategies as well as the challenges they faced were also reported based on the representation of their intercultural experience. All components and details of variables are discussed.

The Discussion chapter provides a reminder of the results and indicates the extent to which the research objectives have been achieved. It also explains how the results distance or corroborate current knowledge in the fields of international student acculturation process and overall intercultural adaptation. The discussion section concludes with the limitations of the study and prospects for future research was suggested.

A general conclusion completes this research project. A synthesis of the key research findings and discussions related to our research questions allows us to briefly review the issues driving our study. Suggestions for higher education institutions and avenues to improve international students' educational adventure in their new host country finalises the conclusion.

Through the introduction, I have presented the research environment, have laid out the research problem and have stated my objectives. The next chapter, the literature review, explores the concept of culture, the paradigms of acculturation and intercultural adaptation, and the

foundations of their juxtaposition. International student's acculturation process, especially Black-African acculturation experience, and acculturative stressors, therefore, constitute as many sections as the reader will recognize by browsing the second chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

It has been demonstrated that individuals' behaviour is strongly influenced by their culture (LaFramboise et al., 1993). Culture impacts our way of experiencing the world (Minkov, 2013). It gives us a selection of patterns which guide our feelings and thoughts, making us respond in a way, different from those who are used to different patterns (Minkov, 2013; Noesjirwan & Freestone, 1979). People of different cultures will perceive the world differently because they have been informed to a set of patterns rather than others as part of membership in a particular cultural group (Minkov, 2014). When an individuals' culture of origin is different from the culture of the new environment where they have been emerged, an acculturative change occurs (Berry, 1997). Research has suggested that increasing distance or dissimilarity between cultures, negatively affect acculturation process, increases acculturative stress and negatively impacts psychological and sociocultural adaptation (Ward et al., 2001). Acculturation is related to identity development taking place in newcomers as they try to make sense of their new culture (Berry, 1997, 2005).

Acculturation has been defined as the alterations that result from continuous, direct contact between two or more different cultural groups and/or individual members (Berry, 1997). Conceptualized as a group phenomenon, acculturation is related to the changes in social structures and practices at the group level. It is the changes in everyday practices, attitudes and beliefs that happened when two dissimilar cultures come into contact (Berry, 1997). At the individual level, acculturation is the changes in an individual's daily behaviour patterns due to cross-cultural contact (Berry, 2005). An individual cultural or racial identity can impede or facilitate the acculturation process (Berry, 1997; Benet-Martínez, 2012).

Cross-cultural interaction poses the situation where individuals have to interact with people who do not share the same view of the world and see things differently (Berry, 1097; Kim, 2001;

Noesjirwan & Freestone, 1979). Usually, while people move to a new environment, they take with them the meanings, and assumptions of their home culture and continue to act and to interpret others' actions according to it (Noesjirwan & Freestone, 1979). This will lead to conflicts related to the differences in rules, meanings, and values between the two cultures (Berry, 1997, 2005). In this situation, people may experience frustration, confusion, etc., also called acculturative stress (Berry, 2005). As a way to survive and manage in their environment, people develop a useful set of expectations which allows them to interact with their social environment to meet their needs (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). As sojourners, international students also adapt to the foreign ways of living over time (Adelegan & Parks, 1985; Andrade et al. 2009).

The identity of the individual is in part determined by the culture of origin, but also by their identification with different social groups (Noesjirwan & Freestone, 1979). Previously, it was suggested by acculturation researchers that, identification with either the host or the original culture was mutually exclusive (Gillin & Raimy, 1940; Eaton, 1952; Noesjirwan & Freestone, 1979). Recent pieces of research argue that individual can have multiple identifications and can be identified with the host and original culture (Berry 1997, LaFramboise et al., 1993). It has been assumed that bicultural competences coupled with integration are the healthiest outcome of acculturation process (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). This is due to the fact that the individual retains the elements of the culture of origin that are important and adopts elements of the host culture that are necessary for greater adaptation (Berry, 1997; LaFramboise et al., 1993; Kim, 2001, Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013).

For some individuals switching between cultures may be challenging, especially when the two cultures are greatly diverse (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Caldwell & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2016; LaFramboise et al., 1993). This is evident in the case of international students from Sub-Saharan

Africa francophone countries as the degree of concordance between their culture of origin and the host culture is limited (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Caldwell & Hyams-Ssekasi). Ward and Kennedy (1993) suggested that similarity between the culture of origin and the host culture influence the acculturation process of an individual. The level of changes experienced by the ISSAFC to adapt to the host culture will depend on multiple variables such as the difference between the two cultures, personal factors, and setting conditions (Bourhis et al. 1997; Furnham & Bochner, 1982).

2.1 The Concept of Culture

It is important to conceptualize what culture is in an attempt to understand the concepts of acculturation and intercultural adaptation. There is not a single definition of culture that all researchers agree on (Birukou et al., 2013; Minkov, 2013; Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). Depending on their perception, researchers define culture in terms of ideas, or as an abstraction of behaviour, or as behaviour (Birukou et al., 2013; LaFramboise et al., 1993; Minkov, 2013). At the beginning of the 20th century, most anthropologists agree with the Tylorian conception of culture presented in *Primitive Culture*, volume 1: "Culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1871, as cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952 p. 47; White, 1959 p. 227). With globalisation, the meaning of culture has changed and the contact between cultures has increasingly become unavoidable (Birukou et al., 2013).

2.1.1 Culture as a Shared Behaviour

Along the way, concepts of culture have evolved. In recent years, many anthropologists have viewed culture as human behaviour (Birukou et al., 2013; Minkov; 2013). This view was held by Schaefer (2002) who viewed culture as "The totality of learned, socially transmitted customs, knowledge, material objects, and behaviour." (Schaefer, 2002). But this understanding is

not unanimous. Some researchers such as Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), objected and suggested that culture "is an abstraction from concrete human behaviour, but it is not itself behaviour" (as cited in White, 1959, p. 228). For the researchers, culture is essentially made of traditional ideas and attached value (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). Yet, contemporary researchers Bate and Plog (1990) defined culture as "the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning" (p. 7). According to Hofstede (2001), culture is different from personality in the sense that culture shapes values, attitudes, and beliefs of a group of people and differentiates them from others. Far from being a mere individual characteristic culture gather people from same local, national, and regional contexts (Gelfand et al., 2011; Hofstede, 2001).

2.1.2 The Content of Culture

While the content of culture fluctuates, the fact that it is shared among a group of people and transmitted from generation to generation through social learning and observation is recognized in most of the definitions (Hofstede, 2001; Minkov, 2013). Birukou et al. (2013) summarized different ways the notion of culture is approached. In the anthropological literature, cultures have been defined as accumulated experiences, a social transmitted way of acting distinctive to a social group (Birukou et al., 2013). Many definitions also approached cultures according to social phenomena they embrace, such as values, norms, beliefs, concepts, and shared meanings specific to a community (Birudou et al., 2013; Minkov, 2013). Other definitions look at culture as the aggregate of emotional reactions learned through instruction or imitation common to the members of a particular group. The authors concluded that culture is composed of phenomena such as norms, beliefs, shared meanings, and ways of acting learned by a specific group of people (Birukou et. al., 2013).

2.1.3 Corporate Culture

For a long time, culture was associated with the human species and focused on the notion of nations or ethnic groups (Gelfand et al., 2011; Hofstede, 2001; Minkov, 2013). That view of culture has shifted. The concept of culture now also refers to a community different from the one related to geographical areas such as state or to a race. Today, culture also refers to a group of knowledge and way (Birukou et al., 2013). The culture as defined in anthropology usually refers to societies defined in national or ethnic terms (Hofstede, 2001; Minkov, 2013). However, the concept has been recently used to describe knowledge and behaviour of other groups, social networks, like in the concepts of corporate culture or organisational culture (Birukou et al., 2013).

2.1.4 International Students and Culture

Cross-cultural researchers have shown that values, attitudes, and beliefs differentiate people from different local, national, and regional contexts and that these psychological conditions shape behaviour (Gelfand et al. 2011; Hofstede, 2001). There is evidence that an individual's culture is shaped by a variety of social impacts through which individuals perceive, interpret and respond to external signs in their environment (LaFramboise et al., 1993). Studying abroad requires integrating with a host culture (Carson, 2008; Constantine et al., 2004). In their transition to the new culture, international students have to abandon previous ways and behaviour and learn new ways and behaviours appropriate to the new environment (Kim, 1988, 2001). Researchers who have attempted to further analyze the relationship between international student intercultural adaptation and wellbeing, found that the process of acquisition of second culture can significantly contribute to negative mental health outcomes (Crockett, et al., 2007; Constantin et al., 2004). As suggested earlier, international students may experience increased stress when transmitting in the new environment with different cultural value systems (Zhang & Goodson, 2011).

2.1.5 Black International Students and Culture

Due to the significant difference between the cultures of international students from African countries and the West countries' culture, it appears that African international students experience greater acculturative stress while transitioning into the new culture (Constantine et al., 2005; Ward et. al., 2001). A number of interpersonal relation differences explain why the meeting of the two cultures can be problematic or affect intercultural communication (Constantine et al., 2005; Irungu, 2013; Lee & Opio, 2011). Many black international students have reported experiencing negative stereotypes about their African culture and traditions (Lee & Opio, 2011; Irungu, 2013). Because these students are coming from communities whose norms and behaviours are extremely different from the one of the host countries, to perfectly adapt and especially to be accepted, black international students have to renounce their former identity and adopt the host culture (Lee & Opio, 2011). They have to change their deeply embedded cultural beliefs, norms and way of doing in a short-term way to adjust (Irungu, 2013; Lee & Opio, 2011). It is very challenging for African international students to overcome the cultural gap between their home culture and the majority group culture (Irungu, 2013). Also, since the ISSAFC are coming from a culture that advocates community values, familial duty, and loyalty (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Irungu, 2013) they may experience greater acculturative stress due to their cultural values compared to Western countries' international students or even North African international students (Lee & Opio, 2011). For example, there is a significant difference in Western international students and Black African international students' perception of the family (Lee & Opio, 2011). As opposed to other international students, the community is as important as the close family for the Black African international students who see themselves as parts of a whole society rather than as individuals (Boafo-Arthur, 2014).

2.1.6 Bicultural Competence

With increasing cross-cultural contact, many individuals are exposed to more than one culture and are defined as bicultural or multicultural (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2010, 2013). In Canada for example, more than one fifth (21.9%) of Canada's total population is foreign-born and navigate between two or more cultures (Statistics Canada Census, 2016). Biculturalism has received considerable attention in the last decades (LaFramboise et al., 1993). Researchers asserted that an individual who has been exposed to and has adopted elements from two or more cultures does not necessarily suffer from their experience (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez; 2013; LaFramboise et al., 1993). Several researchers have demonstrated a wide variety of benefits associated with bicultural integration (Benet-Martínez, 2012; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). Nguyen and Benet-Martínez (2013) found a strong positive relationship between biculturalism and psychological and sociocultural adjustment of international students in the United States. Different pieces of research concluded that adopting the integration strategy compared to separation, assimilation and marginalization, coupled with biculturalism is positively related to self-esteem, life satisfaction, academic achievement, social skills and less acculturative stress (Berry, 1997, 2005; LaFramboise et al., 1993; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). A successful transition between the original culture and the dominant culture can be achieved by managing cultural differences both socially and psychologically. Bicultural people have also been found to be able to easily adapt their behaviour in cross-cultural environments than monocultural people (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). Brannen et al. (2009) found that bicultural people have the ability to record and manage their knowledge processes according to an objective and they are able to abstract knowledge from a specific experience to broader principles for future cross-cultural interactions than monocultural people. In the literature on acculturation, the opinion is divided as to how biculturalism influences the immigrant's acculturation process (Gordon, 1964). Some

researchers in contrary claimed that biculturalism is associated with greater acculturation stress and maladjustment (Gordon, 1964). Isolation, social identity uncertainty, with considerable personal struggle are some outcome of the relationship of biculturalism and intercultural adaptation (Gordon, 1964).

2.2 The Concept of Acculturation

Acculturation is not a new field of study, since scholars have studied and researched the area since the 1920s (Gordon, 1964; Gillin & Raimy, 1940; Park & Burgess, 1921; Thurnwald 1932). The field of acculturation is visited by sociologists, anthropologists, cross-cultural psychologists, and scholars in cross-cultural communication studies. Culture refers to shared meanings, understandings, and rules and enable a varied range of psychological and social processes (Hofstede, 2001). Acculturation, on the other hand, refers to changes that take place in cultural patterns as a result of contacts between culturally dissimilar peoples. Acculturation occurs at both individual and societal levels (Berry, 1997).

2.2.1 Acculturation: The Anthropological Lens

Anthropologists were among the first scholars to contribute to the literature on acculturation by analysing the experience from the perspective of cultural patterns (Minkov, 2013). Acculturation is a concept first introduced to explain the phenomena at work when people from diverse cultural backgrounds come into continuous contact with one another cross-cultural transition has been documented lengthily across social science disciplines since the 1930s (Gillin & Raimy, 1940; Redfield et al., 1936). However, the field suffers from the lack of consensus across studies making it problematic for people to view a clear and consistent picture of what has been achieved in the field over the years (Kim, 2017).

Park and Burgess (1921), pioneers of the Chicago School of Sociology, were among the first scholars to explore the concept of acculturation. They have enlightened the process people from different cultures undergo when they come into continuous contact with one another (Park & Burgess, 1921). Scholars agreed that acculturation is a process and not an event, defining acculturation as "those processes whereby the culture of a society is modified as a result of contact with the culture of one or more other societies" (Gillin & Raimy, 1940, p. 371; Thurnwald 1932, p. 557). Some considered the process as group experience and defined acculturation as "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups" (Redfield et al., 1936, p 149). Several writers have argued that acculturation is a unidirectional process (Ryder et al., 2000). They treat acculturation as a one-way cultural and psychological process for newcomers to engage in, achieving perfect integration in the dominant culture and pursuing their conception of a good life, with changes occurring within each minority group in the direction of a majority culture (Gillin & Raimy, 1940; Redfield et al., 1936). The unidirectional school of thought research or theoretical discussions make no mention of reciprocity or changes in the majority group or other groups, but discussed only changes in regard to immigrant groups, and factors contributing to such changes (Gillin & Raimy, 1940; Redfield et al., 1936). There is no discussion on the effect of the immigrant group on the majority culture nor is it even suggested that some traits of the immigrant group may be adopted by the majority culture (Gillin & Raimy, 1940; Noesjirwan & Freestone, 1979). Assimilation was considered the only way of acculturation.

Acculturation is a complex process and has often been dealt with in the literature in confusing ways. Some scholars used acculturation and assimilation synonymously (Berry, 1997).

Gordon's "Theory of cultural assimilation" defines assimilation as a process of the absorption which will start with the engagement of the host culture and will evolve all along the immigrants' journey in their new environment (Gordon, 1964).

2.2.2 Acculturation as a Two Directional Process

In the literature, acculturation has been also considered a two-way, or reciprocal process (Redfield et al., 1936; Linton, 1940). Most of the contemporary writers conceptualized acculturation as a two-way process, which implied continuous contact between two or more groups with two or more bodies of tradition and focused on interactive perspectives (Berry 1997, 2005, Berry & Kim 1998; Tartakovsky, 2012). Acculturation is defined as "the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members" (Berry, 2005, p. 698). The model introduced by Berry suggested that the choice of an acculturation strategy is influenced by the immigrants' psychological profile, their social history coupled with the acculturation policy of the host society (Berry, 2005). Acculturation was considered as a process which engages the immigrant, while taking into account his origin and cultural heritage, and the host country, while considering the different policies put in place in health, education and immigration systems to ease the process (Berry, 1997, 2005). The acculturation orientations adopted by the host majority are important in the acculturation processes, because the members of the dominant groups have a considerable influence on the immigration and integration policies of immigrants (Berry, 1997; Materaa et al., 2018). In their research conducted in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver to assess attitudes towards various aspects of multiculturalism towards various ethnic and immigrant groups, and to assess tolerance and Canadianism, the author found that attitudes towards ethnic and immigrant groups vary depending of the regions of residence and ethnic origin (Berry & Kalin, 1995). The author argued that changes occur both at the group level and also at the individual level and proposed the

concept of psychological acculturation (Berry, 1997, 2005). Berry's (1997) study identified and described four acculturation strategies, integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalisation, which several acculturation models have built on.

2.2.3 The Interactive Acculturation Model

Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, and Senecal's (1997) interactive acculturation model (IAM), in addition to focussing on the immigrants' acculturation attitude, provides a model to investigate this attitude in relation to the host country government's immigration policies. The model is based on three components: (1) the immigrant groups' acculturation orientations, (2) the host country acculturation orientations towards specific groups of immigrants; and (3) interpersonal and intergroup relational outcomes depending on the combinations of immigrants' and the host country's acculturation orientations (Bourhis et al., 1997). The authors found that depending on the immigrant acculturation attitude, the relational outcome with the majority group can be consensual, problematic, or conflicting, suggesting that government immigration policies can strongly influence host country groups and migrant acculturation attitudes (Bourhis et al.,1997).

2.2.4 The ABC's of Acculturation

Many models of acculturation have been introduced to investigate the factors that influence the acculturation process. Ward et al. (2001) popularized the ABC's of acculturation. They framed three approaches to study acculturation: the stress and coping framework, the cultural learning approach, and the social identification perspective. Each approach focuses upon affective, behavioural, or cognitive changes occurring in the psychological acculturation process, which is the origin of the term ABC's of acculturation (War, 2001; Ward et al., 2001). Ward et al. (2001) provided a useful starting point for framing the outcomes of acculturation in multicultural societies by making a distinction between the two mains dimensions of adaptation: psychological and sociocultural. Psychological adaptation refers to the "feelings of well-being or satisfaction during

cross-cultural transitions" (p. 42). Psychological adaptation is affected by personality, life changes, coping styles and social support (Ward et al. 2001). Sociocultural adaptation is referring to a behavioural response associated to how an individual effectively connect to the new community, and develops competences needed in managing tasks required for daily intercultural living (Ward et al., 2001). They also reiterate that ABCs of acculturation represent a process that occurs over time (Ward et al., 2001)

2.2.5 The Multidimensional Individual Difference Acculturation

Safdar et al. (2009) proposed the multidimensional individual difference acculturation (MIDA) model which was longitudinally tested on international students. The model built on the three theoretical approaches to studying acculturation: affective, behavioural, or cognitive, to analyze individual characteristics, social norms, and stressors as predictor variables (Safdar et al., 2009). The results showed that the choice for an acculturation strategy is influenced by the immigrants' psychological resources and both the relationship with their home country and the relationship they develop in the host country (Safdar et al., 2009).

2.2.6 Acculturation and the Concept of Time

Time and place were also considered as important variables in acculturation research (Burgelt et al., 2008; Ward et al., 2001; Ianni, 1958). Burgelt, Morgan, and Pernice (2008) model of acculturation, did not only explore the factors affecting the immigrant choice for the different acculturation strategies, but introduced the concept of time and place, and suggested that the factors influencing the acculturation strategies change with time (Burgelt et al., 2008). Particularly, this model took into account the pre-migration factors, such as the nationality and socioeconomic background, considered as a game changer in the acculturation process. Ianni (1958) adopted four time-place situations to conceptualize the acculturation process. The four time-place situations for consideration are: 1) the original precontact immigrant culture; 2) the conditions of contact; 3) the

present-day life of the immigrant group; and 4) the present-day culture of the immigrants' area of origin. It has been argued that "changes which took place among the immigrants and did not take place among those who remained in the original culture are the result of the immigrants' acculturative experience" (Ianni, 1958, p. 44). The author added historical depth to studies of acculturation by suggesting the reconstructions of patterns of the different cultures prior to contact. They are compared to the culture as observed at one moment after contact. The process also considers the conditions of contact which shape the ways people acculturate. Purpose for migrating, places of emigration and immigration and their similarity, acculturation interaction with the host culture, all contribute to acculturation phenomena. Acculturation is also moderated by the nature, permanence, and duration of contact (Ianni, 1958). The degree and nature of acculturation can be limited by the conditions of contact within the environments in which newcomers are engaged (Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001). According to Berry (1997), an immigrant will go through little acculturation if the contact with the host culture is accidental and is of short duration. As opposed, there will be the greatest acculturation if the contact is planned, voluntary and for long durations like in the case of emigration or settlement (Maisonneuve & Testé, 2007; Ward et al. 2001). Most acculturation theoretical concepts are formulated to explain the acculturation process of immigrants and refugees, leaving a gap to reshape the models and apply them to international student experiences (Carson, 2008; Fu, 2015).

2.3 International Students' Acculturation Process

The literature towards international students' acculturation has focused on the acculturative stress that they face in their new environment (Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Zhang and Goodson's (2011) research study, which set out to explore the predictors of international students' psychosocial adjustment in the U.S., focused on the role that new media plays in cross-cultural

adaptation of international students' friendship network development. They argue that international students increase and adapt their new social media use when they are abroad to stay in contact both with people in their home country, and with new relationships at the host country (Zhang & Goodson, 2011). The research gave insight to the struggle of the international students' acculturation process but did not focus on the acculturation models. Rasmi et al. (2009) investigated the effect of social support on acculturative stress of international students. They suggested that international students who obtain friendships with Canadians experienced better sociocultural adaptations (Rasmi et al., 2009). Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping, and Todman (2008) made an important addition to the field when they applied the different acculturation models to international students. They applied the contemporary theoretical approaches, such as "culture learning," "stress and coping" and "social identification" to the pedagogical adaptation of international students in the host culture. This offered a deeper understanding of the acculturation process of this particular immigrant group. Chirkov, Vansteenkiste, Tao and Lynch (2007) tested the role that self-determined motivation and the goals for studying abroad played in the acculturation adaptation of international students. The study was based on the two-factor model of human motivation proposed by the self-determination theory of human motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The results indicated that motivation to study abroad was an essential factor in predicting international students' acculturation adjustment as in contrary to the other immigrant who motivation can be economic, family or political reasons.

Tartakovsky (2012) built his model of acculturation of immigrants on the Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour to explain the acculturation intention of immigrants. The researchers tested the model on international students from Russia and Ukraine who immigrated to Israel to fulfill their education (Tartakovsky, 2012). The acculturation intention model showed that both

immigrants' relationship with their home country in addition to their relationship with the host country influenced their acculturation intention.

International students have to adjust to a new culture and educational system, which can be very different from their home countries (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Constantine et al., 2004, 2005; Kim, 2001). They have to learn new ways of acting according to the new cultural norms and many must acquire new communication skills when learning the language of the host country. The journey through adaptation has positive and negative aspects (Berry, 2001; Kim, 1988, 2001). It is important to recognize that the level of adaptation depends on how different people respond to experiences during the adaptive process that varies from person to person (Berry, 2005; Berry et al., 2006). Although most international students eventually adapt to the new environment, these learning processes take time, and are very challenging (Adelegan & Parks, 1985; Boafo-Arhur, 2014; Constantine et al., 2005; Hyams-Ssekasi et al. 2014). The longer these students stay in the host culture, the more acculturated they become (Kim, 1988, 2001; Zhang & Zhou, 2010). During this acculturation process, international students experience a type of stress called acculturative stress, which is due to their interaction with a new culture (Berry, 1997; Samuel, 2009; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). The literature reviewed above considered international students as a homogeneous and discrete entities in terms of values, beliefs, attitudes, or behaviours leaving the gap to address the struggle of Black African international students particularly the one coming from the Sub-Saharan francophone countries.

2.4 Black African International Student Adaptation

Adaptation basically refers to the relatively stable changes that migrants make in responding to the external environment demands of the host community (Berry, 1997, War et al., 2001). Kim (1988) referred to adaptation as the level of "fit" between migrants and their new

environment. While much research has been conducted on other groups of international students, literature on the experience and impact on international Black African students is limited (Hyams Ssekasi, 2012; Irugu, 2013). Researchers have suggested that Black African international students have different issues with adjusting to studying abroad, compared to the more commonly studied groups of students from Asia and Europe (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Warren & Constantine, 2007). It has been also demonstrated that some of the issues faced by Black African students are different from those experienced by White African students (Adelegan & Parks, 1985; Lee & Opio, 2011).

Studies have highlighted the experiences of African international students as they attempt to integrate into their new cultural and institutional environments in the host country (Manyika, 2001; Boafo-Arthur, 2014). There have been a number of studies done on African students studying in the United States (Adelegan & Parks, 1985; Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Irungu, 2013; Lee & Opio, 2011; Nebedum-Ezeh, 1997; Pruitt, 1978), but their experiences of studying in Canada is an area that has received less attention. Constantine (2004) suggested that there are very few in-depth studies examining the cultural adjustment experiences of Black African international students in white dominant culture. Boafo-Arthur (2014) found that while adjusting to the new culture, international students experience acculturative stress, as a result of language deficiency, homesickness, and lack of social support. Individual personality, cultural conditioning, history, family, coping skills, and knowledge are all factors which can influence the process of acculturation (Berry, 1997). Researchers also found that gender, age, and race-ethnicity are related to international students' adjustment to a new culture (Berry, 2005; Berry et al. 2006).

A study with African students identified significant stress during the acculturation process due to experiences of discrimination (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Irungu, 2013; Lee & Opio, 2011). Discrimination is defined as negative attitudes, judgment, or unfair treatment of the members from

a particular group (Williams et al., 1999). Ong et al. (2009) stated that discrimination contributed to greater levels of other stressors in Black immigrants, such as the pressures of learning a new language, stereotypes, and prejudice because of racism. Researchers found that there were negative correlations between the perception of discrimination and the acculturation of recent immigrants in the United States to the value systems of the host communities (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Lee & Opio, 2011; Manyika, 2001; Maringe & Carter, 2007). Several studies suggested a positive correlation between acculturative stress and Black African health problems, due to discrimination (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Lee & Opio, 2011; Williams & Berry, 1991). Acculturative stress can result in psychological health problems (Williams & Berry, 1991). Research revealed that Black African international students, in addition to challenges of alienation and isolation encountered by many international students, further face discrimination and prejudice that subject them to stress-related acculturation (Contrada et al., 2001; Williams & Berry, 1991). According to Boafo-Arthur (2014), the acculturative experiences of Black African international students may differ from the experience of other groups of international students because, these students have to deal with prejudice and discrimination based on their race, faulty assumptions about their cultural heritage, and their countries of origin.

2.5 Acculturative Stress

Acculturative stress, a term that Berry used to replace an earlier concept, known as "Culture shock," was defined as a reaction to intercultural contact or the cultural adaptation process (Berry, 1997, 2006). The notion of acculturative stress, unlike the traditional perspective of culture shock, was considered as a motivating factor to overcome the challenges newcomers encounter in their new environment by establishing a coping system (Berry, 1997, 2006; Kim, 2001). Berry has described acculturative stress as problematic but controllable and surmountable (Berry, 2006). An

individual who has trouble learning the way of doing of the new culture may feel isolated and hence experience conflict with the new culture, resulting in acculturative stress (Berry, 1997). Samuel (2009) conducted a study on a group of South East Asians in the United States. Based on her research findings, Samuel classified sources of acculturative stress that immigrants experience in their host environments into three distinct categories: discrimination, intergenerational conflict and depression. Similarly, Constantine et al. (2005) asserted that the most common adjustment issues faced by Black African international students can be grouped into four categories: prejudice and discrimination, social isolation, separation from family and friends, and financial concerns. Acculturative stress has been associated to mental health problems in many studies including Crockett et al. (2007) study of a group of Latino college students. Based on a stress and coping framework, Berry (2006) suggested that negative environmental experiences, especially discrimination, contributed to acculturative stress and that acculturation attitudes and behaviours can lessen this relationship. According to Constantine et al. (2005) international students suffer acculturative stress such as confusion, feelings of isolation and alienation. According to Gouin and MacNeil (2018), discrimination, and language barriers can result in physical, social, and psychological problems for international students' overtime. The study suggested that international students may be at risk for cardiovascular disease and other aging-related disorders over time due to a sudden change to their sociocultural environment (Gouin & MacNeil, 2018). In result to their 5-month longitudinal study conducted on 58 new international students at the University of Concordia, the researchers found that during a period of rapid changes in social functioning, attachment anxiety promotes immune changes that may increase health risk over time (Gouin & MacNeil, 2018). The researchers showed that some people are more predisposed than others to develop health problems when they change their environment (Gouin & MacNeil, 2018).

Individuals with higher attachment anxiety, characterized by fear of being rejected or abandoned by others may experience difficulties when they find themselves in an environment where they do not know anyone and need to develop several new social relationships, in a new cultural environment (Gouin & MacNeil, 2018). International student success was also linked to social connectedness, particularly for minority students due to their small number (Walton & Cohen 2007). In their study in which Walton and Cohen (2007) investigated whether social belonging uncertainty predicts an important decrease of motivation for ethnic minority students than for ethnic majority students, they found that a lack of social connectedness has irrationally important impacts on Black students. They show that social belonging is a key factor for intellectual achievement.

2.5.1 Discrimination

According to Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994), perceived discrimination and alienation are on top of the list of the seven main sub-factors that contribute to acculturative stress, followed by homesickness, perceived hate, fear, culture shock, guilt and a miscellaneous category. The authors defined perceived discrimination and alienation as an experience of discrimination based on race or colour, receiving injustice, and feeling socially isolated (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). Studies in the cross-cultural field also found that perceived discrimination affects how individuals decide to acculturate and get into contact with the host communities (Berry & Sabatier, 2010; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2006; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006). Several pieces of research showed that experiences with discrimination are critical for acculturating individuals because they are one of the most harmful acculturative stresses endured by cultural minorities (Berry & Sabatier, 2010; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2006). Hanassab (2006) suggested that international students have different experiences with discrimination, depending on whether they face it on or off campus. In his study conducted in the US on international students, Hanassab (2006) evaluate discriminating

behaviours faced by the subjects according to being on or off campus. The result shows that discrimination occurs more off campus than on campus. Even if international students from non-predominantly White regions of the world report that they encounter a high level of discrimination by professors, university staff, and classmates compared with European peers, the experience occurs more off campus than on campus (Poyrasli, 2003; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007). The researcher noted that international encounter discrimination off campus while participating in social communities and dealing with housing, transportation, and getting administrative documentation (Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007). It also came out that international students from less developed countries report that they experience frequent negative encounters with professors (Ramos et al., 2016).

A study by Ramos et al. (2016), which investigated the impact of discrimination on the acculturation strategies of international students in the United Kingdom, concluded that perceived discrimination does not positively correlate with greater instability or illegitimacy. International students do not see their status to be illegitimate, meaning that being British people should not give certain students the privilege to have a better treatment and in contrast justify the discrimination against others, such as international students (Ramos et al., 2016). The study concluded that perceived discrimination hinders internationals' student adjustment to the host culture by diminishing their enthusiasm to get into contact with the host group and learn new ways of interaction, while increasing their willingness to keep their culture (Ramos et al., 2016). An interview study conducted by Adelegan and Parks (1985) with Black East African, Black West African, and Arabic North African students at a U.S. university, indicated that Black African students reported more difficulty adapting to American culture than non-Black African students.

Furthermore, research stated that Black African international students in the US experience racism (Constantine et al., 2005; Manyika, 2001).

2.5.2 Social Experience

Another factor affecting Black international students' adaptations is the ability to interact with their national peers (Constantine et al., 2005; Márkus & Kitayama, 1991). The meaning they give to friendship may be different from the one expressed by the national students. Constantine et al. (2005) showed that Kenyan, Nigerian, and Ghanaian international college students experience profound cultural value conflicts due to differences in worldviews and values compared to White U.S. college students. Since many of these African students come from more communal cultural backgrounds, they may value close interpersonal relationships (Hofstede, 2001; Hyams-Ssekasi, 2012; Irungu, 2013). Therefore, they may experience difficulties during their interactions with White American students, who may tend to value aspects of individualism such as independence and self-reliance in relationships (Hofstede, 2001; Hyams-Ssekasi, 2012). A study by Hyams-Ssekasi et al. (2014) which investigates the pre-departure experience of twenty-one postgraduates African students revealed that the students felt socially excluded and unwelcome by the local students. Márkus & Kitayama (1991) suggested that Black African international students also experience acculturative stress because of their perception of societal norms and expectation and interpersonal relationships. This is due to the fact that in their home country they evolve in an interdependent sense of self in which an individual's "behavior is determined, contingent on, and, to a large extent organised by what the actor perceives to be the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others in the relationship" (Márkus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 227). While in the United States, the Black international students' experiences are influenced by race problems, in the United Kingdom it is the social class problems which are obvious (Manyika, 2001; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014). The literature about African students' experiences in Canada does not make any mention of

discrimination. Does the lack of research on Black African students in Canada means that this issue can be eliminated as a potential problem? A qualitative study conducted by Housdmand et al. (2014) at one Canadian university, that investigated East and South Asian international students' experiences with racial microaggressions grouped their result in six racial microaggressions themes: 1) excluded and avoided, 2) ridiculed for accents, 3) rendered invisible, 4) disregarded international values and needs, 5) ascription of intelligence, and 6) environmental microaggressions. Another study by Codjoe (2001) exploring the experiences of academically successful Black students in Alberta's secondary schools, found that there is a concern of systemic racism in Canadian society which constitutes an obstacle for Black academic achievement. The author suggested that the chronic underachievement of Black students in Western multiethnic societies such as Canada is due to in part to racism. However, Codjoe's (2001) research is about African-Canadian youth not international students.

2.5.3 Financial Constraints

Financial difficulties are one of the main stressors of international students. Financial constrains are an obstacle to their academic achievement (Andrade, 2006; Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Irungu, 2013). They also prevent students from participating in social activities that could potentially improve language proficiency during the adaptation process (Adelegan & Parks, 1985; Andrade, 2006; Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Irungu, 2013; Maringe & Carter, 2007). According to Blake (2006) and Maringe and Carter (2007) financial concerns were the biggest source of anxiety for Black African students as well as for their parents and families. In the study conducted by Constantine et al.'s (2005) that explored the cultural adjustment experiences of 15 Asian Indian, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese international college women in the U.S., all the participants expressed having financial difficulties paying rent, food, clothing, entertainment, and tuition fees. In the study conducted by Maringe and Carter (2007), almost all of the students reported anxieties

about how to pay their school fees. Zhou and Zhang (2014) reported the same issue about international students studying at Canadian institutions since they also face financial constraints. Today, international students pay three to four times more than domestic students in some Canadian institutions (Universities Canada, 2018). For example, at the University of Toronto (includes colleges) Canadian undergraduate students pay between $6,780 - $7,070 for tuition fees while International undergraduate students pay between $42,870 - $49,800 (Universities Canada, 2018). Some have suggested that the Canadian government is exploiting international students by charging exorbitant tuition fees, effectively subsidizing the educational costs of domestic students (Stein, 2018).

There is an assumption that all African International students who come to study in Western countries are from wealthy families (Maringe & Carter, 2007). This is due to the fact that during the colonial period, most international students from Africa who studied abroad were from wealthy socioeconomic backgrounds (Maringe & Carter, 2007). However, several pieces of research on African International students have shown that they come from a wide range of backgrounds (Minyika, 2001; Hyams-Ssekasi, 2012). A study conducted in the United Kingdom on Black African students showed that the majority of them come from poor rural communities and grew up in villages (Hyams-Ssekasi, 2012). The study also revealed that in countries where state support is limited, African students rely on their communities for sponsorship arrangements. Many Black African international students are sponsored by governments and international organisations, but this does not mean that they are without financial difficulties (Hyams-Ssekasi, 2012). Very often, it happens that these students have to face financial challenges because of the unreliable payment schedules of the institutions (Hyams-Ssekasi, 2012). Researchers have indicated that in addition to struggling financially to survive abroad, many African students are

expected to send money back to their families and communities (Hyams-Ssekasi, 2012; Irungu, 2013).

2.6 The Coping Mechanisms of International Students

2.6.1 Social Networking

As international students initially integrate into host cultures, they usually employ certain means and strategies to adjust to the traditions and norms in these cultures (Berry, 2006; Caldwell & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2016; Lee et al. 2004). Yakushko et al. (2008) emphasized that the ability of immigrants to adjust to their new environments is usually determined by their capability to effectively use appropriate coping mechanisms for acculturative stress that they experience in their host communities. They further explained that coping mechanisms that immigrants use enable them to overcome stressors that undermine their ability to adjust to the host culture. Among international students' coping mechanisms, social support has long been shown to be an important factor in buffering the effects of stress (Kuo & Tsai, 1986; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). According to Smith and Khawaja (2011), social support and stronger social ties may have a protective effect on international students' acculturative stress. Furthermore, the quantity and quality of social relationships indicate lower health problems such as cardiovascular disease (Gouin & MacNeil, 2018). According to Gouin and MacNeil (2018), greater social integration, in the form of larger social networks, has been associated with better physical health results (Gouin & MacNeil, 2018). Evidence suggested that friendships with resident students, which is difficult to establish, positively affect the adjustment process of international students (Zhang & Zhou 2010). Social networking is used for several purposes during the acculturation process and intercultural adaptation. International students use social networking to remain in contact with family members and friends in their home countries, to develop relationships with host countries members, and to

socially adjust in educational settings. Alamri (2018) in his review of the literature on the impacts of social networking sites use as coping strategies during the acculturation process, found that the pedagogical ramifications of what comes from the literature can be summarized in threefold: connections and relationships, communities, and acculturation. Social networking is used for several purposes during the intercultural adaptation process (Alamri, 2018).

2.6.2 Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication can be defined as the exchange process whereby people from different cultural communities negotiate shared meaning (Bourhis et al., 1997). It is suggested that intercultural communication may be correlated to the level of similarity between the acculturation attitudes of both the majority and minority members (Matera et al., 2018; Bourhis et al., 1997). The majority groups can influence the acculturation orientation adopted by the minority groups who reversely may affect the preference and perception of the host country (Berry, 1997; Maisonneuve & Testé, 2007). The perception that majority members value international students' cultural maintenance positively influences intergroup attitude and communication (Berry, 1997; Matera et al., 2018). While exploring how concordance of acculturation preferences can influence the intergroup attitudes and intentions of international students, Matera et al. (2018) found that perceived concordance with respect to culture maintenance increase international students' willingness to get in contact with the members of the majority groups and improve their integration. A divergence between the choice of the hosts and immigrant's acculturation orientations is a great source of group conflicts, discrimination, poor intergroup communication and lower immigrant wellbeing (Matera et al., 2018). They recommend that actions taken to better intergroup relationship should consider the relationship between acculturation preferences of the immigrants and the perception of the expectations of the majority group. The majority groups that value immigrants' original culture maintenance is a fertile land for multiculturalism, greater

intercultural interaction (Matera et al., 2018). Such a group will promote different languages and cultural and adhere to a two-way integration process (Berry 2005; Matera et al., 2018). The concordance of acculturation preferences may lead to more intercultural communication and adaptation (Matera et al., 2018).

2.6.3 Language Proficiency

Constantine et al. (2004) found a negative relationship between English fluency and depressive symptoms in African, Asian, and Latin American international students while Yang et al. (2006) established a positive connection between communicative self-confidence and sociocultural adjustment. Findings from the National Latino and Asian American Survey (NLAAS) showed that English language proficiency was associated with lower acculturative stress while Spanish language proficiency was related to higher acculturative stress (Lueck & Wilson, 2011). In their study set to investigate which are the factors that predict acculturative stress in a large sample of Latino migrants in the US, Lueck and Wilson (2011) found that acculturative stress is negatively correlated to the English proficiency index. The participants are native of ten different nationalities and composed of first-generation immigrants, refugees and migrants. Researchers also suggested that the findings can result from the fact that speaking Spanish language is not well regarded in the US, but viewed as threat (Lueck & Wilson, 2011). A previous study showed that Asian immigrants experience lower acculturative stress with high native language proficiency, compared to Latinos (Lueck & Wilson, 2011). The researchers stated that a change in the US bilingual language policy toward Latinos would not only decrease acculturative stress for this immigrant group but would increase their overall well-being in US society (Lueck & Wilson, 2011). As for other groups of immigrants, language mastering has a significant effect on the intercultural adaptation of international students. Zhang and Zhou (2010) in their study on Chinese international students at a Canadian university came to the same conclusion, by stating that the

lack of English language proficiency affected many aspects of their lives, such as making friends with native English speakers, understanding the course materials, finding group work partners, etc. English language proficiency increases students' willingness to adapt to the host culture because it provides opportunities for them to communicate with people from the host country and share their cultural values (Jia et al., 2016). A study on the factors influencing the acculturation attitude of international postgraduate students in Malaysia showed that English language proficiency, intention to stay in Malaysia after graduation, media usage, and perceived positive stereotypes of the majority members about them, are significantly and positively related to the integration attitude of international students to the host country's culture (Shafaei et al., 2016). The study also found that the most important predictor of marginalization is the level of English language proficiency, followed by perceived stereotype images (Shafaei et al., 2016). Students with a low level of English language proficiency are more likely to choose marginalization as their preferred acculturation strategy (Shafaei et al., 2016). However, this study included only international postgraduate students and excluded undergraduate students. Research related to African international students revealed that they face the same language proficiency challenges when studying in Western countries (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Manyika, 2001; Constantine et al., 2004; Constantine et al., 2005; More, 2000).

2.6.4 The Choice of Where to Study

The choice of the destination can contribute to less or greater acculturative stress during the transition period (Maringe & Carter, 2007). International students choose where to study, according to the historical connections to particular countries (usually that of the historical colonizer), as well as language, education system, and the perceived quality and international reputation of the country's educational institution (Maringe & Carter, 2007). The study also indicated that most francophone African international students' first choice for studying abroad is

France while South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States are the most popular destinations for English-speaking African students (ICEF Monitor, 2013). The majority of the international students who come from the francophone Sub-Saharan region to study in Canada go to higher educational institutions in the province of Quebec. The linguistic duality in the educational institutions in the province of Quebec is an asset for international students from francophone countries. As the use of English is more universal than that of French, the offer of courses in this language is attractive for these linguistic groups. Students have the opportunity in their daily lives, especially in Montreal, where the majority of francophone international students are, to evolve in a francophone or an anglophone or even bilingual environment.

2.6.5 Self-determination

Much theoretical and empirical research has been conducted to investigate the role of autonomy and self-determination in people's actions using the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2001). The results indicated that people who engage in activities because they either enjoy them or believe in their importance, and if they personally choose to do them because they are in concordance with their values, are more successful, happier and healthier than people who do not have this kind of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan et al., 2006). Chirkov et al. (2007) discovered that the level of autonomy is a stronger predictor of adjustment than preservation goals. The authors also note that autonomy and the preservation goals are independent predictors of the academic motivation and well-being of Chinese students abroad (ChirKov et al., 2007). Their findings indicated that the students' chances of adjusting to a new culture become higher when the decision to move to a foreign country to further their education is based on self-determined motivation. In contrast, students who were forced and/or controlled by others into making this decision to study abroad faced important adjustment problems (Chirkov et al., 2007). The researchers stated that the nationality of students is also an important factor to

consider when analyzing international students' motivation to study abroad and their overall intercultural adaptation (Chirkov et al., 2007). They argue that the role of the country of origin and regionally specific motivations to study in Canada can be further investigated (Chirkov et al. 2007). Western students experience fewer difficulties in adjusting to life in Canada in comparison to non-Western students (Chirkov et al., 2007). The same results were obtained by other researchers (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Ward et al., 2001; Ward & Searle, 1991; Chirkov et al., 2005; Searle & Ward, 1990) which gave rise to a so-called "cultural distance hypothesis". This states that students from countries that are culturally close/similar to the host country experience less stress and difficulties adjusting in comparison to students from culturally distant countries (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Ward et al., 2001). Based on the literature, we may predict that Black international student's motivation for studying abroad plays an important role in influencing the choice of acculturation strategy and the intercultural adaptation. It is predicted that they will choose integration as their preferred acculturation strategy and will achieve a high level of intercultural adaptation in their new environment (Kim, 2001).

2.6.6 Motivation for Studying Abroad

According to Pimpa (2003), the ability of international education to raise economic and social status of graduates, limited access to education in home countries, and the perception of quality of education in home or host countries represent the motives generally cited by international students to justify their choice of pursuing international education. Studying abroad and particularly in Western countries is perceived by African students as a guarantee of a job when they return home (Irungu, 2013). Apparently, what matters the most for employers is not the university they attended but the fact that they have an education from a developed country (Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014). The authors further stated that in some African countries, obtaining an overseas degree is a fixation (Hyams-Ssekasi, 2014). Irungu (2013), has even suggested that

"education from an American institution is viewed with pride, not only by immediate and extended families, but also by entire villages, communities and governments" (p. 166).

Another motivation for studying abroad indicated by African international students is to put their skills and knowledge into practice when they go back home (Fischer, 2011). Maringe and Carter's (2007) study of African students studying in the United Kingdom found that they regard higher education in the United Kingdom as preparing them for leadership positions when they get back home. The participants in the research by Fischer (2011) that investigates Ghanaian students, demonstrated that most of the participants plan to go back home after their graduation in the United Kingdom in the perspective to communicate their knowledge to others in their home country.

2.6.7 Intention to Stay in Canada After Graduation

Most African international students perceive the West as being an appealing place to study (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Irungu, 2013; Lee & Opio, 2011). However, moving to a new environment can be a significant challenge, with culture shock being an inevitable aspect, leading to acculturative stress (Berry, 1997). Tartakovsky (2012) assessed students' intention to stay in the host country after graduation and concluded that this factor is significantly and positively related to the integration attitude of international students. This finding was supported by Shafaei et al. (2016) whose study strove to identify the factors which influence postgraduate students' migration intentions in Malaysia. The authors' research suggested that in addition to English language proficiency and social media usage, intention to stay in the host country after graduation is also a significant factor in the prediction of the choice of the international postgraduate students' acculturation strategy. Another study by Lu, Zong and Schissel (2009), conducted at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada, looked at the factors that influence Chinese undergraduate students' decision to permanently immigrate. The study suggested that changes in immigration policy to attract foreign students to stay in Canada after graduation motivate their immigration intention to

some extent (Lu, Zong & Schissel, 2009). The immigration policy changes in recent years were based on the fact that international students trained in Canada have better chances to integrate into the Canadian labour market than those without any Canadian experience (IRCC, 2015, 2016).

Balaz et al. (2004) demonstrated a relationship between initially temporary and eventual permanent migration. The study revealed that pull and push factors that influence the immigrant decision to stay are better employment opportunities, higher salaries, benefits for their children, and problematic economic and political situations in their home countries. The authors found that most migrants from less developed countries use temporary migration as a passage to permanent migration Balaz et al. (2004). However, the study was not able to demonstrate a convincing difference in motivation between migrants from less developed countries and those from developed countries to engage in permanent migration. Socioeconomic considerations are influential factors in international students' intention to stay in Canada after graduation (Balaz et al., 2004; Ward et al., 2001).

The literature in the field of cross-cultural adaptation provided a generalist interpretation on international student experiences during their adjustment in the majority culture instead of considering the distinct characteristics that exist between the different student racial groups (Bohafo-Arthur, 2014; Hyams-ssekasi et al. 2014). Consequently, ignoring that international students experienced varied levels of stress, anxiety related to the fact of being in a new environment (Zhang & Zhou, 2010). In reviewing the acculturation literature that examined various issues that enhance or undermine immigrants' acculturation process, communication was found to be an enhancing factor for acculturation (Kim, 2001; Ward et al., 2001). On the other hand, acculturative stress was found to be a handicapping factor to acculturation (Berry, 2005; Ward et al., 2001). Literature has shown that support from the host community could be the

difference between a greater or little transition. (Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001). There is strong evidence showing that the integration strategy and biculturalism, as compared to the other three acculturation strategies, separation, assimilation, marginalization, is the best, leading to greater benefits in key areas of life (Berry, 1997; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013).

In light of the literature review, it has been noticed that since a few decades, the field of international students has received a lot of attention (Adelegan & Parks, 1985; Costantine et al., 2004, 2005; Crockett et al., 2007). The growth in international students' populations accentuated the importance of conducting research on them. Most acculturation research that was conducted in Canada in the recent past decades that examined the acculturation process of international students focused on Asian students (Lu, Zon & Schissel, 2009). While most studies on Black African international students conducted in North America takes place in the United States (Adelegan & Parks, 1985; Costantine et al. 2004, 2005; Crockett et al., 2007). The goal of the present study is to fill the gap by exploring the challenges of intercultural adaptation that ISSAFC experience once they arrive in Ontario's bilingual higher education institutions in Canada, and the impact this has on their education and well-being. Furthermore, the expectation is that the outcomes of this thesis will enable Higher Education stakeholders to develop more appropriate programs that enhance social support and coping strategies, in various ways to promote integration and lesser acculturative stress experienced by this specific international student group.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Ground

The study of acculturation overlaps many academic disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, and cross-cultural communication, just to name a few (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Park & Burgess, 1921). Due to many differences of theoretical constructs, it becomes complex when studying in a multidisciplinary field, to decide which acculturation model to adhere to (Ward et al. 2001). This makes the task of selecting one concept very difficult. Given the multicultural nature of Canada, and the growing number of international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries, there are a number of appropriate concepts that can be used to reach this study's objectives. The study's goal is to investigate the phenomenon of ISSAFC adaptation in their new environment, by focusing on their acculturation experience in a bilingual environment. In the way to outline the struggle these students face during their acculturation process, how they deal with acculturative stress and what the resources available to them to ease the process and transform this acculturation experience in successful life experience. To reach its principal aims, this work is placed within three theoretical models: Berry's (1997) acculturation model, Kim's (1988) integrative communication theory and LaFramboise, Coleman & Gerton (1993) bicultural competence.

All theories offer somewhat different, but complementary explanations about the acculturation and cross-cultural adaptation of different groups living in plural societies such as immigrants, refugees, indigenous people, national minorities, and sojourners (i.e., international students). While Berry's (1977) model emphasizes different modes of acculturation strategies, Kim's (l988) theory focuses on the communicative interaction between an immigrant and the majority group in bringing about cross-cultural adaptation at the individual level. LaFramboise, Coleman & Gerton (1993), through the term bicultural competence, describes the process in which

individuals can successfully meet the demands of two distinct cultures to achieve wellbeing in their new environment. Studies suggest that international students experience the process of adapting to life in their new environment differently from immigrant groups (Berry 2004, Kim, 1988; Ward et al. 2001). Within Berry's model, "integration" is referred to as the individual ability to co-exist simultaneously with their own cultural identity and that of the host culture, which represents biculturalism, the focus of LaFrambroise's work. Whereas Kim's framework supports the notion that "intercultural identity" is necessary for immigrants to maintain their ethnic cultural values while adapting to the host country's culture. Navigating between the culture of origin and the majority culture was positively associated with both psychological and sociocultural adjustment (Berry, 1997; LaFramboise et al., 1993; Kim, 1988).

3.1 Berry's Bidimensional Model of Acculturation

Berry's Bidimensional model has been one of the most dominant models of acculturation, despite some criticisms such as differences in terminology, conceptual issues, and the variation in methodologies used to measure acculturation strategies (Smith-Castro, 2003). According to Berry's (1997) bidimensional model of acculturation, there are two fundamental dimensions of acculturation, namely 1) culture maintenance; and 2) contact and participation in the life of the host society. Culture maintenance is defined as the way in which the immigrants decide to conserve their cultural heritage and identity. Contact and participation in the life of the host society is referred to as the individual's interaction with members of the host culture or other cultures (Berry, 1997). Immigrants usually maintain their original culture in their private lives while they actively participate in their original cultural practices within family and ethnic communities. Immigrants often adapt to the host culture in their public and professional lives, within interactions with colleagues and with people of the host community (Berry, 1997).

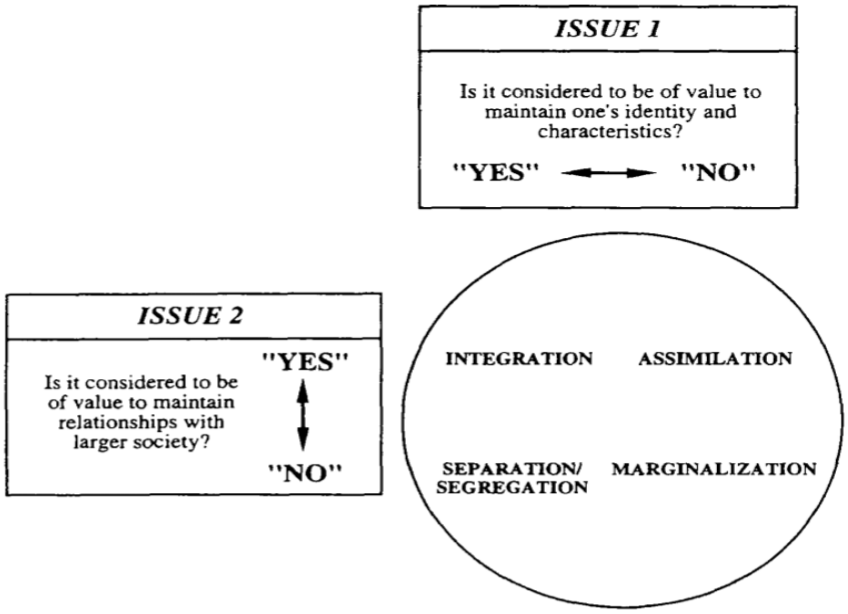
The combination of these two dimensions of acculturation will generate four different methods of acculturation, which will consist of "acculturation strategies" when considered by ethnocultural groups, or "acculturation expectations" when dealing with the dominant group (Berry, 1997). The four different acculturation orientations are integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalisation (Berry, 1997). Integration refers to the individual capacity to participate in both cultures while the immigrant takes on the receiving culture and retains the heritage culture. Assimilation is the immigrants' decision to abandon their cultural heritage, to invest primarily into the host culture (Berry, 1997). The acculturating individual takes on the receiving culture and gets rid of the heritage culture. Separation refers to the immigrant's incapacity to participate in the host culture because they are holding on to their home culture. In this case, the acculturating individual rejects the receiving culture and retains the heritage culture (Berry, 1997). Finally, marginalisation refers to the immigrant's decision not to participate in either the home culture or in the host culture (Berry, 1997). In this present situation the acculturating individual rejects the receiving culture and discards the heritage culture. This study assumes that ISSAFC will choose integration as the preferred acculturation strategy. Research in cross-cultural studies suggested that integration is the most effective strategy compared to assimilation, segregation, and marginalisation (Berry 2005; Kim, 2001, LaFramboise et al., 1993).

Acculturation is viewed as a dynamic continuum of cultural adaptation and Berry's theory offers a theoretical structure for exploring the newcomer's such as international students' penchant for different acculturation orientation (Berry, 1997; Ward et al., 2001). Focusing on how they see themselves in relation to their own ethnic group and the larger society. Berry's acculturation model (1997) assumed that the choice of acculturation strategies is dictated by the interaction between the immigrants' psychosocial characteristics, which constituted the immigrants' psychological

background. The other main factor which affected the immigrants' choice of acculturation strategies is the acculturation policy of the host society (Berry, 2005). For international students, the motivation to go abroad is primarily academic and learning oriented compared to permanent migrants whose motivation can be economic opportunities, political reasons, career and or family oriented, etc. (Ward et al., 2001). This principal motivation makes them more inclined to focus on their academic success than learning about the host country environment (Kim, 2001; Wintre et al., 2015). However, as pointed out by Kim (2001) some international students' primary goal is to stay in the host country after graduation. This is the case of most international students coming from developing countries such as the Sub-Saharan Africa francophone countries (CBIE, 2019b). These students who migrate with a plan to stay after graduation can be categorized as future permanent immigrants (Kim, 2001, Ward et al., 2001). There is strong evidence showing that the best acculturation strategy is integration, defined as the immigrants' willingness to retain their cultural identity and at the same time be in contact with other cultural groups and learn their ways (Berry, 1997, 2006; Berry et al., 2006). This will lead to greater benefits in key areas of life such as academic achievement, career success, individuals' intercultural communication and social skills development, as compared to the other three acculturation modes such as separation, assimilation, and marginalization (Berry 1997; Kim, 2001). According to a study by Berry on immigrants' acculturation, the choice of acculturation strategies is also affected by a large number of variables related to the immigrants' home country or the host community, their psychological resources, and the environment (Berry, 1997, 2005). Unfortunately, Berry's (1997) model doesn't consider the fact that living in a multicultural society such as Canada, newcomers might not adopt the host country's cultural norms, and even reject their original culture and might choose to adopt a culture different from their original and host culture Tartakovsky, 2012). Another weakness of

the theory is that it doesn't consider the effect of life experience. By this is meant the possibility for a newcomer to change acculturation strategy depending on time and experience.

Figure 1. The Formulation of Acculturation Strategies



Source: Berry (1997) Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation.

3.2 Kim's Integrative Communication Theory

Kim's theory suggests that through communicative interactions, the newcomers acquire a gradual fitness and wellbeing, with regard to the majority group (Kim, 1988, 2001). Still, acculturation does not only affect the immigrant groups. The different definitions in the literature present acculturation as a neutral concept that affects both groups and implies that both groups have equal resources and power (Berry, 1997). Although, when comparing two cultural groups, the immigrating group frequently experiences the majority of changes in cultural patterns (Berry, 1995). In reality, successful adaptation depends on the willingness of the dominant society to allow it, and the wish of co-ethnics to pursue it (Berry, 1997). According to Kim's theory, constant intercultural communication activities play an important role in the immigrant's adaptation process

due to the continuous cyclic movement of the stress-adaptation-growth dynamic (Kim, 1988, 2001). This will permit the newcomers to gradually move from the position of a monocultural identity to an intercultural identity with an increased capacity to "fit" into the new environment (Kim, 1988). Stress plays two important roles in this dynamic (Kim, 1988). The same way stress impacts newcomers' wellbeing causing frustration, anxiety, isolation, etc., it is also an important element of learning and growth. It serves as the power that drives newcomers to learn and adapt (Kim, 2001). It is through the presence of stress that they are constrained to achieve the level of learning and adjustment that is necessary in order to fit into their new environment and work out new ways of managing their daily activities (Kim, 1988, 2001). The researcher stated that it is by engaging in social communication with the host country that immigrants gain insight and skills needed to adjust socially and psychologically to the new environment (Kim, 2001). Through active contact and communication with the dominant community, the newcomers will gradually replace their old behaviours by adopting the new cultural ways (Kim, 1988). With persistent contact with the host country's culture, they will develop the necessary competencies during the acculturation process and, therefore, generally reach a successful adaptive change (Kim, 1988). Kim's theory also specifies that immigrants increase their communication competency in the host culture with time (Kim, 1988). Kim (1988) recognizes the important of the immigrant ethnic group in their adaptation process. They will reach a greater level of adaptation if at the beginning of the acculturation process, they can participate in a constant communication within their own ethnic community, while they develop communication competencies through their contact with the host community (Kim, 1988). While reporting to the extent to which immigrant participate into the majority culture, Kim (1988) speculates that immigrants naturally adapt to their new environment with ongoing participation in the host society communication processes.

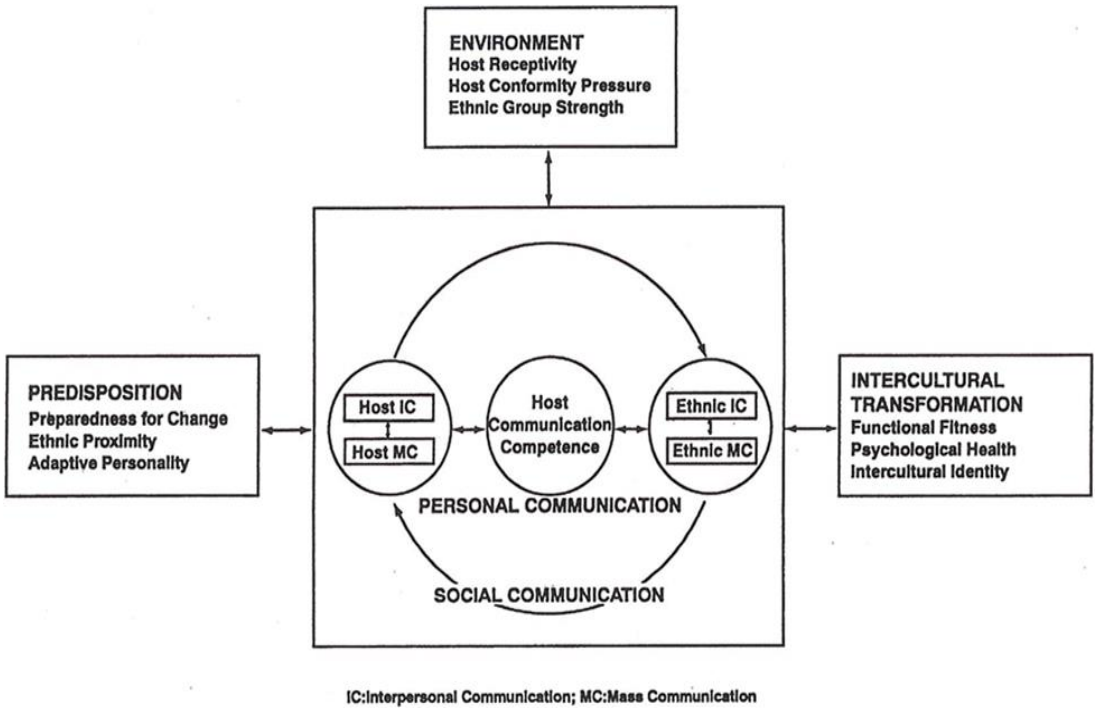
The social environment that immigrants interact with, both on an interpersonal and a mass communication level is a key factor in the adaptation process (Kim, 1988). The receptiveness of the host society towards the immigrant is critical for his adjustment (Berry, 1997; Ward et al., 2001). This results in a level of openness of the host community and a level of acceptance of the immigrant which is expressed through nonverbal behaviour and also subtle actions of the majority group (Kim, 1988). The other factors related to the host culture are how much the host explicitly or implicitly requires the immigrants to adapt or adopt their culture, values and communication paradigms (Berry & Sam, 2006). Societies that value multiculturalism will be tolerant toward the immigrants (Berry & Sam, 2006, Berry et al., 2006). However, those that do not tend to privilege the immigrant culture demand that they adapt to their host cultural values by changing their behaviours and language (Berry & Sam, 2006, Berry et al., 2006).

Kim's (1988) theory identifies a structural model of adaptation process which describes key factors of communication and an environment necessary for the process of intercultural transformation as reciprocally influencing one another. The theory acknowledges three elements which mutually influence the intercultural identity development and lead to greater adaptation. These are: 1) factors of communication, 2) predisposition, and 3) environmental factors (Kim, 1988). The model also offers a comprehensive multidimensional way that suggests that individuals undergo different levels of intercultural transformation at a different time. According to Kim's theory, the different factors go together to facilitate or impede the adaptation process of the newcomer (Kim, 1988). See figure 2 below for Kim's Model of the Structure of Cross-cultural Adaptation (Kim, 2001)

As shown in the literature, acculturation always generates some level of acculturative stress (Berry, 1997). According to Kim's (1988) acculturation theory, the immigrants will face some

struggle as they move from their heritage culture to the host mainstream culture. However, she refers to acculturation as the phenomena whereby immigrants will attend a level of comprehension of the dominant cultural behaviour, value and act according to these societal norms (Kim, 1988, 2001). Pursuing the analysis of immigrant intercultural adaptation, Kim (2001) includes a formulation of an "intercultural identity" to the acculturation framework for an immigrant, the sojourner, or businessperson that successfully integrates into a new environment (Kim, 2001). She defines "intercultural identity" as an individual ability to develop the necessary elements needed to navigate successfully between the heritage culture and the host culture as they grow (Kim, 2001). Communication represents one of the key factors of Kim theoretical framework. Kim (1988) stresses that interpersonal communication and mass media communication are key factors in the immigrant acculturation process while defining acculturation from a communication perspective. Communication is the system facilitating the acculturation flow between the two cultures in contact (Kim, 2001). She argues that newcomers successfully acculturate through the identification and the internalization of the behaviours, norms and values of the host society (Kim, 2001). Put differently, the acculturation process is an interactive and continuous process that evolves as immigrants sustain the communication activities with the new environment (Kim, 2001).

Figure 2. The Structure of Cross-cultural Adaptation



Source: Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation (2001).

3.3 LaFramboise, Coleman, and Gerton, Bicultural Competence

LaFramboise and colleagues' (1993) concept of biculturalism is pertinent to identify and understand the competences needed by an individual to effectively navigate between two cultures. The authors analysed different acculturation models examining distinctions in acculturation patterns proposed in the literature (LaFrambroise et al., 1993). The study focused on differences among bicultural individuals with regard to their levels of cultural identification to their culture of origin and competence in the dominant culture. According to the behavioural model of culture that constitutes the basis of their bicultural model of second culture acquisition, individuals are culturally competent if they fulfill the following conditions: possess a strong personal identity, are able to adopt the beliefs and values of the host culture, can communicate effectively in the dominant language, behave according to the host culture's social norms, maintain social

relationships within the host society, and deal with the institutions of the culture (LaFramboise et al., 1993). They stated that the acculturated achieve a successful transition throughout the acquisition of a variety of competences in the host culture. They consider cultural competence as a set of abilities and skills an individual may acquire on the way to succeed in second culture acquisition (LaFramboise et al., 1993). The researchers' assumption is that the level of competency varies from one individual to another (LaFramboise et al., 1993). Someone can reach perfection in one area and not in another. However, the authors posited that to reduce the harms related to the intercultural transition it is important to be culturally competent in as many areas of the mainstream culture (LaFramboise et al., 1993). The authors also emphasize that particular social and physical situations can facilitate switching between cultural settings (LaFramboise et al., 1993). They conclude their study by assuming that there are many ways in which biculturals negotiate their cultures. The outcome of their bidimensional model of second culture acquisition is consistent with the findings in previous research that strongly has suggested that it is of interest for the acculturating individual to maintain a close relationship with the original culture while developing the competences towards the dominant culture (Berry, 1997; Kim, 1988). A variety of demographic, social and psychological characteristics are necessary to the development of bicultural competence. LaFramboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) suggested that to be bi-culturally competent, the acculturating individual must acquire competencies along six dimensions: (1) knowledge of cultural beliefs and values, (2) positive attitudes toward both groups, (3) bicultural efficacy, which is the ability to navigate effectively in both, culture of origin and dominant culture without losing their cultural identity, (4) communication ability, (5) role repertoire, which is the ability to demonstrate appropriate behaviours in both cultural environments, and (6) social groundedness, which includes the ability to maintain social networks

in both cultural groups (LaFramboise et al., 1993). LaFramboise et al. (1993) noted that an individual who develops those abilities may face less acculturative stress during their adjustment to their host country. It is worth indicating that the skills outlined previously are not required in a specific order (LaFramboise et al., 1993). Some of the skills may be more important than others in the process and some must be developed before others. First, a strong personal identity and positive attitudes toward the two cultures may represent the main skills needed for an individual to become a socially competent person in a second culture while maintaining competence in the culture of origin (LaFramboise et al., 1993). Active participation in both cultures can help acculturate individuals in their efforts to acquire and sustain competencies in the dominant culture and keep attachments with the original culture (LaFramboise et al., 1993).

Berry's (1997) acculturation theory, Kim's (l988) communication theory of cross-cultural adaptation and LaFramboise and colleagues' (1993) bicultural competence address ethnic minorities, such as foreign-born immigrant minorities adjustment in their new environment. The theories share a common conception of acculturation at an individual level. They suggest that the level of acculturation or cross-cultural adaptation varies from an immigrant to another depending on multiple variables such as the reason for migration, motivation, age, education, cultural distance, attitude of host culture, language, and social support which are consistent factors identified in the research (Berry, 1997; Kim, 1988; Gordon, 1964). The authors recognize that while the newcomers will adopt certain aspects of the host country cultural beliefs and values, some aspects of their original culture may be vital for their survival in the new environment and will never be completely abandoned for others (Kim, 2001). According to Ward, Bochner and Furnham (2001) the early theories of intercultural adaptation applied to the study of international students were clinically oriented and focussed on medical models of sojourner adaptation in their

new environment. In contrast, our three models, view international students sojourning as a dynamic experience, both for students and members of the host culture (Berry et al. 2006; Kim, 1988; LaFramboise et al., 1993). Their work is rooted in the social skills and culture learning perspective for the development of the culture learning model. Most of the studies in sociological and anthropological areas focus on immigrant groups (Kim, 2001). They investigate acculturation processes at the group level. The phenomenon of acculturation at the individual level has received most of the attention from the Socio-Psychological field (Berry, 1990). This research relies on Berry's model because it is one of the first to describe acculturation at individual level and primarily because it applies to a plural society such as the Canadian society (Berry, 1995, 1997). The model has been used to investigate international students' acculturation process and especially Black international students' acculturation (Berry, 2005; Boafo-Arthur, 2013; Sandhu and Asrabadi, 1994). Berry (1997) and Kim (2001) also make a distinction between permanent immigrants and sojourners. This is very important because acculturation and intercultural adaptation are a long-term process that can take years, generations, and even centuries (Berry, 2006). According to Kim's (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation, what distinguishes sojourners from long permanent migrants is their low willingness to adapt. The sojourners are mostly conscious that they will return to their country after graduation and may not invest in adapting to the host society culture (Kim, 2001).

Berry's acculturation orientation can be compared to LaFramboise and colleagues' (1993) biculturalism competences, which is achieved through the navigation between the host and the original (LaFramboise et al., 1993; Phinney & Onwughalu,1996). It also has the same meaning as the concept of intercultural identity, articulated in Kim's model (1988). Whereas Berry's (1997) model emphasizes different acculturation strategies adopted by the newcomers, Kim's (l988)

theory focuses on the interaction between the immigrants and the majority group. Kim's model is developed on the intercultural adaptation of the newcomer with an accent put on the communicative aspect. Berry (1997), Kim (1988) and LaFramboise et al. (1993) address a process of identity development at an individual level with the focus on minority groups. The major difference between our theorists pertains to the fact that Berry (1997) and Kim (1988) state that during the process of acculturation the acculturated individual will replace some of the old culture by the new one. LaFramboise et al. (1993) by contrast assert that the immigrants do not have to lose part of their original culture, but they just have to switch between two cultures depending on the situation they are facing. As most of the acculturation theorists, our three proposed research rooted their theory in the philosophical realism realm which posits an objective and universal reality for all the acculturating individuals. They suggested that the changes which occurred during the acculturation process are the same for all the cultural groups despite their social, historical, and political background (Berry & Sam, 1997).

The present chapter of the theoretical ground ends with the current state of knowledge concerning Berry's (1997) fourfold acculturation theory, Kim's (1988) integrative communication theory and LaFramboise et al. (1993) bicultural competence model. It also offers the tools necessary to reach our goal. It proposes the hypothetical application of the concepts of acculturation experiences of black African students coming from Sub-Saharan Africa francophone countries and studying in bilingual white environments in Canada. The following chapter will present the research question and the hypothesis which will be tested in the study.

Chapter 4: Method and Procedure

4.1 Research Question and Hypothesis

Despite the multiple challenges encountered by international students in Canada, most of them get acculturated in the long run and choose to remain in the country (Lu et al., 2009). As suggested by the Canadian Bureau of International Education, 67. 6 % of international students are planning to apply for permanent residency after their graduation (CBIE. 2015a). Many African International students' long-term goal is permanent immigration due to familial-related, socio-cultural, and economic factors (Boafo-Arthur, 2013). Compared to American students, international students from Africa and the Middle East are nearly three times more likely to stay in Canada after their graduation (A World of Learning. CBIE. 2015a). As immigration is one of the key considerations when deciding where to pursue their future education, most African international students develop strategies that enable them to adjust to their new environment (Boafo-Arthur, 2013). This is in accordance with the study conducted by Phinney and Onwughalu (1996) which found that immigrants who come to the United States from poorer or less-advantaged countries are less troubled by issues such as discrimination, as they are more absorbed by the opportunities available to them.

According to the literature, most Black students decide to study abroad to gain better employment opportunities, higher salaries, and avoid unpleasant economical and political situations in their home countries (Boafor-Arthur, 2013; Constantine et al., 2005; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014). Giving the above-mentioned, this research will intend to answer one important question related to ISSAFC acculturation and adaptation to their new environment:

> What is the preferred acculturation strategy adopted by International Students from francophone Sub-Saharan African Countries in the Ontario bilingual universities?

The study hypothesizes that:

H1. Most ISSAFC will choose integration as their preferred acculturation strategy, by retaining their ethnic cultural values while adopting the host country's mainstream culture (Berry, 1997).

According to Kim (1988), it is through active contact and communication with the dominant community that immigrants will gain insights and skills needed to adjust to the new environment. Newcomers will reach a greater level of adaptation if, during the acculturation process, they participate in constant communication within their own ethnic community, while they develop communication competencies through their contact with the host community (Kim, 1988). In accordance to this finding, we hypothesized that ISSAFCs' greater communication competences as well as greater bicultural competences would be associated with the choice of integration as an acculturation strategy.

H2. International students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries' greater intercultural communication competences will be associated with the better intercultural adaptation.

This will result in maintaining their original cultural identity and customs of values while willing to be in contact with host cultural groups and learn their ways of doing (Berry, 1997; Kim, 1988; LaFramboise et al., 1993).

In most countries, newcomers must learn the majority community language to survive and function in the new environment. Host language proficiency is imperative for the performance of international students pursuing an academic degree (Constantine et al., 2005). Language barriers will also prevent newcomer from developing a social network important to their adaptation (Kim, 1988). Gonzales (2006), suggested that students with strong social networks are able to adapt easily to the new culture and cope with stress better. This research assumes that, language barriers will enhance conflicts with the new culture of education and lead to greater acculturative stress.

H3. Language barriers will enhance conflicts with the new culture and lead to greater acculturative stress and lower sociocultural adaptation.

Sheldon et al. (2004) in the SDT showed that if the decision to perform an action is autonomous, such as when individuals engage in an activity because they have personally decided to do it and consistently perform it, they achieve very well and gain in well-being. Assuming that our participants actively participate in the decision to study in Canada and that the reason behind this decision is to gain better employment opportunities or to avoid economic and political difficulties in their home countries, we hypothesized that two motivational factors:

(1) self-determination of studying abroad, and

(2) the students' goal to achieve personal growth and career development from a global perspective

will positively predict various indicators of the students' academic, social, and cultural adaptations. Also, for international students, the motivation to go abroad is primarily academic and learning-oriented compared to permanent migrants whose motivation can be economic opportunities, political reasons, career and or family oriented, etc. This makes them more inclined to focus on their academic success than learning about the host country environment (Kim, 2001; Wintre et al., 2015). If the research relies on the assumption that the initial motivation of international students coming from Africa is the possibility to seek permanent residency after graduation, it can be hypothesized that they will differ from the other international students in their willingness to adapt to Canada and to the Canadian university context. The fourth question this study is intended to answer is

Do future residency intentions moderate the relationship between acculturation and these students' intercultural adaptation outcomes and well-being?

The research hypothesises that

H4. Permanent residency intention will significantly predict ISSAFCs' acculturation orientation, increase sociocultural and intercultural adaptation, and reduce acculturative stress.

With the aim of pursuing our analysis of the effect of language on the ISSAFCs' acculturation orientation, we have decided to compare ISSAFCs studying in Toronto to their co-national studying in Montreal as we hypothesized that:

H5. International students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries studying in Montreal, a francophone environment will undergo less acculturative stress than the participants studying in Toronto an anglophone environment.

4.2 Method

4.2.1 Participants

According to the participants demographic information, our participants range between 18–27 years of age with an M age= 21.41, SD = 2.29. A total of 32 international students participated in the survey (N=32), from 10 Sub-Saharan African countries including Côte d'Ivoire (n=10) 31.25%, Benin (n=11) 34.37%, Mali (n=4) 12.5%, Congo (n=2) 6.25%, Burkina Faso (n=1) 3.12%, Cameroon (n=1) 3.12%, Guinea (n=1) 3.12%, Niger (n=1) 3.12%, Senegal (n=1) 3.12%, and Togo (n=1) 3.12%. Students from various undergraduate degree levels: first-year students count for (n=13) 40.62, second year (n=6) 18.75%, third year (n=7) 21.87%, and fourth year (n=4) 12.5% and others (n=3) 10%. Included in the other category, two (n=2) 6.25% participants are recent graduates from undergraduate degrees at the university level. These two participants are from Montreal and graduated with a bachelor's degree, one year prior to the interview. The last participant is in the final stage of his collegial degree in Montreal (n=1) 3.12%. All participants are full-time students. The students are studying in various programs ranging from communication, business economics, international studies, computer studies, etc. The personal data form reveals that (n=9) 28.12% of the participants studied in another country before coming to Canada. The majority of the participants who study abroad before coming to Canada have sojourned in one

country of the Sub-Saharan African sub-region. While Anglophone and Western European countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, France, and Canada have historically attracted the largest number of international students, students from developing countries are also opting to study in countries of the francophone Sub-Saharan African sub-region, where tuition fees and living costs are low (Marshall, 2013). There is a proliferation of United States and United Kingdom university branch campuses in the sub-region (Lane, 2011). France, elite institutions and business schools are opening campuses in several countries of Africa (Marshall, 2013). According to the French newspaper *le Figaro (February 27, 2018),* in recent years, French higher education institutions prefer opening their own campuses on the continent opposed to recruiting students in Africa to teach them in France. Another way to benefit from of internationalization of education is to sign a partnership with existing elite higher education institutions on the continent. Fees in those institutions are about US$ 3,722, compared to US$ 8,375 in France (Marshall, 2013).

For this study, participants have spent an average of 2.43 years in Canada. The participants' personal data form has permitted to investigate their financial situation. To see whether they face a lot of financial difficulties or not as reported in the literature (. Few of our participants indicated that they are very satisfied with their financial situation (n=9) 28.12%, while most of them, more than half of them (n=20) 62.5% responded that they are satisfied with their financial situation. All of our participants indicated that their families finance their studies. Only one participant studying in the province of Quebec indicated that he has a scholarship from the country of origin. All participants learned English as a second language when in their native country prior to pursuing higher education in Canada. Three participants even indicated that they studied in Ghana, an

anglophone country of the Sub-Saharan Africa sub-region (see Appendix A, table 1 for participants personnel information).

4.2.2 Procedure

The study employed a two-phase mixed method combining quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. A mixed method approach is increasingly adopted by researchers and adding standardised survey questions to qualitative interviews can be a successful method to explore research issues and give insight into challenging topics, such as the adaptation of ISSAFCs (Adamson et al., 2004). Researchers have criticized the preference for a quantitative research method to investigate the acculturation process of immigrants (Dantakos, 2014). They proposed that a qualitative research design is considered while investigating the international student acculturation (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Doing so will result in plenty of scrutiny in their experience in the new environment (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). As indicated by DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006), the aim of qualitative research interviews is to add to the discipline by drawing from the interviewees' interpretations of their life experiences. Responses to the standardised items are also notable sources of qualitative data (Adamson et al., 2004). Coupling the two methods will give considerable insight into the meanings that life experiences hold for the interviewees (Adamson et al. 2004). Participants were asked to fill out the International Students Personal Data Form (ISPDF) as well as three different questionnaires: The Brief Intercultural Adaptation Scale (BIAS), the revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SAS) and the revised Acculturation Stress Scale for International students (ASSIS). Twelve participants among the 32 were also invited to participate in an interview and a focus group discussion.

4.3 Data Collection

On April 8, 2019, a letter of invitation (see Appendix B) to participate in a research study as well as an Informed Consent Form (see Appendix C) were sent to Glendon College, York University African international students through the Glendon African Network (GAN). Attached to the message were

1) International Student Personal Data Form (ISPDF) (See Appendix D);

2) Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (ASSIS) (Appendix E);

3) Brief Intercultural Adaptation Scale (BIAS) (Appendix F);

4) International Students Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (ISSAS) (Appendix G).

The participating students were instructed to return the completed questionnaire by Email, by April 25, 2019, directly to the researcher, to ensure confidentiality. Prior to the letter of invitation, a letter of permission was sent to the president of the association seeking approval to reach the African international student using the association serve list (Appendix H). International students participating in this study were encouraged to seek clarifications by telephone if there was any confusion with the questionnaire or the study itself. Ethics approval was granted by York University Delegated Research Ethics Committee (Appendix I). Measures were taken to ensure confidentiality and protect the anonymity of participants.

On April 22, another reminder was sent individually to the students, via Email, to fill out the questionnaire and to advise whether or not they would like to participate in a face-to-face interview or focus group discussion (See Appendix J). After a second follow-up request, a total of 24 (n=24) copies were received. The researcher made use of personal networks to recruit nine participants in Montreal for the study. Responses of students from two provinces to the same questionnaire enabled the researcher to make a comparative analysis concerning the development

of the two groups of participants acculturation in bilingual environments. As Ontario has a majority of English speakers, and Quebec has a majority of French speakers, the participants from the two provinces responded to the same questionnaires; however, the comparative analysis was conducted by identifying the two different groups.

Part one of the study is a quantitative data collection and analysis. Quantitative survey methods consist of administering multiple-choice or close-ended questions to the participants of the study through a questionnaire. The answers of questions are then coded as variables and analyzed statistically to deduce the conditions of a larger population (Appendix K). This also permits an efficient examination of many participants simultaneously. Numeric data was collected through a questionnaire survey. Different methods were used to reach international students. These recruitment methods include the use of posters, recruitment via the newsletters of the Glendon African Network, as well as the use of personal networks. Snowball sampling technique where use to reach many participants as possible. Snowballing is appropriate because the universe being recruited is very sensitive in nature. International students from francophone Sub-Saharan African countries were approached through the Glendon International Students Services. The person who fit the recruitment criteria were asked to refer people they know who would also fit and then those students were asked the same until the deadline fixed for recruitment was reached.

In part 2 of the study, one-on-one interviews were conducted with 12 of the survey participants. Semi-structured interviews were organised around predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions to emerge from the discussion between the interviewer and the interviewee (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). In discussing each of these interview topics, follow-up questions such as “Why do you think so?” and “Would you elaborate more?” were used to solicit details of the interviewee’s thoughts and experiences. For interviews and groups

discussion questions (Appendix L). Participants were interviewed for an average of 30 minutes. The semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed. An excel table where were used to compile and clearly show the process from raw data to the development of the different themes (See the Appendix L). Each of the participants was issued with a project information sheet and signed consent forms, prior to taking part in the research. Two focus group discussions were conducted. Focus group interviews allowed multiple participants to share their knowledge or experiences about a specific subject. The reason for combining individual and group interviews is because the individual interview allows for greater depth, whereas the focus group interview provides greater perspective. Additionally, this also allows the researcher to confirm the findings from the individual interviews (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). At the beginning of the discussion, emphasis was put on the two fundamental dimensions of acculturation: identification with the culture of origin and relationship to members of the host culture (Berry, 1997). Subjects were asked to consider two fundamental questions about their current experience: (1). How important was it for them to keep their original culture and (2) how important was it for them to acquire the host culture?

Several dimensions of discrimination such as exclusion/rejection and threat/aggression were covered in the discussion. More focus was placed during one part of the interview to discuss coping strategies such as socialization, the use of one-on-one counselling, etc. The individual interviews and the focus group interviews were subjected to content analysis. Content analysis is performed by coding the data for specific words, identifying their patterns and interpreting their meanings. Coding is a way of going through all of the data collected to label words, phrases, and sections of text that relate to the research interest. Pre-set codes based on words or phrases from the field of cross-cultural study as well as open models of codes were used as they emerged from

the interviews (Grbich, 2013). The study used a deductive approach, which means, the data collected was grouped to compare similarities and differences based on a predetermined structure. After the data was coded, similar and contrasting themes were analysed according to the field of research. Comparison was performed to evaluate whether data collected from individual interviews corresponded to the idea represented in the focus group. Finally, the findings grouped in themes were interpreted.

4.4 Measures

4.4.1 International Students Personal Data Form

Previous pieces of research have repeatedly demonstrated that there are a number of individual characteristics that may be considered significant in the process of acculturation or the intercultural adaptation or the development of bicultural competence. These include personal and cultural identity, age, socioeconomic status, academic and linguistic characteristics of international students, which are important predictors of acculturation and intercultural adaptation outcomes (Berry & Sam, 2006; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). In light of this information, international students were invited to fill out an International Student Personal Data Form (Appendix D). A demographic section of the form gathered participants' personal information such as age, country of origin, financial condition, English language proficiency which is considered important moderating variables (Berry, 1997, 2005). Language barriers can lead to ambiguous information from quantitative questionnaires and misinterpretations. Since English is not the participants primary language, the questionnaires as well as the personal information were initially composed in English and later translated into French and interviews and group discussions were conducted in French as a way to reduce language limitations. The measures were translated and back translated by separate French–English bilinguals. The information accessed through the International Student Personal

Data Form covered a variety of topics including a range of background information such as length of time they have lived in Canada at the time of the study, level of studies, language of preference, participation in any integration programs on campus, and previous study destination apart from their source country and Canada.

4.4.2 Language Proficiency (English)

The participants preferred language, language spoken at home, language spoken with friends, language spoken at school and reading material language were accessed. A number was assigned to each category, with French=1, English=2, French & English=3, French & other= 4 and other= 5. The scale for English proficiency measured a participant's ability to understand, speak, read, and write in English. Participants were asked to rate their competence on a five-point Likert scale from not at all (1) to very well (5). Participants language preference and English language proficiency were analyzed (only via this self-assessment tool). Associations between language mastery, social interaction, acculturation outcomes, and intercultural adaptation were also investigated. Linguistic proficiency is generally measured through standardized tests such as TOEFL developed to assess the four skills, reading, listening, speaking, and writing separately (LeBlanc & Painchaud, 1985; Xu, 1991). However, this instrument has been pointed out as unreliable measure of English competence due to limitations such as the interpretation of scores in relation to certain norms (Andrade & Evan, 2009). Recently, there has been a surge of interest in self-assessment as a tool of assessing foreign language proficiency (Xu, 1991). Research demonstrated that international students' self-rated perceptions of English language abilities is positively related to their intercultural adaptation outcomes, while their scores on standardized English-language measures have no effect of the process of acculturation (Andrade & Evan, 2009; Chavoshi & Wintre, 2013). LeBlanc & Painchaud (1985), found that the self-assessment tool produced high quality results and can equate the standardized tests. According to Lewthwaite

(1997), the international students' cross-cultural adjustment is positively related to their perception of linguistics ability, not their ability to effectively communicate in the host country's language. Greater perceived host country language abilities are associated with increased international student adjustment (Berry, 1997; Berry et al., 2006).

4.4.3 Sociocultural Adaptation Scale

Sociocultural adaptation is studied within the social learning paradigm and is defined as how the immigrants are able to manage their day-to-day life in the new culture (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001). Several theorists who investigate the acculturation of international students, have agreed that there are two primary domains of acculturation: psychological and sociocultural adaptations (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Communication and social skills are the main drivers of sociocultural adaptation (Kim, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The instrument used in this study focuses on skills that are required to manage everyday social situations in a new cultural context. Subjects utilise the 5-point scales ranging from 1 = Not at all competent to 5 = Extremely competent to rate their ability of learning new skills and behaviours. The sociocultural adaptation scale has been modified and adapted for various sojourner samples. This study has adapted the Wilson (2013) Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale. This version retains 18 items of the original version and contains items such as managing my academics, maintaining my hobbies and interests, building and maintaining relationships, etc. Scores are calculated by averaging the individual item scores, where higher scores represent greater competency in a new cultural environment. Therefore, higher scores representing greater sociocultural adaptation, shows greater ability to negotiate everyday life in the new culture. The combined five-item scale has yielded the Cronbach's alpha of 0.84. The data exhibited adequate consistency for each dimension and for the total scale. Interpersonal communication, $\alpha = 0.80$; Academic Performance $\alpha = 0.76$; Personal Interests and Community Involvement, $\alpha = 0.87$;

Language proficiency, α =0.80; Ecological Adaptation, α = 0.71; interpersonal stress, α = 0.66; total, α = 0.81 (see Appendix A, table 2). Based on the literature on acculturation, subjects who chose integration as strategy and strongly identify with their culture of origin and the host nationals' culture at the same time, will experience less sociocultural adaptation problems. Those who endorse separation will experience the greatest difficulties in sociocultural adaptation, whereas those who are assimilated will experience the least amount of difficulties in sociocultural adaptation (Berry 1997; Kim, 1988; LaFramboise et al., 1993).

4.4.4 Acculturative Stress Scale for International Student

A revised Acculturative Stress Scale for International Student (ASSIS) was used to measure the acculturative stress among the ISSAFC. Acculturative stress is defined as sociocultural and psychological problems, such as homesickness, prejudice and perceived racial discrimination experienced during acculturation (Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001; Phinney & Onwughalu, 1996; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). The ASSIS used in this study is a modification of the questionnaire developed by Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994). The authors concluded that the instrument is reliable. The original version is a 36-item scale measuring international students acculturative stress on six dimensions such as perceived discrimination, homesickness, fear, guilt, perceived hatred, and cultural shock. All six dimensions are known as major contributing factors to acculturative stress (Berry, 1997; Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001). Each of the items on the scale was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= Strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= not sure, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. The revised version used in this study is a 14-item scale related to five dimensions such as perceived discrimination, homesickness, fear, perceived hatred, and cultural shock (Appendix E). The total scores range from 14 to 70 on this scale. Higher scores on the scale were related to greater acculturative stress. The reliability of the ASSIS was examined by computing Cronbach alpha scores of each factor on the sub-sales of

the questionnaires. The Cronbach alpha scores that were obtained on each of the factors were more than 0.7, which revealed that the ASSIS has a reasonable internal consistency. Cronbach alpha was greater than the conventionally accepted standard of .70 for survey research purposes (de Bruin, 2006). The combined five-item scale of the new scale has yielded the Cronbach's alpha of 0.86. The data exhibited adequate consistency for each dimension and for the total scale. Perceived discrimination, $\alpha = 0.92$; homesickness, $\alpha = 0.85$ fears, $\alpha = 0.66$; perceived hatred, $\alpha = 0.55$; and cultural shock, $\alpha = 0.74$ (see Appendix A, table 2).

4.4.5 Intercultural Adaptation Scale

The Brief Intercultural Adaptation Scale (BIAS) is a 14-item self-report inventory, which measures international students' intercultural adaptation in the host country on four dimensions. The fourteen questions on the BIAS assessed the cultural lives of the research participants, including intention about the host country, homesickness, integration, intention to migrate after graduation. The development of the BIAS builds upon existing measures found in the literature. To generate the items for these new scales, a number of existing scales measuring similar constructs were identified (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Items or concepts appearing in these scales were chosen as core elements of the BIAS. Items are scored using a 4-point Likert-type scale. Participants are asked to rate how they have felt fitting into the new culture by choosing the answer which well suited them, based on the fact that being in a new culture can bring you happiness and satisfaction, it can also be a source of anxiety and make you feel out of place. To a question such as "Before travelling, how did you feel about coming to Canada?" suggested answers were: 1= I felt extremely excited; 2= I felt somewhat excited; 3= I felt somewhat indifferent; Four= I felt indifferent. The intercultural adaptation level was determined by a midpoint scale split. Participants who scored above the midpoint of the BIAS were assigned to the group describing them as "not well adapted to their new environment"; participants below

the midpoint were assigned to the group of "well adapted to the new environment." Previous research has shown that individuals who have positive intention about the host country increase their contact and participate in the host country activity and show a high level of adaptation (Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001). Maintaining contact with the culture of origin and particularly participating in the activity of the ethnic community is positively related to well-being and to reduce homesickness (Kim, 2001). The positive relationship between intention to immigrate after graduation and intercultural adaptation was demonstrated (Tartakovsky, 2012; Dentakos et al., 2016). Thus, it is expected to find the same pattern of relationships with the new questionnaire.

4.4.6 Acculturation Strategies

In accordance with the fourfold acculturation theory developed by Berry, newcomers during the acculturation process, decide whether to maintain or relinquish their original culture. This process is the "culture maintenance" which consist of one of the two dimensions of their acculturation orientation (Berry, 1997; Berry, 2001). The second dimension, "intercultural contact" is at which level they want to have contact with or participate in the majority culture, viewed as the Intercultural Contact dimension (Berry, 1997; Berry 2001). By combining their attitude regarding original culture maintenance and host culture participation, we obtain four acculturation strategies: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization (Berry, 1997). As mentioned earlier, integration is related to the newcomer's willingness to maintain both their culture of origin and to have contact with the majority. Assimilation is when they favour contact with the host community but do not maintain their original culture. Separation is referred to when they want to maintain their heritage culture and do not desire to have contact with the host culture. Finally, marginalization is when they reject both their original culture and host culture. To compute the ISSAFC acculturation orientation, we determined the level to which they want to maintain their original culture as well as the level to which they value contact with and participation in the

host culture. Fourteen items were used to evaluate the participant preferred acculturation strategies. Three components constitute the scale, the participants' preferences for culture maintenance, their cultural participation, and interpersonal communication. This scale shows acceptable reliability. The Cronbach's was α=.80.

Four items adopted from the Acculturation Stress Scale for International Student (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994) were used to examine the extent to which participants are willing to maintain their original culture. Each of the items on the scale was rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Not sure, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree. The Cronbach's α was .70. The way international students' interpersonal communication plays a significant role in the choice of their acculturation orientation and how they adjust to a new cultural environment (Kim, 2001). Intercultural communication is likely to be related to the newcomers' level of intercultural adaptation and the choice of acculturation orientation. Intercultural communication also indicates the degree to which newcomers want to participate in the majority culture and by result, the acculturation attitudes they want to adopt (Berry, 1997). We determined the ISSFAC willingness to participate to the majority community culture by computing the result from 10 items extracted from the SCAS. Each of the items on the scale was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Not at all competent to 5 = Extremely competent with higher total scores on the scale indicating greater intercultural communication. The combined 10 items evaluating the cultural participation have yielded the moderate Cronbach's alpha 0.80; interpersonal communication, α = 0.80; and personal interests and community involvement, α = 0.87 (see Appendix A, table 2).

Acculturation strategies were defined by combining the results from the participants' willingness to maintain the original culture and the participants' willingness to interact with the

host country as well as the level of intercultural communication (Berry, 1997). A willingness to maintain the original culture was high or low depending on the score according to the midpoint. Participants who scored below midpoint were grouped in the lower level of willingness to maintain the original culture while participants who scored above were grouped in the category of high willingness to maintain original culture. The same procedure was applied to the willingness to communicate and participate in the host culture. Below midpoint was related to low levels of communication and participation into the host culture. Participants were located in highly original culture maintenance versus low original culture maintenance and high intercultural contact versus low intercultural contact. Based on their responses, participants were then categorized in different orientations categories regarding cultural maintenance and community participation; the two dimensions of acculturation strategy (Berry, 1997).

In accordance with Berry's (1997) acculturation model, AS is adopted based on the degree to which people wish to maintain their heritage culture and identity; and the degree to which people seek contact with the larger society. Therefore, high both original culture maintenance and intercultural contact reflected the choice of integration as acculturation strategy. Low original culture maintenance and high host culture contact denoted this assimilation strategy. Separation occurred when they have high original culture maintenance and low host culture contact and finally marginalisation occurred while they reject both original culture and the host culture. Most participants showed a preference for assimilation n=17, 53.1 % of ISSAFC chose assimilation as acculturation orientation, while n=9, 28.1% choose integration, n=3, 9.4% chose separation, and n=3, 9.4% chose marginalisation. Based on our results, both integration and separation are the preferred acculturation strategies.

4.5 Quantitative Analysis Results

Following the description of the objective of this research and the presentation of the method and the instruments used to reach our goal, we will dig into the analysis of the data collected. The main point of the analysis is to test the following hypothesis in our quantitative analysis.

H1. Most international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries (ISSAFC) will choose integration as their preferred acculturation strategy, by keeping their ethnic cultural values while adopting the host country's mainstream culture (Berry, 1997).

H2. ISSAFCs' greater intercultural communication competencies will be associated with better intercultural adaptation.

H3. Language barriers will enhance conflicts with the new culture and lead to greater acculturative stress and lower sociocultural adaptation.

H4. Permanent residency intention will significantly predict ISSAFCs' acculturation orientation, increase sociocultural and intercultural adaptation, and reduce acculturative stress.

H5. ISSAFC studying in Montreal, a francophone environment will undergo less acculturative stress than the participants studying in Toronto an anglophone environment.

The research question and hypothesis are now presented, and the study peruses the data collected through the questionnaires.

4.5.1 Analysis

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations between the variables were calculated. As a preliminary to our analysis, Cronbach alpha scores were computed for all variables in this study to determine the reliability of scales that were used as shown in the Tables 2. (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

We conducted a Shapiro-Wilk's test (p>.05) to test the normality of our data. Variables of interest showed normal distributions. AS was therefore tested as a predictor of sociocultural adaptation intercultural adaptation. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between AS, SCA, ASSIS, and BIAS. Independent Samples Test was conducted to determine group differences between Toronto and Montreal ISSAFC with regards to their choice of AS, SCA, ASSIS, and BIAS as well as the level of acculturative stress. A series of One-Sample t-test were calculated to analyse the statistic significance of dependent variables. A hierarchical multiple regression was run to determine if the addition of intention to migrate after graduation is a moderator of the relationship between AS and SCA. Descriptive statistics for participants are illustrated in table 3.

4.5.2 Normality Test

All Z-values are within +/- 1.96. SCAS, ASSIS and BIAC scores were normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test (p > .05) and there were no outliers in the data, as assessed by inspection of a box plot and Q-Q plots. AS showed skewness of 0.081 (SE=0.414) and Kurtosis -0.331 (SE=0.809). For SCAS, skewness of 0.248 (SE=0.414) and Kurtosis -0.579 (SE=0.809). The BIAS showed, skewness of 0.234 (SE=0.414) and Kurtosis -0.801 (SE=0.809). Shapiro Wilk's test (p>0.05) (Shapiro & Wilk, 1966) and visual inspection of their normal Q-Q plots and box plots showed normal distribution for all variables. The ASSIS data are skewed 0.08 (SE=0.414) and there is Kurtosis of -0.33 (SE=0.809). The results for normality tests are compiled in table 4.

4.5.3 Intercorrelations Between Variables of Interest

According to "Pearson correlation text (see table 5) analysis, there were no significant relation between acculturation strategy and age, language efficiency, level of study, duration in Canada, previous destinations, self-access financial satisfaction and school financing (ps > .05).

In opposition to this study, previous studies have demonstrated that low fluency in English was associated with the choice of separation strategy (Cao et al., 2017; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1998; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). It has also been shown that immigrants with lower levels of study preferred separation and marginalization as acculturation strategies (Pham & Harris, 2001). Age has been reported to be significantly related to acculturation outcomes in a study that examined the acculturation and adaptation of immigrant youth from 13 countries (Berry et al., 2006; Cao et al., 2017). The effect of length of residence on acculturation strategies has been mitigated (Cao et al., 2017). Berry (1997) indicated that the length of residence positively predicts the degree of acculturation. In contrary, some other studies found that age, gender and length of residence have no significance in predicting the degree of acculturation (Cao et al., 2017). However, previous research has shown that intercultural adaptation happens as the newcomers arrive into a host society and increase as they gradually acquire new cultural skills recalling that acculturation is a long process (Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Previous overseas experience tends to affect acculturation of international students. Research showed that international students who have studied in a country different from their own, may better acculturate in a new foreign country (Buergelt et al., 2008; Cao et al., 2017). The relationship between specific variables is further examined later in the thesis.

4.6 Testing Hypothesises

As the above finding does not seem to warrant any further investigating beyond what they have proven, a discussion of the different hypothesis is now warranted. The choice of acculturation strategy, the effect of language barriers, and migration intention effect on principle variables were tested. The effect of language efficiency on acculturative stress was also further examined. The difference between the ISSAFC in Montreal and in Toronto, in regard to the choice of AS, level

of acculturative stress, intercultural adaptation and sociocultural adaptation, is addressed as well (see table 6 for One-Sample T Test Value=0).

4.6.1 Integration as a Preferred Acculturation Strategy of International Students from Sub-Saharan African Francophone Countries

This part explored the principal question of this thesis: what is the preferred acculturation strategy of the ISSAFC?

H1. Most international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries will choose integration as their preferred acculturation strategy, by keeping their ethnic cultural values while adopting the host country's mainstream culture (Berry, 1997).

A one sample t-test was performed to test whether ISSAFC will choose integration as their preferred acculturation strategy. The result showed that our test statistic is statistically significant. The ISSAFC choose a different acculturation strategy ($M=41.19$, $SD=6.6$) than did international students in general, $t(32) = 35.35$, $p<.001$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and a conclusion is made that there are statistically significant differences in the preference of our participants acculturation strategies, with less ISSAFC preferring integration ($N = 9$) compared to assimilation ($N = 17$) (see table 7). To confirm our findings, this hypothesis was further examined in the qualitative analysis.

4.6.2 The Effect of Communication Competences on Intercultural Adaptation

We speculate that with greater intercultural communication competences (ICCC), our ISSAFC will be able to fit into the new environment through their participating in a constant communication with the host community (Kim, 2001). This assumption will lead us to the test of the next hypothesis.

H2. ISSAFCs' greater intercultural communication competences will be associated with the better intercultural adaptation.

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the ICCC (M=31.78, SD=6.36). and ICA (M=19.78, SD=4.31). There was a weak negative linear relationship between the two variables, r = -0.316, n= 32, p = 0.078. Decreases in ICCC were correlated with decreases in ICA." We were not able to reject the null hypothesis.

4.6.3 Do Language Barriers Increase Acculturative Stress and Decrease Sociocultural Adaptation?

The next analysis looked at the effect of language barriers on acculturative stress and on sociocultural adaptation.

H3. Language barriers will enhance conflicts with the new culture and lead to greater acculturative stress and lower sociocultural adaptation.

4.6.3.1 *Do Language Barriers Increase Acculturative Stress?*

To respond to the question: "do language barriers enhance acculturative stress?" we conducted a Pearson correlation coefficient to assess the relationship between the two variables, language efficiency (M=5.4, SD=1.14). and acculturative stress levels (M=7.6, SD=1.7). The test showed a very weak positive correlation between the two variables, r = 0.018, n = 32, p = 0.921. There is no meaningful relationship between language efficiency and acculturative stress. This is opposed to the general assumption that there is a negative relationship between the two variables (Berry et al., 1987; Kim, 2001; Zhang & Goodson, 2011; Zhou & Zhang, 2014).

4.6.3.2 *Do Language Barriers Hinder Sociocultural Adaptation?*

Sociocultural adaptation has been placed within a culture learning approach to acculturation, which emphasises the importance of cross-cultural interactions and the acquisition of culture-specific interpersonal skills and behaviours in new cultural environments (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). According to Zhang and Goodson's (2011) review of adjustment antecedents, it is postulated that factors such as English language proficiency,

length of residence, and acculturation preferences predicted sociocultural adaptation. To test the relationship between language efficiency (M=7.7, SD=1.7) and sociocultural adaptation (M=61.7, SD=9.6) a Person's correlation coefficient was used. The calculation and subsequent significance testing reveal that language efficiency and SCA were significantly positively correlated r (32) = 0.542, p< 0.000. As our participants increase their knowledge of the majority language, they increase their sociocultural adaptation. We fail to reject the null hypothesis.

4.6.4 Migration Intention as Predictor of Principal Variables

We hypothesise that permanent residency intention is a predictor of AS and ASS, SCA, and ICA as measured by the total score on different scales (ps > .05).

H4. Permanent residency intention will significantly predict ISSAFCs' acculturation orientation, increase sociocultural and intercultural adaptation, and reduce acculturative stress.

Multiple regression analysis was used to test if the intention to migrate after graduation significantly predicted the effect of our principal variables. Intention to immigrate after graduation did not predict any of our dependent variables as shown in the table 8.

4.6.5 Migration Intention as a Moderator of Sociocultural Adaptation

Multiple regression analysis was used to test if the intention to migrate after graduation is a moderator of the significantly negatively correlated relationship between AS and SCA r = -0.50, n = 32, p< 0.00. The results of the regression indicated that migration intention (β = -0.075, p=.68) does not moderate the relationship AS-SCA as shown in the table 9.

4.6.6 International Students from Sub-Saharan African Countries in Toronto vs. Montreal

To further investigate at which level language barriers affected our participant we have decided tout compare our group from Toronto to another group in Montreal, a French environment. We hypothesis that:

H5. International students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries studying in Montreal, a francophone environment will undergo less acculturative stress than the participants studying in Toronto an anglophone environment.

Prior to our analysis, we checked the statistical significance of our variables for Toronto and Montreal Participants. The result showed that all the variables have a p-value p<005 (see table 10). To test whether ISSAFC in Toronto differ from one in Montreal based on their level of acculturative stress, sociocultural adaptation, intercultural adaptation, and the choice of acculturation strategy, we ran a series of Independent Samples T-test. As a result, the participants in Toronto choice of acculturation strategy (M=42.43, SD=6.2) do not differ from the one of the ISSAFC in Montreal (M=38, SD=6.8), t(30) = 1.77, p= .087. For SCA there is no difference between ISSAFC studying in Toronto (M=63.17, SD=9.81) and the one studying in Montreal (M=57.78, SD=8.41), t (30) =1.45, p= .157. The comparison of the two groups for BIAS showed that, Toronto (M=19.35, SD=5.05), Montreal (M=20.89, SD=4.99), t (30) = -.91, p= .372 do not differ in regard to their intercultural adaptation. Our calculations also showed that Toronto ISSAFCs' level of acculturative stress (M=33.35, SD=10.32), is not statistically different from Montreal participants (M=33.78, SD=7.90), t (30) = -.11, p= .911. As seen in the table 10, in the different cases, the p-value is greater than our chosen significance level $\alpha = 0.05$. We failed to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no difference between ISSAFC in Montreal and in Toronto regarding their level of acculturative stress, sociocultural adaptation, intercultural adaptation and the choice of acculturation strategy (see table 11). This is based on the fact that the students have access to learning in a French environment. Likewise, both groups had significantly higher preferences for assimilation than did the international students in general.

Following this session is the analysis of our qualitative data. Qualitative data consisted of individual and group interviews. Researchers suggested that combining individual and group

interviews gives considerable insight into the meanings that acculturation experiences hold for the interviewees (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). According to Adamson (2004) adding qualitative interviews to standardised survey questions can be a successful method to explore research issues and give insight into challenging topics. The next session also helped to compare and check the findings from quantitative analysis.

4.7 Qualitative Analysis

Pursuant to the in-depth quantitative analysis, and as mentioned throughout the previous chapter, qualitative approaches were also undertaken to further investigate the results. Validity is an essential criterion for evaluating the quality and acceptability of research. In order to validate the data and findings, it is recommended that researchers adopt triangulation by collecting data through several sources: questionnaires, interviews and group discussions, etc. Doing so can strengthen the validity of evaluation data and findings, avoid biases and weakness of the research and confirm findings (Brink, 1993). Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis allowed for the benefit of both a systematic statistical testing of theoretical hypotheses as well as qualitative insights provided in the interviewees' interviews.

A multi-method approach was adopted for this research, using both interviews and focus group discussions. Overall, 16 participants contributed through either a one-on-one interview, one of the two focus-group discussions, or both. In total, 12 interviews were conducted, and two focus groups were completed. The interviews took place in an office on campus, which I had booked for this purpose. The two focus group discussions took place in the Meaning Lab at Ryerson University. Except for some background noise, interviews and focus group discussions took place in a relatively quiet environment. The research used a theoretical thematic analysis that was driven by the specific research questions:

1. What are international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries preferred acculturation strategies?
2. How well do international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries adapt in their new educational and social environment?
3. What are the struggles international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries face when adapting to their new environment?
4. What are the coping systems used by international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries to overcome acculturative stress?

The analysis process was based on the data collected during our interviews and two group discussions. The data were coded and grouped into themes according to the thematic analysis methodology outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). We adopted the thematic analysis due to its flexibility (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To ensure the quality of the analysis, we used an Excel table (See Appendix K) where we compiled and clearly showed the process from raw data to the development of the different themes (Rolf, 2006).

The analysis started with the familiarization of the transcribed data and it was organised in a meaningful and systematic way. The data was broken down into smaller meaning units (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The meaning units are groups of sentences or paragraphs with significance, given by the participants in response to interview and focus group discussion questions. Particular word or group of words was highlighted to facilitate the identification of concepts and analysis. This first step was followed by the open coding process which consisted of labelling each identified meaning unit in concordance with the study (see Analysis schedule in the Appendix K) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The coded material was divided into concepts in accordance with the questions used during interviews and group discussions and on theoretical assumptions from the literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006). We used open coding which allowed us to develop and modify the codes as we worked through the coding process (Bengtosson, 2016). The use of codes in data analysis

facilitates the identification of concepts around which the data can be grouped into patterns (Bengtsson, 2016). We finished the process with the categorization which consisted of identifying themes and categories. Under themes, the sub-themes were discussed in a way to broaden the analysis. The themes and categories were named based on the existing literature and expressions from the participants. A final total of four themes were retained at the end of our analysis:

1) International students from Sub-Saharan African Francophone countries choice of acculturation strategies;
2) Acculturative stressors;
3) Coping strategies adopted to resolve these difficulties;
4) Suggestions to improve wellbeing;

After identifying the themes, we first performed a descriptive analysis and then followed with an interpretative analysis in concordance with the literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It was sometimes necessary to double code the data when it fit under more than one theme or category. Below are the findings based on the participants' responses about their acculturation experiences during their settlement process in an Ontario bilingual university in Canada.

4.8 Findings

4.8.1 The Choice of Acculturation Strategies

According to Berry's (1997) two-dimensional model of acculturation, individuals adopt different strategies that will allow them to achieve a successful adaptation to the culture of their new environment. These strategies are dictated by the degree to which the immigrants' favour either the host majority culture, their own original culture, both, and neither culture (Berry, 1997). As international students, our participants' acculturation process occurs mostly in their educational environment. Their acculturation strategies and intercultural adaptation were determined according to the degree to which they interact with the university setting. Therefore, our research

focused on how they value contact with their fellow African students, and how much they participated in activities on campus, particularly with Canadian students, campus staff and officials, faculty members, and even strangers, to determine their acculturation strategies. It came from our analysis that integration and separation were the two preferred acculturation strategies adopted by our participants.

4.8.1.1 ***Integration***

This refers to when immigrants desire to maintain their culture and to have contact with the majority culture. While most of the participants do not have Canadian friends, they give significant value to Canadian culture and would like to learn from this culture. Half of our participants n= 8 (50%) chose integration as their preferred acculturation orientation, as indicated by the following excerpts in which a participant was asked how much he values his original culture:

> "If I have to measure it, **I have to say 10/10** because for me everyone has his culture, everyone brings something new. I am very open to other cultures and I think that in the same way **others as well should accept my culture**. I'm trying to learn from other cultures, no culture is perfect. There are pros and cons to all kinds of cultures compared to your culture. **That's sort of the blend I make**." LD (21)

> **"100% want to keep my culture**. We are African, and we have to soak up to our culture wherever we are. GD1, NC (20)

> [Culture] **makes us who we are**. We have to fit in but not forget ourselves. **We must not forget our culture** even if we have to learn from the culture of others, since we are in their country. GD1 DBA (19)

Since integration refers to participation in the host community while maintaining one's own culture, we also investigated our interviewees' socialization. Most of our participants declared that they generally socialize with other Africans international students. They work together and participate in different events on campus with Africans, but they try to be in contact with Canadian students too.

> "I am **often with African students**, the students of my country. In general, with francophone students in general but also **some African anglophone students**. But **I'm also trying to connect with Canadian** students." GD2 MRL (23)

> 'I take part in activities of **the African club**. I take part in many activities now that I am at Keele, for immersion in an **anglophone environment**. I socialize with Canadians, but it is very rare. Most of the time, it's always with **other [international students],** especially with Africans. Even if I socialize with Canadians, they are **African Canadians**. SS (19)

> 'Most of them [my friends] **are Africans**, but **also blacks**, **Caribbeans**. But people from **the black community are more supportive**. But it is true that the first year during frosh week, when my friends and I were in different groups, I met some **Canadians in my group with which I am still with**, but it is true that **we are not so close anymore**.' MJK (20)

> **Whether it's Canadian or other international students, it doesn't matter to me**. I do activities with both groups so that I can integrate into society, and to have relationships all over the place. MRL (23)

In light of the Berry's bidimensional model of acculturation, we asked how much the ISSAFC value the host culture. According to the excerpts below, they think that learning the host culture is important for their integration.

> "**We need to learn the host country realities** because there are codes and ways of doing things and being around Canadians can open our minds. Also, because we have our ways of doing and thinking which do not necessarily apply here. **It is important to have a circle of Canadian friends."** GD1 KM (25)

"It is important to learn their culture if we want to integrate here." GD2 MRL (23)

> **"I'm trying to learn from other cultures**, nobody's perfect. There are pros and cons to all kinds of cultures compared to your culture. **That's sort of the mix I make."** LD (21)

4.8.1.2 ***Separation***

The second most popular acculturation orientation adopted by our respondents was separation. This strategy is referred to as when immigrants want to maintain their heritage culture and do not desire to be in contact with the host majority. Several participants n=6 (37.5%) chose separation as their acculturation orientation. Several of our participants admitted that they meet up

only with their fellow African students and do not care about getting in contact with Canadian students. When we asked how much they value contact with Canadians, here are their answers:

> "I **don't mind really**. Anyway, there are not many Canadians in my programme." GD1 DBA (19)
>
> "With whom I socialize, **they are only Africans and for me, I do not stop to tell myself that I should be friends with Canadians**." GD1 DBB (20)
>
> "I'm not going to say **I don't have Canadian friends, so that's a problem for me**. I have a Canadian friend, we talk a lot, we go out together, but there's no much affinity between us." GD1 HV (18)
> 'It's **not a priority** for me, but if **I don't, it's okay**. GD2 ME (20)

4.8.1.3 *Assimilation*

While the majority of our participants chose integration or separation as their preferred acculturation orientation, few students adopted assimilation. Assimilation is when immigrants value contact with the majority, but do not desire culture maintenance. Few of our participants n=2 (12.5) did not think that maintaining the original culture is important for wellbeing in their new environment. One of our participants recognized that he generally socialized and does activities with his fellow African students, but he gave more importance to the contact with the host culture than maintaining his original culture.

> "**My culture has a certain importance**, but if it was up to me, **I would not care about it.** Here I hesitate to keep certain cultures." NE (20)

As for another participant, maintaining her culture has no importance. She stated that she knows about her original culture and that the most important thing now is to acquire the host culture.

> "**Culture doesn't matter to me**. Because I think culture is a value you have, but it's a lot more in your head." DG2 ME (20)

As shown by previous research, integration is the most favoured acculturation strategy of international students, which is similarly found in other acculturating groups (Yu & Wang, 2011).

However, our findings suggest that separation is also favoured by our participants. According to the literature, when lessening acculturative stress and improving adaptation, it is important that immigrants participate in a familiar form of communication within their own ethnic community at the beginning of the process (Kim, 2001). It was also suggested that immigrants will become more independent and overcome acculturative stressors as they increase their communication competency in the host culture (Kim, 2001). Our results may be justified by the fact that our participants are in the early of their adventure.

4.8.2 Acculturative Stressors

Previous pieces of research have shown that the most common challenges faced by international students when studying abroad are language-related, sociocultural, and academic problems. (Mori, 2000; Ramsay et al.,1999; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Zhang & Zhou, 2010; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). To investigate our second theme, acculturative stressors, sub-themes were developed based on the conceptual and experiential similarities of most of the participants' responses on factors affecting their intercultural adaptations. The following sub-themes such as discrimination, homesickness, language barriers, academic stressors, challenges in social settings and other academic challenges are elaborated by participants' quotes.

4.8.2.1 ***Discrimination***

Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994) found in their study that perceived discrimination was the stressor which affected international student acculturation process the most. It is also demonstrated that international students of colour, in addition to racial discrimination, have to endure discrimination based on their accents, language, and stereotypes about their countries of origin (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014). Researchers suggested that when immigrants experience racial discrimination or prejudice in their interactions with members of the host culture,

they have more difficulties adapting to their new environment (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Constantine et al., 2005; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014).

Most of our participants reported that they have never encountered discrimination on campus. When we asked them whether they have faced discrimination, they answered that they have not been discriminated against. Even if most of them stated that they do not face discrimination, a few have claimed that their friends told them that they have to endure it.

> "I don't, **I have friends who tell me that**, but **I don't let those kinds of things get to me.** As long as you agree to be here, the rest doesn't matter." ME (20)

> **"I've never had a situation of discrimination**, but **people tell me about it**. But **I tell myself that it's often in the head**. For me, when I look at myself I tell myself that no one is above me and no one is below me." LD (21)

In their research on African students studying in the United Kingdom, Maringe and Carter (2007) found that the participants did not report any issues with discrimination, abounding in the same direction as our findings. However, Houshmand et al. (2014) found that due to multiculturalism, international students in Canada are most of the time subjected to micro-aggressions rather than direct racial confrontations. This suggests that the issues of discrimination cannot be ignored in the process of acculturation of international students. Some of the interviewees declared they may be faced with discrimination but do not pay attention to it. These findings are supported by Constantine and colleagues' study which suggested that international students usually ignore the acts of discrimination (Constantine et al., 2005). For example, one of our respondents noted:

> "**Maybe I've been a victim of racism** but I'm not paying attention to that." LD (21)

> "**I faced an act of discrimination** in the subway and **just ignored it**". GD2 MRL (23)

Among participants who declared they had discriminatory experiences, one said it occurred with a professor. While the majority of our ISSAFC reported they had support from their professors, one did not agree with this statement. The student revealed she was discriminated against by a professor on campus:

> "I had a professor. I was late, and I went to see her to apologize and everything. **She didn't actually listen to me and said she didn't know why I was late**. And there was a Frenchman who arrived two weeks later, even later. But she welcomed him very well. As if nothing had happened, **she even arranged for him to return his homework in time**." ME (20)

As it comes to discrimination off campus, most of our participants reported they have experienced discrimination outside the university in their social lives. Two of the respondents noted they were called names and racial slurs by individuals in the subway. With regard to this, one student reported,

> "I had to go to the supermarket with some friends, **a woman on the subway** looked at us from a distance, and as soon as we passed her, **she called us witches and dirty Blacks.** We didn't want to answer, but we were extremely shocked. Once in the subway, yet another person started threatening us with death. That **blacks don't deserve to be here,** [asking] why we're in their country**, and telling us to go back home, that he's not afraid to kill us."** MRL (23)

4.8.2.2 ***Life in Residence***

As opposed to the finding in Zhou and Zhang (2014) which suggested that living on campus increases international student wellbeing during their acculturation process, living in residence was not a pleasant experience for our participants. All of them commented on the quality of life in residence on campus. The critiques they shared with us were the dirtiness of the washrooms and toilets, the impossibility of having access to the kitchen and the fact that the food at the cafeteria is not varied or good.

> "Frankly, **there is no way I would live in residence on campus**. I have only heard bad feedback about it. People who live on campus **find that, it is dirty, it is really bad**." GD1 DBB (20)

> "**We could have moved to campus if we had good returns** without a problem, but we can't. We have to look for an apartment and **look for an apartment here is a fighter's way**." GD1 DBA (19)

> "And **it's not like staying on campus is affordable**. The only advantage this offers is not looking for an apartment." GD1 HV (18)

In conclusion, most of the surveyed participants had no solution other than looking for an apartment out of campus. And as expressed by the interviewees, the search for an apartment is a severe source of discrimination and stress. All of the respondents recalled how difficult it is to live on campus when they do not have access to the kitchen and good food in the cafeteria. It was found that discrimination happened most of the time while looking for apartments or in public transportation. Most of our participants n=12 (75%) have faced discrimination while they were looking for an apartment. Ours findings are supported by Calder et al.'s (2016) study on international graduate students in Canada, which revealed different struggles faced by these students in their search for a decent apartment to live in during their acculturation. The researchers found that most of these students reported difficulties finding an adequate accommodation. While living on campus is very costly and not always pleasant because of the inconvenient reported by our participants such as cleanliness of the residences, obligation to leave campus during breaks, and non-access to the kitchen, it is also very difficult to find an accommodation at a reasonable price and close to campus. According to Calder et al. (2016),

> "When you talk about **discrimination** in Toronto, **it's not always because you're black or you're from Africa**. It's because **you're not Canadian.** Because they ask you for papers that you can't hold if you haven't lived here. Like your rental history. For example, **when you want to rent a house, they ask us for guarantees**, we are international students. We sure don't have one. Where do we find them? They ask you anyway. I tell them I'm an international student. If you are here as an international student, it means **you're all alone**, and **you probably don't have anyone here in Canada to guarantee anything**. If your parents sent you, they can afford it." HV (18)

> **'At Walmart** I **was physically attacked by a gentleman**. Also, before I found a rented apartment, I suffered. I rented an apartment (in a home setting) in York village twice, **I had racist janitors**. The first place I lived was with my friend whom I met, **who told me she was being harassed, but I didn't want to dwell on that**. My parents don't like when I talk about it because they tell themselves that eventually it becomes mental. Then where I moved next, **this place was a real problem until the janitor tried to slap me**. Where **I got comments like when you prepare it all the time you people of Africa**. By the time it was too much, I had to answer, and they said, yes, you answer because you have no education, **you come from Africa**.' SS (19)

The participant even reported that the situation hampered her mood.

> "I still have audio recordings of my concierge following me into the house. Because for a moment I needed proof. Telling me, you Africans, you are this, you are that. **I even had problems at school because it had become too much**. **My mood, my way of behaving had all changed.** I didn't even want to affiliate with Canadians anymore, because to me it was racism and they're pretending." SS (19)

The students also faced discrimination in their everyday lives and some of them talked about what they have suffered. For example, bus drivers will drive away while they are running to catch the bus during the winter. Another participant expressed his frustration when a bus driver would not let him get on the bus because he did not have the right change and instead suggested to give a $ 5.00 bill. However, the driver refused, preventing him to take the bus.

> "It **was a bus driver**. I was coming from a friend's house, I wanted to get on the bus… but I only had a $2.00 coin. …. I explained to him that I am a student and that I have two dollars. He told me it was $ 2.25 then. I said, as I have no coin, I will deposit a $5.00 bill, and he refused. I said I don't want any money back, he can keep $7.00. It started discussions. You, **when you come in people's country…** and **he got me off the bus**, and I got off." PB (22).

All these statements align with what is suggested in the literature. As stated by the other international students, the ISSAFC also reported being discriminated against during their acculturation process.

4.8.2.3 *Homesickness and Loneliness*

Researchers argued that homesickness is the second most common acculturative stressor reported by international students (Boafo-Arthur 2014; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Constantine et al., 2004). Constantine et al. (2005) reported prejudice and discrimination as the principal source of stress in Black African students. All the participants in this study revealed that they had homesickness. One told us now that school has finished, she started suffering homesickness.

> "Now again, **I feel homesick because I am no longer in school**. Because the school is over. When I'm at school, I do not have time to think about it, because I'm busy. When I'm with my friends, it's OK. But I do not see myself staying until September, **I want to go back.**" DG1 DBB (20)

> "At the beginning of my first year **I felt quite alone**, I wanted to see my parents. **Whenever I heard my parents' voice, it made me cry**. I wanted to go back home. Yes, now it's better." MRL (23)

> "**At times, I get homesick**. And to get over these moments, **I talk a lot with my parents** and at the same time **I had the chance to make a lot of friends here**. And I also know that **I'm here for a purpose**. I also knew that it was going to happen and that this bas time will go by." LD (21)

> "The first time I came, I was with my mum and she stayed with me until November and after that, I was busy with my courses. It is when **I went back home during the December** holidays and came back that **I was really homesick**. I spent **dozens of days without getting out of my house**." GD1 HV (18)

This research is consistent with the findings reported in the literature which suggested that in adjusting to life in the host country, international students most of the time feel home sick, depressed and lonely. (Boafo-Arthur, 2013; Constantine et al., 2005; Lee & Opio, 2011; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994).

4.8.2.4 *Pressure from Families*

International students may be pressured by their family and sponsoring university in their country of origin to do well at the level of academic performance (Constantine et al., 2005; Boafo-Arthur, 2014). The participants also declared that they have a lot of pressure from their family.

Even if their parents do not complain about the costliness of education in Canada, they knew it constitutes a considerable load on their shoulders. Because of the amount of money their parents are investing in their education the international student said missing the academic year in not an option.

> "Our parents will never tell us that it is too expensive. We know that they are fighting for us. **And the pressure is on us. You cannot** miss a $3,000.00 course. You want to get a good grade back. And also, there's no recognition. We work well, and **we are forced to work well because of what our parents pay**, **so that is a pressure**." GD1 HV (18)

> **"We are under so much pressure**. **We cannot afford to have a C or D."** My conclusion is clear: it is not worth the $ 27,000.00 we are paying." GD1 DBB (20)

As expressed in the vignettes below, most of our respondents recalled that their parents paid they school fees and in return they have to help other members of the family.

> "It is that in African society it is **mainly the look of the family, what people will think**. You must succeed, so **it puts pressure on you**. You have to succeed and everything. But **it stresses me**, since I have not yet mastered my English, I have the impression that **I am not moving** on but staying put. **It is a source of stress**." NE (20)

> "I'm **the oldest in my family**, and I have to **help my parents push my brothers.** Frankly, I cannot fail. There is a responsibility on my shoulders." GK (20).

The examples above are an indication that supports the notion that in addition to the common acculturative stress experienced by international students in general, Black international students also faced a lot of presser from their original home community (Boafo-Arthur, 2013; Lee & Opio, 2011).

4.8.3 Academic Stressors

International students also encounter several acculturative stressors within the educational domain, which as a result can influence adaptations (Mori, 2000). Research suggests that, in general, international students feel the most stressed in their academic environment (Foafo-Arthur,

2013; Constantine & al., 2005). From the students in our study, it appeared that the common stressors in the educational domain are language barriers, lack of information, dissatisfaction with the program, and adapting to new teaching styles.

4.8.3.1 *Language Barriers*

Language barriers are recognized as one of the principal stressors of people during the acculturation process (Constantine et al., 2005; Boafo-Arthur, 2014). In addition to constituting an obstacle to their academic success, language barriers may also impair our respondents' social life as suggested by the expert below.

> "**Classes in English require more work**. On weekends, I had to translate to understand because they were specialized words, like in my biology class." DBA (19)
>
> "I like Canada, but the cold! And what I find unfortunate, I'm not integrated enough. I don't know many Canadians**. And there's also the language barrier that doesn't help.** And I'm also afraid to find myself in an environment that I don't know!" **AD (18)**

Abounding in the same direction as previous research, some of the respondents to this research declared language proficiency impaired their adaptation to the new environment (Zhang & Zhou, 2010, 2014). All of the participants did English as a second language back home before coming to Canada. While they all had difficulties adapting to the pronunciation, and had some vocabulary problems, many of them master the grammar and overcome language barriers relatively fast.

> "**Language has not been a barrier to my socialization**. I know I **don't speak English well**, so I don't trust myself to speak. But that **doesn't stop me from making anglophone friends**." GK (20)
>
> "No, **I didn't have a problem with the language**. Because **I have parents who pushed me much more to learn English**. I had to adapt to the **Canadian way of talking**, but I think I got used to it." LD (21)
>
> "When I noticed that **everyone had an accent here**. I told myself that in truth **nobody really speaks English like the** [people from England]

> **English**. I said to myself, I have to do this. As for doing, if you were asked the same question two or three times, you would have learned." GD1 HV (18)

As shown in a number of studies that examined the acculturative experiences of international students, our participants also seem to experience to some degree common adjustment issues which are language barriers (Andrade et al., 2005).

4.8.4 Lack of Information

According to our participants' comments on their perceptions of the university and programs, it turned out that lack of information was one of the main academic issues reported. A mismatch in expectations regarding the quality and efficiency of the services provided by educational institutions appeared to be another possible source of acculturative stress for international students (Dentakos et al., 2017). African students were dissatisfied with the information they received from the university about their academic matters. Lee and Opio (2011) asserted that the challenges experienced by Black international students are mostly due to the lack of information shown by their host institutions. One student reported that the counselors found it difficult to reliably determine whether a student had to take one course or not. The result was a waste of financial resources and time for the students and their parents. One should recall that these students usually pay for courses they do not have the means to take.

> "I think it's a scam. They make us take courses we don't need." GD1 HV (18).

> "**All the general education courses** I had taken, **I didn't need them.** I could have completed this programme in two years." DBB (20).

> **"I came to study business economics**, but I'm sorry, what I study is economics and math. **I found nothing business**." GD1 DBA (19).

> "Especially as an international student **we don't know the credit system,** etc. so if you don't make an effort **you lose your money**." GD1 HV (18)

Some students indicated that sometimes information was available but not accessible to students.

> "I know there are **a lot of resources that I'm not aware of**, but it's not because I'm not looking for information. Some things are not disclosed." SS (19)

One participant commented about an important program that most of the students ignore on campus. When describing the experience with a particular instructor, the participant said:

> "**We didn't know that the students could take courses in English and return works in French**. If we knew that, many students would try to take a course in English, try to understand the course, even if they couldn't assimilate the course in English, they would study to translate, and return the work in French. Essentially, **the students would have acquired the language**, **the way of speaking of the professor** and to do the work in French to **be able to have the grade**" PB (22).

A few participants have also complained about the teaching methods and the information provided by the instructors.

> "But **it was not written like that on the website**. T**he information on the website is not clear** and when we went to talk to him, he did not want to understand too much." BC (18)

The above-mentioned experiences indicated that our participants experienced acculturative stress because of the lack of information as reported in the literature. They reported a significant lack of information which is a real threat to their experience as reported by one respondent.

> "I think that if they try to find out what the needs of students are, it would be really good. The courses are good, the environment also, but **we don't have the information we needed to benefit from the services."** GK (20)

4.8.5 Adapting to New Teaching Styles

The respondents of the research reported some difficulties in learning the norms and customs of the host country's educational system. Since university education in Canada increasingly involves presentations, some of our participants reported difficulties about making presentations. According to Irungu (2013), the education system in Africa are usually routed in memorization and knowledge presented verbatim (Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014; Irungu, 2013). Few of our students reported that they struggle with the new academic environment pedagogical styles.

They also found it difficult to adjust to the teaching style in Canada, because in their country, the educational system focusses upon rote learning, and

> "**I had a lot of difficulties adjusting to the way they teach here**. Back home, even though we talked a lot about France, we did African stuff and **we didn't use computers much.** Except for people who are a little lucky and their parents can give them computers." GD1 NC (20)

> "**Presentations are my main source of stress**. I have a phobia about presentations. Back home I used to, but it was like five or seven in the group and you can have two or three sentences to say and that's it. Here it is necessary to do it alone or maximum with two. Also, in all my courses, I had to make presentations**. It's stressful**, but it also helps me overcome my fear." GD2 MRL (23)

International student's lack of involvement in class is generally due to linguistic issues. One participant declared she did not participate because even when the professor spoke in French, her native language, she did not fully understand what he was saying.

> "**Because of my accent at the beginning**, when **I spoke in the class, nobody understood me.** Both the teachers and the students. Either in French or English." GD2 MRL (23)

As retrieved in the literature, Boafo-Arthur (2013) recognized that differences in vocabulary and accent can also constitute a source of acculturative stress for international students.

4.8.6 Friendship with Canadian Students

Friendships with co-nationals or fellow international students are an important source of social support for international students (Ward et al., 2001; Kuo & Tsai, 1986). The lack of quality friendships could constitute a real obstacle to the international students' intercultural adaptation. The participants in our study were all critical of Canadians' social customs. All of our students revealed that they had struggled at a certain level making friends with Canadian students. As suggested by participants from our discussion groups,

> "With Canadians **you communicated** only when you are **in classes** actually. But as soon as the course is over, they don't know you anymore. When

> they are alone, they greet you all, but when you see them with their group of friends, they act as if they do not know you." GD2 MRL (23)
>
> "I don't think **they're interested in our culture**. Most of them don't know our countries. A Canadian will never come to you randomly, just to learn about your culture." GD2 MRL (23)

They revealed that they do not have Canadian friends, just acquaintances.

> "But it is true that the first year there had been the frosh week when my friends and I were in different groups, **I met some Canadians in my group with which I am still in touch, but it is true that we are not that close anymore.** After Frosh Week we met very often and went to a restaurant, but as time went by, we lost contact. **In residence, most of the time is spent between international students**." MJK (20)
>
> "**I socialize with Canadians**, but it's very rare. It's always with other non-Canadians. If they are Canadians, t**hey are Canadians who came from Africa and who grew up here.**" SS (19)
>
> "Since our **campus is small**, with a huge **concentration of Africans**, when an African comes for example, most of the time, a senior African student will welcome the new one. That's just how the bonds are formes." PB (22)

It was concluded that most of the respondents received their support from other international students and particularly from other African international students. Some of them were friends back home. The findings about the participants friendships aligned with the literature. It was shown that international students struggle establishing relationships with people outside their ethnic community (Ward & Kennedy, 1992; Kuo & Tsai, 1986).

4.8.7 Coping Strategies

Researchers emphasised that the immigrants' capability to adapt to their new environments is usually determined by the ways in which they effectively use appropriate coping mechanisms to overcome acculturative stress (Andrade, 2006; Berry, 1997; Crockett et al., 2007).

The students were asked to comment on which coping strategies they used to overcome their acculturative stress. They reported that to cope with such situations, they maintain regular communication with their loved ones. Most of them talk to parents and friends back home, but

most of the time they hang out with other African international students. Participants also reported that support from professors and staff helped during critical moments.

4.8.8 Social Support

Social support is vital for international student wellbeing. Social support is comprised of support from university staff, professors, friends from back home and in the host country, and parents. The participants recognized that they received a lot of assistance from the academics and this support really made a difference in their adaptation process and wellbeing.

> "I'm **satisfied with my teachers**, they're **easy to approach**. That's one of the benefits of Glendon. **Classes are small**, it is easier to approach teachers and ask questions when there is a problem." LD (21)

> "**Many teachers come from abroad**. For example, our math teacher, he knows all the systems. Therefore, **he allows everyone to answer the way he learned**. The fact that staff have an open mind allows students to adapt better." GD1 HV (18)

> "There are language barriers, but it is a problem that can be resolved. **There are some teachers who will help you find books or websites in French.** MJK (20)

The effectiveness of support from university staff was found to be crucial for international students' wellbeing. Many of our students were critical about the support they received from university staff. The students argued that they had a lot of support from university staff when they were back home during the admission process, but as soon as they were here the situation changed. One student told us that,

> "**I used to have direct contact, but now you're here, it's like we're harassing them. They tell you, I give you the site and you go get the information."** GD1 HV (18)

> 'When a foreign student comes here, **it's up to them to deal with it**. At the beginning of the year, there are small workshops in which they explain things like public transit, but we have so many things in our head that I am not sure this is what we are interested in at that moment. What's there, **there's no follow-up afterwards**. GD2 MRL (23)

> ‘[The advisor] **didn’t tell me** there were **courses I didn’t need**. **All my general education classes, I didn’t need them**. I could have finished in two and a half years. DBA (20)

While several respondents were disappointed about the service provided by university staff, some of them were very satisfied by the assistance during difficult moments.

> **“We actually “subscribed” to her**. She took the time to go to the website to show us the stuff and everything. We used to go to see her all the time.” DBA (20)

> “The teachers, **the counsellors and my family here helped me**. I was called to academic services because my grades were not good, and they talked to me and told me that it was normal and that it would pass.” GD2 MRL (23).

> “I have attended several workshops on how to take a course and how to adapt to the system. **The advisors are quite reactive and understanding**.” PB (22)

Diversity on campus was reported as having facilitated the students’ adaptation on campus. African clubs on campus are helpful for our participants. All of them have indicated that they were welcomed by the African Students’ Association and participated in the activities organised by the club.

> “When I arrived the first year, **I already knew some Ivorians**. I had the chance **to talk with others through social networks**. So, it **was easier for me to make some African friends**. And since everyone some kind of relationship, the circle quickly grew. **There was the African Club**, we went to club events and we met other students.” MJK (20)

> “My socialization **was easy** because **I knew some international students before I came here**. I was in contact with **some people I knew back home**. When I came here, **they were pleased to help me get around**.” GD2 ME

4.8.9 Counselling

When asked if they would like to talk to a counselor about their difficulties, our respondents showed suspicion about individual counselling. Many of them do not want to access the service. Research has suggested that international students may face cultural stigma for seeing a therapist (Constantine et al., 2004). However, some of them indicated that they may be considered one-on-

one meeting a counsellor if they are constraints to do so, while others find the needed service during a critical moment as suggested by the experts below.

> "**I don't think I'll have the will to consult with a psychologist**. But if I'm urged to, I will go as a last resort. Back home you don't expose your problems to strangers. The problems stay inside the family. You don't wash your dirty laundry in public." MRL (23)

> "I **know there's the service**, but I'm not comfortable explaining my problems because **we're not used to it** from where I came. I don't think so, because I know, even when there was the problem with the janitor and other problems that happened, **I was really struggling, but I can't**. I don't think I could go." SS (19)

> "**If she were an African from our culture** and perhaps **also a little younger**, I would say yes. Because, I tell myself, the older the age, certain things may seem commonplace; whereas for younger people, we know what it is. That it is not trivial. Yes, **it would encourage me a lot more**, when things are too much for me, **I could meet with someone.**" SS (19)

> "I think that it can be **a good way to help students to overcome homesickness**." ME (20)

Research has shown that social support from friends, family, campus staff and officials such as counselors is essential to international students' positive adaptation (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Warren & Constantine, 2007; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Constantine and colleagues (2005) found in their study on Kenyan, Nigerian, and Ghanaian international students in the United States, many of these students will refuse to use formal mental health services such as individual counselling when facing severe struggles during their adjustment period. Even if one student mentioned the advantages such a service can bring to international students during this critical moment, several of our respondents reported that they cannot access this service because of their cultural beliefs and the fact that they are not familiar with this Western notion.

4.8.10 Intercultural Adaptation

4.8.10.1 *Self-determination of Studying Abroad*

Among the factors that facilitate international students' integration in their new environment, there is the self-determination of studying abroad. Chirkov and colleagues (2007, 2008) found in their study on Chinese international students that their autonomy in moving abroad is an important predictor of their adaptation in the university setting. This statement assumed that students who actively participate in the decision to pursue their higher education abroad are more expected to reach a high-level adaptation than the ones who are forced, due to self-determined motivation. For all our participants, the decision to study abroad was made by their parents.

> "**My father decided that I would come to Canada**. Given the situation in our country, he thought of the opportunities he missed and wished that his children should get a good education. **My dad made the decision and I agreed with him**. I think it was really the best decision." GK (20)

> "**My dad and my older brother** were **pushing** for me to come to study in Canada. Coming to Glendon wasn't the first choice, but my older brother proposed Glendon. I wanted to have classes in French too, not just in English." MJK (20)

Two of them have participated in the search for a university. Even if the decision was made by their family, it does not negatively affect their adaptation to the new environment because of the prestige that studying abroad constitutes in their country.

> "With the situation back home, after graduating, we don't really have an opportunity to get a job. **But with a Canadian diploma, you have more chances to get a job**." GK (20)

> "Not everyone **has had the chance** to come to Canada. I think I should make the most of it." LD (23)

The above-mentioned results suggested that event if most of our participants are not involved in the decision to move abroad, they stood behind this decision and are happy to take the journey. This is generally due to the meaning that studying abroad represent in their culture. The findings also demonstrated that motivational factors may have a positive effect on our

participants' sociocultural adaptation (Chirkov et al., 2008; Chirkov et al., 2007; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

4.8.11 Satisfaction with the University

Several respondents in this thesis reported that they were satisfied with their university. The participants n=12 (75%) revealed they are satisfied with their choice of university. Most of the participants are satisfied with the university, even if they are not satisfied with the programs they are enrolled in. Some of them are satisfied because of the diversity on campus and others comment about the bilingual environment.

> "I **was impressed by the diversity of culture on campus**. I can find other people from elsewhere, **other communities, other cultures**. And it allows you to learn from each other. With **French and English**, it allows you to gain more experience, even if you only take courses in French." GK (20)

> "**I chose Glendon because of bilingualism**. Some of my friends have asked me why I don't come to Montreal, because I cannot speak English, which is true, but the **longer I stay in an English environment the better my chances of speaking English**." GK (20)

> "**I am satisfied, because it is bilingual and multicultural**. Me, I like this! Me, [to me this is] the most important, you are here, you study, this is the most important for the moment." MM (20)

> "Another problem I have in Glendon is that **we really speak too much French**. For people who have come here, like, 80% or 90% of the people who come here, they want to **use Glendon as a springboard to improve their English**, while being in an easy environment, to be able to adapt to English. But they ended up being in an environment where **French is spoken 90%** of the time." PB (22)

A few students reported their dissatisfaction with their programs. They argued that the descriptions provided about the programs at the university website, did not correspond with what was offered in reality. They even declared that the university did it on purpose as suggested by one participant,

> "Since everything in North America is based on money, I think that's also the problem. **The fact that international students pay dearly**. So, by

> paying extra for courses it's more money, **I think maybe it's done on purpose**." GD1 KM (25)

> "There should be an **anglophone lounge** to allow francophones **to perfect their English** as well. I am in my 4th year, I understand English well, but I continue to have problems expressing myself. My expression is really basic" KM (25).

> "**I especially like the fact that it's small and there aren't many people in the classes**, so you feel that the teacher knows you. The university is small but there's no such thing as support, what makes me lost." AD (18)

> "The only positive thing about Glendon, I think, is the fact that **the professors are bilingual**, that's really very positive, **you can switch between the two languages**. And the fact that the classes aren't that big, it really **gets the teacher's attention**." SS (19)

Among people who are not satisfied, the choice of the program was also the root of the problem.

> "**I came to do Business Economics**, but I'm sorry, what I do is economics and math**. I didn't find any business**." DBA (19)

The fact that there is a concentration of Black international students in their programme justify the fact that there are most of the time with their fellow Black international students.

> "And especially also, there's a small...**in business economics, most of the students are African**. It's not a program where there's a concentration of Canadians or.... So, it's always the same international students." PB (22)

4.8.12 Satisfaction About the Canadian Academic System

Most of the participants have a good perception about the Canadian academic system. One respondent indicated that she chose to come to study in Canada because of the prestige of a Canadian diploma. Another one declared that her parents chose Canada because a Canadian diploma is valued everywhere in the world.

> "I would say it's **a blessing to have a Canadian degree**. Because for me, frankly, **I never thought I'd ever get here**. With a Canadian degree, if tomorrow I go to China in France or anywhere, there is **a better opportunity** for me to **have a job** because it is recognized." GK (20)

> I decided to come here because **the common idea back home when you have a diploma from Canada**, you **are better recognized in the workplace**. It was mostly only for that purpose. SS (19)

Only three participants who had studied in Europe showed disappointment about the Canadian education system.

> "I **don't like the environment**, though, **I don't like the school and I don't like what I am doing**. And overall, it is expensive. **I have decided to move to Montreal**." GD1 HV (18)

4.8.13 Intention to Immigrate After Graduation

The students were asked whether they were planning to immigrate to Canada after graduation. The reason behind the question was to find out whether the intention to immigrate after graduation will lessen acculturative stressors and lead to a greater intercultural adaptation. The majority of the participants reported they are planning to immigrate after graduation. Some participants declared that the decision to stay in Canada after graduation was from their parents. One participant recounted:

> "I graduate, I do my residency and I get the passport and then I can go back. **My father told me I pay $ 30,000. 00, you cannot come back only with the diploma; you get the passport too.** Because with the passport, you can travel in many countries, visas are expensive. To go to the United States nearby, we pay $210. 00" GD1 NC

> "**Even before I came to Canada, my parents had decided that I would not return home after my studies**. My parents don't want me to go back. For holidays, yes, but not for me to stay in the country. They want me to move here, to be successful." GK (20)

> "I'm thinking of immigrating after graduation. **At first, I didn't plan to stay in Canada. I thought that when I finish I was finishing my studies I would go back home**. But my sisters don't want me to. I am the youngest of four girls and my big sisters do not want me to come back home. As time goes by, I can see myself staying after my studies." MRL (23)

> "**That was the plan**, **to get the passport, to get the residence, to work here**. I decided to come to Canada, and I think I should make the most of it." LD (21)

The responses from our participants also confirm the assumption that the intention to stay in Canada after graduation may have a positive effect on the immigrant adaptation in the new environment. Student has confirmed that it would be more difficult to adapt if he did not have the plane to immigrate after graduation. Abounding in the same direction with findings of the study conducting by Dentakos and colleagues (2017) that investigated international student adjustment and permanent residency intentions. The researchers suggested that international students with high levels of acculturation motivation are subject to positive adjustment and have high intentions of pursuing permanent host country residency.

> "**It would have been more complicated if I didn't have the plan to move to Canada after graduation.** When everything is well set up, well organised, you grow without any problem. Not everyone has had the opportunity to come to Canada. I think I need to make the most of it." LD (21)

4.8.14 Intercultural Adaptation

All of our participants suggested that they are somehow integrated in their new environment. When a few of them declared they are well integrated some recognized, they still had a way to go in their integration process. However, all of them think they are on the good track, showing that despite a few pitfalls the ISSAFC acculturation process was relatively smooth and they are fitting well in their new environment as suggested by one participant.

> "I'm **giving myself 9/10 for my journey in Canada**, whether it's socially, academically or mentally, I think it went well. LD (21)

> "**It's easier to integrate because Canada is bilingual, and it allows us to**... in terms of English, in terms of the number of people. There's so much diversity, especially in Toronto**, that it's easier**." LD (21)

> "I can't say that I am really integrated 100%, from my point of view, **but I can say that I have already done more than half of my integration**." MRL (23)

4.8.15 Suggestions to Improve Wellbeing

It is known that the transition to new educational, cultural and social environments is a struggle for most international students. Researchers have noted several suggestions to improve

wellbeing (Hyams-Ssekasi, 2014; Constantine et al., 2005). One participant suggested that the diversity among the university staff and especially among the counselor could incite the international student to open up and seek for help during their difficult times.

> "I think we should **hire a lot more people from different cultures**. Much **more comprehensive** and can **anticipate problems that we do not** anticipate. We are students, they should **put in place solutions** to make that happen less." DG1 HV (18)

> "There should have a **committee that looks at the problems facing international students** and try to find solutions."GD1 HV (18)

With the purpose of improving the services to international students, one of the strategies suggested by the students to overcome the lack of information is the institution of a mandatory orientation followed by an updated meeting with an advisor at the mid-session.

> "**A mandatory appointment to meet with counsellors**. When I have a problem, I talk to my friends about it and it's over. But I'm never going to get up and go down to somebody's office and say I want to talk about it**. Let's say after a month of integration, everyone has an appointment with a counsellor to tell where they are**. HV (18)

Another participant suggested that it would be good to have group discussions in the intention to hear from the students and develop programs that can help them.

> "**In instances, something like what we are doing now.** We have many friends who would like to do this, but they have exams and others already go back home. **They have to re-contact us, so we can sum up the situation.**" GD1 DBA (19)

The presence of knowledgeable mentor was recommended by the participants. They declared that there was a program of mentorship on campus but, this program is not effective because the mentors are not able to provide the necessary assistance needed by this group of students. The literature on international students showed that there is a need for assessing the effectiveness of programs such as peer mentorship implementing to support international students in their wellbeing (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). One respondent declared,

> "There **is already a mentoring system**. But there's no point. He **never contacts you**. The mentoring system **is not effective at all**. Everything you ask the mentor, **he doesn't know**" GD1 HV (18).

> "**A mandatory appointment that requires us to meet with counsellors**. **When I have a problem**, I talk to my friends about it and it's over. But I'm never going get up and go down to somebody's office and say I want to talk about it. Let's say **after a month of integration, everyone has an appointment with a counsellor to tell where they are**." GD1 HV (18)

> "**International students should be mentors for others**. Because he's had **the experience and that can help**. I would like to have **an experiment mentor** who did the same programme and is able to advise and help through my first year." GD1 NC (20)

It came out of the research that the first year is crucial for the participant adaptation and any basic information about the Canadian education system is necessary. A respondent declared that some first-year international students ignored a basic knowledge such as how to check their GPA.

> 'It is important **to explain how the system of GPA** works. Some international students **think that by passing your courses with "D" is good enough**, but it is not. They don't **even know how to check their GPA**.' MJK (20)

For many international students, studying abroad can be a negative experience. However, research also shows that the experience could be a transformative learning process that could lead to a journey of personal growth and development (Berry et al., 2006; Kim, 2001). It came to the study that despite the difficulties, several of the participants were satisfied with the decision to study abroad as well as the choice of their institution despite the lack of knowledgeable advisors. As indicated by the expert below.

> "Often when you talk to them, **you feel they don't have the information**. Sometimes **you feel you know more than they do**. This is not at all normal for me. But I'm not going to blame it all on them. Because some students when they arrive, they remain silo in their corners. **Often there are information sessions**." LD (21)

The institution should put in place workshops that will teach them strategies that would help alleviate the discomfort related to their acculturation experience. There is a need for programs which will permit international students to interact with the host nationals. Our participant recognized that there are a lot of activities on campus, but they do not give the opportunity to Black international students to get in contact with the other students because these programs do not fit their needs.

In considering the experiences of the ISSAFC detailed above, according to the qualitative analysis, there are no differences in the preferences of our participants' acculturation strategies compared to the large population of immigrants (Berry, 1997). In contrast to the findings of our quantitative analysis, most ISSAFC showed a preference for integration, n=8 (50 %). Among participants, n=6 (37.5%) chose separation as acculturation orientation, while only n=2 (12.5%) chose assimilation. None of our participants chose marginalization. As a conclusion of our research, both integration and separation are the preferred acculturation strategies of ISSAFC. The findings align with the outcome of the study conducted by Yu and Wang (2011), which investigated the acculturation strategies adopted by Chinese international students in Germany. The same pattern was found in a large international study conducted by Berry's and colleagues which investigated immigrants' youth acculturation, identity, and adaptation (Berry et al., 2006). The participants also fit well in the new environment as it was shown by both our quantitative and qualitative analysis. While they faced acculturative stressors at different levels, many declared they were satisfied with their new environment and are planning to stay after graduation. The evidence is emerging to suggest that international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries have different ways of adjusting to a university setting, compared with the more commonly studied groups of students (Boafo-Arthur, 2014).

Chapter 5: General Discussion

5.1 Translation and Transcription: Pre-Discussion Special Note

Qualitative research implies exploration and understanding of meanings, and conveying the outcomes in writing to the readers, language differences may constitute an obstacle which can cause the loss of meaning and therefore, compromise the validity of the study (Van Nes et al., 2010). Since this research used French statements that were translated in English, we acknowledge that during the process of both lingual and contextual translation, there is a possibility for some of the intended meaning to be diluted. The questions for interviews and group discussions of this research were in French. The data collection was folly conducted in French[1] and translated in English. All translations were done by the author unless otherwise specified. Informed by the difficulties of meaning lost, resulting from language differences in cross-language qualitative research, all reasonable care is taken to remain as close as possible to the "intended" statements (Van Nes et al., 2010).

During the early part of the study, the questionnaires, interviews, and group discussion questions and all the documents used to contact and recruit the participants were prepared in English and translated in French by me, the principal researcher, for ethics approval. The translation from English to French were validated by a bilingual individual with excellent sociolinguistic language competence[2]. A bilingual person made some recommendations which were integrated into the documents. The participants in this research are francophone and speak the same language as the principal researcher who speaks French as first language. Data collection,

[1] The original transcript data is available upon request.
[2] Preliminary English translations was checked by a bilingual person who speaks English as a first language and is fluent in French and work in a bilingual higher education institution.

transcription, coding, and the first analyses were conducted in French. The purpose was to catch the subtlety of the language and also capture what Squires (2009) described as "conceptual equivalence." Conceptual equivalence is the ability to relate the concept spoken by the participant to the context (Squires, 2009). Specialists recommended that to avoid potential limitations in the analysis, it is better for the researcher to use the original language as long and as much as possible (Van Nes et al., 2010). The principal researcher has conducted all the interviews and group discussions and also was the only person in contact with the participants. Translation of all the documents related to this study was validated by a bilingual individual who is not involved with data collection and translation. It should be noted that the main researcher is not a professional translator but is familiar with translation and has previous experience with translation due to her connection with a bilingual institution. Squires (2009) pointed out the importance of credentials and experience of the person performing the translation which can affect the quality of translations produced. It was important to report the subtle meaning in English at best to enhance the trustworthiness. Van Nes et al. (2010) recognized that translating quotations represents big challenges in qualitative research. The citations, the quotes, transcriptions were translated by the main researcher and submitted to a bilingual person who made some recommendations. An example of the quotes as transcribed in the original language and the correspondent translation is reported in Appendix K.

5.2 General Discussion

Results from the current study extend the literature on international students' acculturation orientation in Canada by examining the predominant acculturation strategies adopted by the Sub-Saharan Africa francophone countries overseas students in the Ontario bilingual higher education institutions in Canada. The research has attempted to answer four principal questions:

1. What are internationals ISSAFC preferred acculturation strategies?
2. How well ISSAFC adapt in their new educational and social environment?
3. What are the struggles ISSAFC faced when adapting to their new environment?
4. What are the coping systems used to overcome acculturative stress?

We have hypothesized that:

H1. Most international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries will choose integration as their preferred acculturation strategy, by keeping their ethnic cultural values while adopting the host country's mainstream culture (Berry, 1997).

H2. ISSAFCs' greater intercultural communication competencies will be associated with the better intercultural adaptation.

H3. Language barriers will enhance conflicts with the new culture and lead to greater acculturative stress and lower sociocultural adaptation.

H4. Permanent residency intention will significantly predict ISSAFCs' acculturation orientation, increase sociocultural and intercultural adaptation, and reduce acculturative stress.

H5. International students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries studying in Montreal, a francophone environment will undergo less acculturative stress than the participants studying in Toronto an anglophone environment.

According to the mix methods analysis, we have found that the international students from Sub-Saharan Africa francophone countries adopted a particular attitude in the way they acculturated in the Ontario bilingual higher education institutions in Canada as shown by the results of our analysis and discussions below.

5.2.1 International Students from Sub-Saharan African Francophone Countries Acculturation Strategies

The combination of the two dimensions of Berry's model of acculturation strategies permitted in this study to explore the participants' acculturation process in their new environment. We started our analysis by testing the following hypothesis: "Most of the ISSAFC will choose integration as their preferred acculturation attitude." The quantitative analysis suggested that the

participants choose assimilation and integration as their preferred acculturation strategies. For an in-depth analysis, we have moved to a qualitative analysis. The qualitative analysis resulted in the integration and separation as the two adopted acculturation strategies. This result should not be viewed as contradictory, but instead as complementary because the outcome may be due to two reasons.

First, the difference between quantitative and qualitative analysis, as they emphasised two different aspects of the study. The quantitative analysis mostly quantified our ISSAFC contact with and participation in the host country community. On the other hand, the qualitative analysis measured the importance they give to the participation and contact to both the host and original culture. This refutes the assumption that one analysis is right and the other is wrong. In contrary, our results capture two different aspects of the ISSAFC choice of acculturation strategies. Second the results may also reveal the principal critics to Berry's (1997) model of acculturation strategies, the simplest approach to culture (Ward, 2001; Moor, 2001). According to Moor (2001), Berry's fourfold acculturation model is too simplistic and does not consider all the parameters of culture assuming for example, that people may adopt a different strategy depending on when they are in their social life or in their professional life. Furthermore, Ward (2001) suggested that Berry's two fundamental dimensions of acculturation, namely culture maintenance, and contact and participation in the life of the host society are better predictors of acculturation outcomes than the four acculturation strategies as predicted by the author. This is in line with the outcome of our qualitative analysis where most of our participants reported that they are well or very well integrated in their new environment and this is without consideration for their choice of acculturation strategy. Based on the acculturation strategy questionnaire, our participants' score n=32 (M=12, SD=11.63) to the component, personal interests and community involvement and

n=32 (M=4, SD=4.97) to the component, interpersonal communication, resulting in most of them showing a relatively high willingness to have contact and involve in the host community. When come with the maintenance of the original culture, n=32 (M=7.21, SD=2.72) most of them showed less interest to the maintenance of their original culture. However, when they were specifically asked how much they value and willing to maintain their original culture and how much they are willing to have contact and participate in the host community, what most of our participants expressed through their responses, they value both cultures and would like to participate in both. This could be probably due to Canada's multicultural environment, where these students feel a sense of belonging and integration into the new culture. Berry (1997) suggested that integration and assimilation occur when immigrants feel accepted by the dominant society. Berry (2005) also asserted that immigrants generally chose integration as their preferred acculturation strategy when the state policy endorses multiculturalism. The author attributes the immigrant's choice of acculturation strategy in part to the policy and attitudes held by the dominant society (Berry, 2005). As our participants' acculturation happened in their educational institution, specific problems such as the lack of information and support from the administrative staff, most of the interviewees expressed satisfaction about the support and assistance from their professors. Tartakovsky's (2012) investigation of adolescent immigrants in Israel suggested that perceived social support from teachers was associated with a preference for assimilation. Overall, the interviewees expressly stated that they are willing to maintain their original culture because they recognize that it is part of who they are, because their culture defined positively their social identity. Even if culture maintenance is very challenging for these international students from ethnic groups, they do not wish to relinquish their cultural values because of what they represent to their self-concept. But they also express the importance of learning Canadian culture.

5.2.2 International Student from Sub-Saharan African Francophone Countries Intercultural Communication

This study also examined the relationships between our participants' intercultural communication competencies and intercultural adaptation. We found a weak negative linear relationship between the two variables. Even if we were not able to reject the null hypothesis, we can assume that the ISSAFC intercultural communication competence permitted them to achieve a certain intercultural adaptation as suggested by our qualitative analysis. They all reported a relative to perfect fit in their new environment. When referring to the questionnaire results, the participants scored relatively high on the components personal interests and community involvement and interpersonal communication. This showed that our students have established a sense of community and feeling of belonging and participating in the host countries. They are willing to become part of the larger society. Some even express their willingness to build friendships with Canadians with expectation to learn the ways of doing things in Canada, as to improve their integration. Kim (1988) reported the importance of contact with the host community as a means of increasing communication competency in the host culture. According to the author, the way international students communicate with host nationals plays a significant role in how they adjust to a new cultural environment (Kim, 2001).

5.2.3 Language Barriers and Acculturative Stress

In the way to complete the day-to-day academic obligations, international students must master their English skills. Host language proficiency is a central component of the culture learning framework (Berry, 2001; Jia et al., 2006; Kim, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The essence of the academic and cultural information is communicated through language. We asked the participant to self-rate their ability to communicate in the host community language. According to Chavoshi and Wintre (2013), international students' self-rated perceptions of English language abilities are

positively correlated with their intercultural adaptation outcomes. The same study revealed that the students' scores on standardized English-language measures have no effect of their acculturation process (Chavoshi & Wintre, 2013). Our results did not reveal any relation between language proficiency and acculturation strategies. By contrary, a research conducted by Berry and his colleagues in Canada found that immigrants with low fluency in English are likely to choose separation as their preferred acculturation strategy (Berry et al., 2006). Our quantitative analysis showed very weak correlation between the language proficiency and acculturative stress in our study group. While almost all our participants expressed some language problems, this problem was not an obstacle to their acculturation process. Zhou and Zhang (2014) in their study of first-year international students' challenges in Canada reveal that both students who practice English in high school back home and students who are fluent in English and use it perfectly in the academic environment experience some adjustment problems at academic level. Most of the international students in this research stated that they struggle less with their fluency in spoken English and more with understanding accents, cultural references, and different terminology. Generally, the challenges occur in the educational environment where their writing ability could not meet the Canadian expectations (Jia et al., 2016). Even in this case, it was not critical to their acculturation process, because they have the chance to take their courses in French the first year and take some English courses to improve their competency in the host culture language. Furthermore, our participant did English as a second language in their curriculum back home. Resulting in the fact that they have a moderate English background. Even if the study reveals that our participants faced some difficulties in relation to the host community language, this struggle does not seem to hamper their overall intercultural adaptation (Poyrazli & Philip, 2006).

5.2.4 Language Barriers and Sociocultural Adaptation

Language is a primary mechanism through which individuals engage in interpersonal relationships (Berry 2001, Kim, 2001). We analysed our participant sociocultural adaptation in relation to their language proficiency. Previous study showed that international students' perception of their language proficiency is a good predictor of their intercultural adaptation and their coping ability (Zhou & Zhang, 2014). Zhang and Goodson's (2011) also speculated that factors such as English language proficiency, predicted sociocultural adaptation. Verbal communication and social interaction abilities are essential skills needed to facilitate the individual sociocultural adaptation. Several studies in the literature suggested that host language proficiency -speaking and understanding are two central components of effective social interaction that in turn enhance sociocultural adaptation (Kim, 2001, War & Kennedy, 1999). Our analysis reveals that language proficiency significantly positively correlated with the participants' sociocultural adaptation. The participants attested that they have a problem communicating at the beginning of their arrival in the host culture, most of the time because they lack the host culture communication competencies. But they slowly overcome this handicap and start to feel comfortable getting in contact with the host community through study groups, interactions with professors, and other members of the institution as well as with people outside the university. A participant revealed she took an accelerated English course to improve her communication abilities. The study, therefore, corroborates previous studies conducted that found that language difficulties were not central to social adjustment in the case of married international students because the marital relationship served as a buffer (Poyrazli & Philip, 2006). Individuals, community or group participation as well as the ability to become involved with the community and maintaining personal interests is a core element in facilitating immigrants' sociocultural adaptation (Berry, 2001). Our results match previous research that stated that factors such as English language proficiency which is one of the

predictors of sociocultural adaptation, happens as the newcomers arrive into a host society and increase as they gradually acquire new cultural skills recalling that acculturation is a long process (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

5.2.5 International students from Sub-Saharan African Francophone Countries Intercultural Adaptation.

By intercultural adaptation this study refers to interactions and the acquisition of culture-specific interpersonal skills and behavioural component that enable the newcomer to adapt effectively in new cultural environments (Kim, 2001). Communication varies across cultures. Learning the non-verbal communication and understanding of behavioural norms facilitate the individual adaptation in the new cultural situation. Furnham and Bochner (1982) found in their study on international subtends in Britain that cultural distance between students' original culture and Britain culture enhance the difficulties they faced during their adaptation process. We observed that the participants with some little struggles, and especially with some homesickness and academic mismatch, adapted very well to their new environment. This may be because these students' pre-migration period was well prepared. They have received a lot of information from friends, parents or acquaintances who are already studying at this institution. From our analysis results, the ISSAFC demonstrate a relative to perfect fit in their new environment. Our findings do not validate the optimal relationship between integration and international students' intercultural adaptations (Berry & al., 2006, Kim, 2001). Even if they also reported assimilation or separation as their preferred acculturation strategies, the ISSAFC attested positive overall intercultural adaptation. The results may be explained by the fact that the study was conducted in a small university, which may foster a sense of belonging in comparison to large universities typically used in international student research. Therefore, our study validates the assumption that intercultural experience can be a transitional and transformative learning process which will result

in a journey of personal growth (Berry et al. 2006; Kim, 2001). However, the students' international adaptation was not done without certain struggles. They reported struggle adapting to the academic style, difficulty establishing relationships with national students, getting the necessary information for their acculturation process, feelings of homesickness and isolation, language difficulties, lack of knowledge of local contextual references, inadequate vocabulary, and struggles to meet the requirements for academic writing (Berry et al., 2006; Ward & Kennedy, 1992; Ward et al., 2008).

5.2.6 Academic Acculturation

Academic acculturation refers to international students' ability to learn and integrate into their new educational system. Several of the interviewees reported low writing ability, aligning with the findings in Zhou and Zhang (2014) study that investigated Chinese international students who attended Canadian institutions, in which participants reported difficulties meeting the writing standard of Canadian classes. Students also reported difficulties adapting to teaching styles, curricular approaches, and evaluation methods (Zhou & Zhan, 2014). Previous studies enumerated struggles to meet the requirement for academic writing among principal difficulties faced by international students in their new learning environment and this research brings into line with what is reported in the literature (Ward & Kennedy, 1999, Ward et al., 2001). Another mentioned that they have little experience with essay writing as in their previous institution they were not used such exercises. Confirming the difference between their new academic institutions and their home country teaching style. Zhou and Zhan (2014) reported in their study that several international students reported that the teaching style in Canadian institutions focuses more on knowledge applications when back home, the teaching is more theory oriented. Some students also revealed their phobia about presentations, which they find very challenging as they were not exposed to such experience in their prior learning environment. International students are also

more hesitant to participate in discussions in class because of their English proficiency level, as shown by the results of the interviews. Researchers have shown that language proficiency has a direct impact on academic performance of international students (Berry, 1997; Zhou & Zhan, 2014). However, with the help of their academic support, they adapt very well, even if some have to take an extra workshop to learn how to write essays or how to cite effectively. They have also commented on their institution's small-size classes which permit contact with faculties and improve student-professor relationships. Since international students' first reason of migration is to obtain a degree from foreign countries, we can suppose that they must adapt quickly to the new academic environment to achieve their goal. With the help of the professors who they qualified as accessible, helpful and always available, they indicated that they are adapted very well to their academic environment. According to Calder et al. (2016) social, institutional, and faculty assistance is primordial to international students' academic acculturation.

5.2.7 Acculturation Strategy and Intention to Immigrate After Graduation

For most of the international students from Africa, studying abroad is usually a stepping-stone for permanent residency (CBIE, 2015a). International students who migrate with an a priori intention of pursuing permanent residency may present a different pattern in their choice of acculturation strategy. According to Kim (2001) who defined them as "permanent migrants in process," their process may differ from the one of the typical, temporary migrants (Kim, 2001). Several of our participants are planning to stay in Canada after graduation. Unfortunately, we could not demonstrate a significant link between intentions to migrate and the acculturation process. However, most of them indicated that they planned to apply for permanent residency before their arrival to Canada. Some of the reasons given were economic and social situation in their countries of origin. The findings validate the results of the study conducted by Balzac et al. (2004) that suggested that migrants from less developed countries use temporary migration as a getaway to

permanent migration. In the same direction with the Tartakovsky (2012) which found that the immigrants' preferences for different acculturation strategies were related to their further emigration intentions. Our students who planned to stay in Canada after graduation choose integration as acculturation strategy. The preferences for different acculturation strategies and further emigration intentions in the present study may be related to the social conditions existing in the immigrant's country of origin and to the change to immigration policy existing in the host country. This study also corroborates previous studies conducted in Canada that investigate the influence of parents in the decision to migrate after graduation. Lu and colleagues (2009) find a strong and significant relation between parental attitudes and students' migration intentions in their research conducted to identify factors which influence the Chinese undergraduate student at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada migration intentions. For a few of our participants, the immigration intention has been fostered by parental influences. However, for their well-being they preferred those acculturation strategies that increased their interaction with the host society they do not decrease their interaction with people from their heritage culture and other cultures aligning with the integration strategy and biculturalism (Berry, 1997; LaFramboise et al., 1993).

5.2.8 Acculturative Stress and Social Support

International students have been noted to experience acculturative stress (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). Studies which have investigated Black African students, especially in the US indicated that they have more struggles adapting to their new environment than other international students. (Adelegan & Parks, 1985; Constantine et al., 2004; Manyika, 2001). Acculturative stress is a complex phenomenon with multiple manifestations which can lead to symptoms such as homesickness, isolation, sadness, feelings of loss, anger (Berry, 1997; Mori, 2000; Ward, 2001). An important part of the international students' acculturative stress results from the discrepancies between the teaching style in their home country and Canadian institutions. Most of the

interviewees, reported essay writing, presentations and general teaching style as the principal sources of stress. Students stated that they are faced with academic integrity concerns, some being accused of plagiarism and cheating. They commented that back home they can just write papers and exams without using citations, but they learned the hard way after their first exam here in Canada. They were unfamiliar with the proper way of citing. Several researchers recommend that the Faculty and academic advisors incorporate cultural awareness and new strategies into their pedagogical or counselling practices to help international students to overcome their acculturative stress (Andrade, 2006; Kim, 2007; Nguyen, 2013). To align with other researchers, this study also finds that international students under a lot of pressure from families that can result in acculturative stress (Boafo-Arthur 2014; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Constantine et al., 2004) multiplying sources of stress. Most of our interviewee acculturative stress derived from the ignorance of Canadian academic environment, the teaching and evaluation method, instructor-student relationship, etc. (Calder & al., 2016, Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

5.2.9 Homesickness

According to the literature, homesickness is the second most reported acculturative stressors by international students (Boafo-Arthur 2014; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; Constantine et al., 2004). International students in this research, as found in previous research are homesick. They miss their parents and the food from home country among other things. However, homesickness is not a major adjustment factor in their situation. This finding may be because with today's advanced communication technologies, these international students keep in contact regularly with their friends and families back home. Most of them travel regularly, especially during holidays such as Christmas, New Year or summer vacations, to visit and spend time with family. They reported the use of social media, which serve as a medium for interaction and conversation in order to get in touch with parents as well as friends back home and in the host country. Using social

media permits them to feel like they are still being a part of the original country and also part of the Canadian community. As reported in several studies, our respondents do not value university counselling services (Robertson et al., 2015)

5.2.10 Discrimination

Students have different experiences with discrimination depending on whether they face it on or off campus (Hanassab, 2006). Our students reported that they do not face any direct discrimination on campus. They usually face discrimination when they sought an apartment or living situation. A study has shown that many international students have accommodation issues (Calder et al., 2016). They stated that it is impossible to live on campus due to the conditions in residences. They could not have access to the kitchen while the food in the cafeteria is not varied and not of good quality. The cleanliness was also a factor in these students' decision to not live on campus. Their experiences of discrimination were related to situations with bus drivers, landlords or strangers in the subway. This is opposed to the findings of previous studies which reported that black international students face discrimination in their everyday life (Constantine et al., 2005; Boafo-Arthur, 2014).

5.2.11 Coping System

To become part of the new community, the international student must understand how to cope or react when faced with problems. As part of being new members in the various institutions' minority students must transform their behaviours in a way to cope. It is important to note that the level of adaptation is individually based, and the way people respond to experiences during the adaptive process varies from person to person Berry (1997). Most of our participant counts on social support as a principal coping system. According to Irungu (2013), Black-African student, do not value university counselling services as a normal way to deal with their feeling of homesickness. The majority turned to their fellow ethnic student during critical moments (Hyams-

Ssekasi et al., 2014; Lee & Opio, 2011). Friendship with host ethnic international students is the coping system our participants frequently use to overcome acculturative stress. As demonstrated in previous study, these students do not use counselling. In general, international students, particularly from non-Western countries do not view counselling the same way Western people do (Robertson et al., 2015). Our respondents have also suggested different ways the institution can assist them during this journey of personal growth.

5.2.11.1 ***International Students Friendship***

Even though researchers demonstrate the benefits of having multicultural relationships, social interactions between international students and host students, unfortunately, have little interest for our participants. Students tend to be segregated into their co-ethnic group or stayed with other international students (Potee & Gomez, 2015). Studies have shown that international students who did not have friendships with host nationals were most likely to seek out fellow international students for support if they experienced difficulties (Berry, 2001; Constantin et al., 2005). Black-African international students have differences in view in their expectations of interpersonal relationships that will usually push them to stay with their fellow black international students. This study corroborates previous studies on this issue international students' friendships conducted in Canada by the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE). According to a survey from the CBIE, over half of 3,000 international students surveyed in Canada have no Canadian friends (CBIE, 2015b). Study exploring the international student adjustment in three universities in Atlantic Canada, suggested that these students may encounter lesser struggle adapting in their social academic life than in their social life Poteet & Gomez, (2015) The report revealed several factors which can affect friendships between international and Canadian students. Among the factors are language difficulties, but also the fact that host students do not participate

in many group activities for international students on campus. As a result, these activities only permit to meet fellow international students from other countries, but not host students. Also, several of our participants reported that they do not have the opportunity to build a relationship with host national students because there are not many of them in their program. The findings support the CBIE (2015b) report, which mentioned that certain academic programs are composed essentially of international students, preventing international students from meeting with their national peers. It was also reported that even if Canadian seems friendly, they are still distant and not approachable supporting the findings in the study conducted by Poteet and Gomez (2015) Even though social support from host friends and co-ethnic friends are equally important, international students tend to look for more support from co-ethnic friends.

5.2.11.2 ***Lack of Information***

Difficulty assessing transfer credits was one key challenge our participants commented on during interviews. Authors have pointed out that Black-African students were disappointed with the information they received from their university prior to arrival (Maringe & Carter, 2007; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014). The students attested their frustration related to transfer credits. These difficulties of getting transfer credit resulted in the fact that they were taking classes they did not need. On this specific issue, they expressed the urgent need of knowledgeable supporting staff to help international students successfully adapt socially and academically to their new environment. According to Calder and colleagues (2016), lack of information is a big issue to international acculturation process. It constitutes the root of most challenged faced by these students in their academic environment such as choice of adequate courses and access important services to their smooth adaptation (Calder et al., 2016). Several participants commented on the lack of trusted information when comes the time to choose their courses leading the lost of money and time. They

were wrongly informed about the transferred credits or have not received any information about them. Consequently, they registered in the courses they were not supposed to take. The student also reported on the orientation section that they found very ineffective. For many of them the non-mandatory aspect of the orientation sections supposed that they can choose the one they wanted to attend. The other issue reported was the follow-up. Several students would like to have a follow-up mandatory meeting with a knowledgeable counselor a few weeks after their arrival, to make sure they possess all the information needed for their journey. Zhou and colleagues (2008) asserted that the lack of information amperes fundamentally an international students' acculturation process.

5.2.11.3 ***Financial Challenges***

Several studies on Black-African international students found that one of the greatest sources of acculturative stress was finances - which greatly impacted their social and educational well-being (Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014; Meringe & Carter, 2007; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). Even if our respondents recognized that the school fees are exorbitant most of them did not report having any financial problem. Their education is founded by their parents who have decided to send them abroad to pursue higher education. It is reported in the literature that one of the reasons of the increase of international students from African is the growth of the middle-class developing countries and the shift in income in some countries of the continent (Cooper, 2017). Most of these students may come from families with privileged position in their home country (Robertson et al., 2015)

5.2.11.4 ***Suggestions for Better Experience***

During the interviews with the participants, we highlighted resources that can be described as moderating factors during the acculturation process. These are mainly resourcing that

institutions can put in place to help meet the needs of international students and facilitate their academic and social integration. To formulate them, we rely directly on what respondents have said. These are the strategies that respondents used to succeed in their academic and social integration, as well as the suggestions they made to us. Students suggested that there is more mentoring from departments and advisors, individual departmental orientations, more academic counselling from the departments. Students also advocated for ongoing orientation as well. They have also suggested that more senior international students be assigned as peer mentors, and that more career guidance is offered. They recommend using students from the same culture to help orient new arrivals. The literature on international students showed that there is a need for assessing the effectiveness of programs such as peer mentorship implementing to support international students in their wellbeing (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). As several of our participants have mentioned during the interview and group discussion, their journey is affected by the lack of information due to the presence of non-effective advisors. Austell (2013) had listed some skills and abilities indispensable for an international student adviser. According to the author in ways to succeed in this job an advisor must be experienced overseas, language skills and specialized cultural backgrounds (Austell, 2013). Some abilities such as diplomacy and intercultural abilities are also necessary, not to mention a perfectly written and verbal communication skills, as well as an expertise with government regulations, new media and technology (Austell, 2013). Findings from the present study have important implications for personnel in higher education, such as faculty, advisors, and counselors. To help international students, professional and other counselling staff who work with these students, should create a more effective resource network with well-trained people who can direct them to valuable campus services in the way to lower the risk of acculturative stress. It is recommended that universities implemented an environment which

will foster interconnection between international and national students on an ongoing basis by organising extracurricular activities value by both groups (Poteet & Gomez, 2015).

5.2.12 Limitations of the Study

As with any research, this study is not free from limitations. The main limitation of the present study is its focus on a small sample of these international students. First, interviewing only twelve international students may limit the application of the generalizations made in this study. Therefore, to generalize the findings of the present study, the obtained results need to be replicated in other groups of immigrants. In addition, most of the students interviewed came from a wealthy background and reported that their parent provided their studies in their entireness. However, since our objective was to understand the acculturation strategies adopted by these specific groups from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries and their intercultural adaptation in their Canadian environment, we believe that the objective was accomplished. Another limitation of this study is related to the consistency of the scales used to measure preferences for acculturation strategies. The internal consistency of these scales was relatively low, and this low internal consistency may have decreased the chances of determining the preferred acculturation strategies of our participants. Further studies may use other measures of acculturation strategies. In terms of limitations, we have to consider the biases of the main researcher with regard to the research field and her experiences with immigration, because she is originally from Sub-Saharan Africa and works in a bilingual university institution and is in contact with international students in her personal or professional life. If this fact could constitute a bias in the interpretation of the data, it can also be considered a strength of the study. Already having a knowledge of the environment, the researcher was able to find solutions when difficulties such as finding participants or collecting data in the language of the participants occurred.

5.2.13 Do International Students in Montreal Differ from Students in Toronto in their Acculturation Process?

One of the reasons we have decided to investigate the international student from the Sub-Saharan Africa francophone countries is the fact that they speak French as a first language and are studying in a bilingual higher education institution in an English majority environment. In the light of the literature which indicated that language barriers constitute a significant obstacle in the acculturation process of international students, we therefore hypothesized that "H3 Language barriers will enhance conflicts with the new culture and lead to greater acculturative stress and lower sociocultural adaptation" (Kim, 2001; Zhang & Goodson, 2011; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). A Pearson correlation coefficient assessing the relationship between the two variables, language efficiency (M=5.4, SD=1.14) and acculturative stress level (M=7.6, SD=1.7) showed a very weak positive correlation, $r = 0.018$, $n = 32$, $p = 0.921$. There is no meaningful relationship between language efficiency and acculturative stress. To further our investigation, we have compared the ISSAFC from Toronto to a group of ISSAFC from Montreal. We therefore hypothesized that:

> H5. International students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries studying in Montreal, a francophone environment will undergo less acculturative stress than the participants studying in Toronto, an anglophone environment.

The quantitative analysis does not permit to make any difference between the two groups investigated. We failed to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no difference between ISSAFC in Montreal and in Toronto regarding their level of acculturative stress, sociocultural adaptation, intercultural adaptation and the choice of acculturation strategy. We were not able to conduct interviews with students in Montreal as the students were not available. Since Montreal is a francophone city within a francophone province and Toronto, an anglophone city our expectation was that surveyed participants in Toronto will face more challenges than the one

in Montreal due to English proficiency, but when it comes to the results of this study, the particular note was the fact that there was no significant difference in the two groups.

In the theoretical frame of the study, the understanding was that acculturation is a multidimensional phenomenon that involves individuals' subjectivity. It is extremely complicated to bring to light acculturation dimensions through questionnaires only. To test our first hypothesis, we need a database that will allow for isolating and specifying different acculturation dimensions and analyzing their interactions (Berry, 1997). What we did through our one-to-one interview and group discussions. While the work had been done for the sample from Toronto, the lack of time and resources prevent us from doing the same for the Montreal sample. We were not able to conduct a detailed interview to confirm our findings regarding the sample from Montreal. We then rely solely on our quantitative analysis to compare the two sample populations.

5.2.14 Further Research

Further research is required to investigate the issue of changes in acculturation intentions over time in the host country. Since acculturation is a process that takes place over time, it can be interesting to study these students for a longer period of time in the way to get more insight into the development and changes in their acculturation process. Future studies may use the findings of this study and compared them with a more diverse group of international students. With the different result for the quantitative and qualitative analysis, it is recommended that the connection between acculturation intentions and the actual acculturation behaviour of international students should be studied. It will be interesting to continue this study by surveying a larger number of students in both Montreal and Toronto and conduct interviews and group discussion with Montreal participants for further analysis and in-depth investigation. The role of regionally specific motives to study in Canada should receive further investigations. The role of nationality in the motivation and adjustment of this group of international students should also be looked at more closely.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The objective of this study is to provide an overview of the acculturation process of international students from Sub-Saharan Africa francophone countries in bilingual post-secondary institutions in Ontario, by identifying and analyzing the factors that support or hinder their cross-cultural adaptations in relation to the conditions of training and learning, the institutional context, their linguistic ability, and the general process of acculturation to Canadian society. The questions guiding the study received answers that are both consistent with and divergent from the literature pertaining to international students in general. With respect to the first question ("What are international students from Sub-Saharan African francophone countries preferred acculturation strategies?"), the quantitative analysis identified one notable difference with a comparatively large number of students, with assimilation as preferred acculturation mode. It appears that these students have different views about how they wish to acculturate in their new environment, whereas previous studies have identified integration as the preferred acculturation strategy of immigrants (Berry et al., 2006, Berry & Sabatier, 2010). Through the two dimensions of interest, cultural maintenance and social participation, and the fourfold conceptualisation of acculturation apply to their attitude, we were able to determine different way they wanted to acculturate in the new settings. The qualitative analysis aligns with previous findings with integration as a preferred acculturation strategy adopted by our participants followed by separation (Berry et al., 2006; Berry & Sabatier, 2010). However, preference for assimilation and integration as preferred acculturation strategy was not consistent with the literature that reported integration as preferred acculturation strategy (Berry et al., 2006; Berry & Sabatier, 2010).

The pattern of how well our participants adapt to their new environment does not replicate the findings in the literature which reported that international students generally have a lot of

difficulties adapting to their new environment (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Chirkov et al., 2007; Constantine et al., 2005; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014). Our participant at different levels reported that they adapt well to their new social environment while facing some problems adapting to the teaching style. The results about acculturative stress largely replicated the findings with other international students (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Chirkov et al., 2007; Constantine et al., 2005; Hyams-Ssekasi, Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). The ISSAFC suffer homesickness, have a lot of stress due to lack of information, unfamiliarity with the new academic system, difficulty to find an adequate accommodation.

Several studies indicate that the lack of effective welcome policy, lack of information and poor orientation were the most significant problems experienced by international students, which also constitute one of the principal causes of school failure (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Calder et al., 2016; Constantine et al., 2005; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014). The higher education institutions in Canada have developed an academic success plan that includes services provided to international students. Different services developed by the institutions focus on the integration of international students through cross-cultural experiences (Andrade, 2006; Calder et al., 2016). Basic information on the services offered to this group of students is generally available on the website of each institution (Calder et al., 2016; Zhou et al., 2008). However, several students feel that their institution does not have a welcome procedure that allow them to better integrate into the school and the host society in general. Most higher education institutions have developed resources integrated to student services. They organise activities such as open houses, mentoring, twinning in order to continuously improve access to information on admission to different programs. Nevertheless, the challenge is to make this information and the various support and support services available more visible to international students (Calder et al., 2016, Monstion, 2018;

Thomson & Esses, 2016); Zhou et al., 2008). Conscious of this persistent lack of information, most students develop strategies to cope with the difficulties they encounter during their acculturation process (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Calder et al., 2016; Constantine et al., 2005; Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014). Through their rhetoric, the respondents have identified services that can be developed to enable them both to be better integrated into the school and to succeed. They have suggested a welcome and integration services that can promote the integration of foreign students. Allowing the students not only to learn how the university as well as Canadian society function, but also to develop their social resources such as having contact with the host society, accessing housing, and preparing the after graduation. According to their recommendations, the university must target measures that make available resources visible and accessible. Fostering academic initiatives specific to foreign students will better support intercultural adaptations. While they appreciate the volume of information that universities provide, they recommend that this information be better explained and contextualized by the staff they meet mainly within the academic services unit. According to our respondents, information channels should not only be computerized. Especially for first-year international students but should be provided by people who can answer questions and direct them to solutions, or individuals who can provide a concrete and quick answers. The respondents indicated the need for an information service offering immediate intervention but not just advisers who send them back to computerized services where the basic information is available, as is currently the case. Our participants attested that there is a programme of mentorship on campus. But they would like to have a mentor who will be able to assist them as soon as they arrive and during the first years of school. They would provide academic support, social development as well as in their personal development outside the college.

In the acculturation process, students reported they find more social support from their fellow international students than with the Canadian students. Which leads us to suggest the popular intercultural twinning program at the Université du Québec à Montréal. The program offers exchange and learning activities for immigrants studying French (in oral and written communication, phonetics and grammar courses) and francophones studying in education, psychology, social work and communication. The initiative permits participants from different cultures and backgrounds to get to know each other better and aims at reducing prejudice and discrimination (Guillot & Carignan, 2018). Moreover, it should be emphasized that the process of acculturation does not only have negative effects on students from sub-Saharan Africa; it is also experienced positively by most of our respondents who reported satisfaction with the university, with their teacher and with life in Canada overall. Obviously, the majority of them are planning to stay in Canada after graduation. This finding is consistent with previous studies which reported the positive aspects of the international students' acculturation (Berry, 2001, Kim, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

We focused on this specific group of African foreign students with the aim of providing tools to overcome obstacles that are unique to them and that they face in their daily lives. We hope this study shed light on the experiences of the ISSAFC in their new educational settings. It has shown that the experiences of these students differ from the experiences of more commonly studied groups of international students. In order to better support international students, awareness and training of administrative staff on intercultural issues is essential. We hope our results bring to light the necessary information post-secondary institutions need to establish the strategies to be adopted in order to play their role in facilitating international students overall intercultural adaptation. Our deepest wish is that administrators can find solutions to foster retention and

academic success of these students. In a way to make these students' experience an enjoyable one, raising the awareness of international students from Sub-Saharan francophone countries' unique challenges should be an important step to organise support from university faculty and staff members. Since they are the first individuals that these students have contact with, know the higher education institutions better, and are also familiar with provincial and federal structures than international students, they might be able to suggest changes that influence policies and practices.

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Appendix A: Tables

Table 1. Participants Personnel Information

Country of origin	**Number**	**Percentage**
Benin	11	34.37
Burkina-Faso	1	3.12
Cameroon	1	3.12
Congo	2	6.25
Côte d'Ivoire	10	31.25
Guinea	1	3.12
Mali	4	12.5
Niger	1	3.12
Senegal	1	3.12
Togo	1	3.12
Age		
18	3	9.37
19	2	6.25
20	9	28.12
21	5	15.63
22	4	12.5
23	3	9.36
24	1	3.12
25	4	12.5
27	1	3.12
Study Level		
Collegial Degree	1	3.12
First year	13	40.62
Second year	6	18.75
Third year	7	21.87
Fourth year	4	12.5
Four year +	2	6.25
Place of study		
Montreal	9	28.13
Toronto	23	71.87

Table 2. Cronbach Alpha Scores for Scales of Interest

Variables	α
Acculturation Strategies Scale (ASS)	**0.80**
Original Culture Importance	0.70
Interpersonal communication	0.80
Personal Interest and Community Involvement	0.87
Revised Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students (ASSIS)	**0.86**
Perceived Discrimination	0.92
Homesickness	0.85
Fear	0.66
Perceived hatred	0.55
Cultural shock	0.74
Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS)	**0.84**
Interpersonal communication	0.80
Academic Performance	0.76
Personal Interests and Community Involvement	0.87
Language Proficiency	0.80
Ecological Adaptation	0.71
Brief Intercultural Adaptation Scale (BIAS).	0.78
Intercultural Communication Competency	0.76
Fitting into the new culture	0.70

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Sociodemographic Variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mini.	Maxi.
Age	21.4	2.30	18.00	27.00
Language Efficiency	3.78	0.88	1.00	5.00
Level of Study	2.28	1.35	1.00	5.00
Intention to Immigrate after Graduation	2.03	1.03	1.00	4.00
Duration in Canada	2.57	1.56	0.66	6.00
School Funding	1.13	0.49	1.00	3.00
Financial Satisfaction	1.78	0.55	1.00	3.00
Previous Destination	0.47	0.62	0.00	2.00
Original Culture maintenance	1.38	0.49	1.00	2.00
Intercultural Contact	1.81	0.40	1.00	2.00
AS	2.00	0.88	1.00	4.00
ASSIS	33.4	9.58	14.00	53.00
SCAS	61.6	9.62	44.00	81.00
BIAS	19.7	4.31	12.00	29.00

Table 4. Normality Test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
AS	2.00	0.88	0.91	0.41	0.61	0.81
ASSIS	33.47	9.58	0.08	0.41	-0.33	0.81
SCAS	61.66	9.62	0.25	0.41	-0.58	0.81
BIAS	19.78	4.31	0.23	0.41	-0.80	0.81

Table 5. Pearson Correlations Between Variables of Interest

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Age	1	-0.05	.420*	-0.25	.630**	0.07	-0.16	-0.09	-0.05	-0.2	0.21	-0.29
2. Language Efficiency		1	0	0.22	0.09	-0.23	-0.17	-0.13	-0.19	0.02	.542**	-0.09
3. Level of Study			1	-0.19	.562**	-0.25	0.09	-0.01	0	-0.05	0	-0.07
4. Immigration Intention				1	-0.35	0.12	-0.04	-0.02	-0.25	.416*	0.01	.604**
5. Duration in Canada					1	0.07	-0.15	0.02	-0.12	-0.19	0.29	-0.26
6. School Funding						1	-0.13	0.01	0.15	0.18	0.04	0.17
7. Financial Satisfaction							1	0.12	-0.13	0.34	-0.23	0.35
8. Previous Destination								1	-0.18	0.21	0	0.12
9. AS									1	-0.05	- .503**	-0.1
10. ASSIS										1	-0.19	.626**
11. SCAS											1	-.392*
12. BIAS												1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6. Significance Test of Variables of Interest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sif. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Intention to Immigrate after Graduation	32	2	1.03	0.18	11.14	31	0	2.03
Duration in Canada	32	3	1.56	0.28	9.29	31	0	2.57
School Funding	32	1	0.49	0.09	12.94	31	0	1.13
Financial Satisfaction	32	2	0.55	0.10	18.23	31	0	1.78
Previous Destination	32	0	0.62	0.11	4.27	31	0	0.47
AS	32	2	0.88	0.16	12.86	31	0	2
SCAS	32	62	9.62	1.70	36.25	31	0	61.66
ASSIS	32	33	9.58	1.69	19.76	31	0	33.47
BIAS	32	20	4.31	0.76	25.97	31	0	19.78
Language Efficiency	32	4	0.88	0.16	24.33	31	0	3.781

Note: One-Sample T Test Value=0

Table 7. International Students of Sub-Saharan African Francophone Countries Choice of Acculturation Strategies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Integration	9	28.1	28.1	28.1
	Assimilation	17	53.1	53.1	81.3
	Separation	3	9.4	9.4	90.6
	Marginalisation	3	9.4	9.4	100
Total		32	100	100	

Table 8. Intention to migrate after graduation as Predictor of dependents Variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-3.276	1.467		-2.232	0.034
	ASSIS	0.003	0.02	0.024	0.13	0.898
	SCAS	0.019	0.02	0.179	0.975	0.338
	BIAS	0.162	0.046	0.677	3.489	0.002
	Lang_Efficiency	0.11	0.1	0.187	1.099	0.281

a. Dependent Variable: Intention to Immigrate after Graduation

Table 9. Intention to Migrate after Graduation as a Moderator Sociocultural Adaptation

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	61.565	1.16		53.07	0.00
	AS_Center	-1.138	0.179	-0.78	-6.36	0.00
	MI_center	-1.294	1.148	-0.139	-1.13	0.27
	MI_AS_Center	-0.075	0.182	-0.05	-0.41	0.68

a. Dependent Variable: Sociocultural Adaptation Scale

Table 10. Test for Significance for Variable of Interest Montreal Vs Toronto

Table One-Sample Test: Test Value-0								
Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Toronto	Intention to Immigrate after Graduation	23	2.00	0.95	0.20	10.06	22	0.00
	Duration in Canada	23	2.20	1.36	0.28	7.75	22	0.00
	Language Efficiency	23	4.09	0.60	0.12	33.86	22	0.00
	AS	23	1.87	0.76	0.16	11.84	22	0.00
	SCAS	23	63.17	9.81	2.04	30.90	22	0.00
	ASSIS	23	33.35	10.32	2.15	15.49	22	0.00
	BIAS	23	19.35	4.05	0.84	22.90	22	0.00
Montreal	Intention to Immigrate after Graduation	9	2.11	1.27	0.42	4.99	8	0.00
	Duration in Canada	9	3.50	1.73	0.58	6.06	8	0.00
	Language Efficiency	9	3.00	1.03	0.34	8.73	8	0.00
	AS	9	2.33	1.12	0.37	6.26	8	0.00
	SCAS	9	57.78	8.41	2.80	20.61	8	0.00
	ASSIS	9	33.78	7.90	2.63	12.82	8	0.00
	BIAS	9	20.89	4.99	1.66	12.57	8	0.00

Table 11. Comparison of Toronto and Montreal Variables: Independent Samples Test

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
ASSIS	EVA[1]	0.49	0.49	-0.1	30	0.911	-0.43	3.83
	EVNA[2]			-0.1	19.15	0.901	-0.43	3.40
SCAS	EVA	0.43	0.52	1.5	30	0.157	5.40	3.72
	EVNA			1.6	17.03	0.138	5.40	3.47
BIAS	EVA	0.78	0.38	-0.9	30	0.372	-1.54	1.70
	EVNA			-0.8	12.37	0.424	-1.54	1.86
AS	EVA	0.08	0.79	1.8	30	0.087	4.43	2.51
	EVNA			1.7	13.47	0.114	4.43	2.62

[1] Equal variances assumed (EVA)

[2] Equal variances not assumed (EVNA)

Appendix B: Invitation to participate in a research study

Dear student,

My name is _____. I am a student at Ryerson and York joint program of Communication and Culture, and the topic of my thesis is "The Choice of Acculturation Strategies: intercultural adaptation of French international students from Sub-Saharan African Countries in Ontario." I would like to ask if you would kindly participate in my research study, which is composed of filling out the "International Students Personal Data Form" and three different questionnaires (the Brief Intercultural adaptation Scale, the sociocultural adaptation scale and Revised Acculturation Stress Scale for International students) and participating in two interviews and one focus group discussion.

Your answers will be kept confidential. It would take about 20–30 min to finish the questionnaires and 45 minutes to 1 hour for each interview. The focus group discussion will take about 45 minutes to one hour.

Thank you for considering my request.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Invitation à participer à une étude de recherche

Chère étudiante,

Cher étudiant,

Mon nom est _____. Je suis étudiante dans le programme de maîtrise de communication et Culture, programme co-dirigé par les universités Ryerson et York. Mon mémoire de recherche a pour titre « Le choix de l'orientation d'acculturation : l'adaptation psychologique et socioculturelle des étudiants étrangers de l'Afrique francophone subsaharienne ».

Je voudrais vous demander si vous aimeriez participer dans l'élaboration de ma recherche. Vous serez invité à remplir un formulaire d'identification personnel ainsi que trois questionnaires (Échelle de stress d'acculturation pour étudiant étranger, Brève échelle d'adaptation psychologique, Échelle d'adaptation socioculturelle). Vous serez aussi appelé à participer à deux entrevues et à une discussion de groupe.

Vos réponses seront confidentielles. Cela vous prendra approximativement 20 à 30 minutes pour remplir les différents formulaires. Chacune des entrevues durera approximativement entre 45 minutes et une heure et la discussion de groupe durera approximativement une heure.

N'hésitez pas à me contacter à l'adresse courrielle suivante : _____ si vous avez des questions.

Veuillez recevoir cher étudiant(e) mes sincères salutations. Merci pour votre considération.

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

Date:

Study Name: The Choice of Acculturation Strategies: Intercultural adaptation of French international students from Sub-Saharan African Countries in Ontario

Researcher name:

Purpose of the Research:

The purpose of this research is to investigate the preferences of International Students from Francophone Sub-Saharan African Countries (ISSAFC) for different acculturation strategies and the role that goal contents and self-determined motivation play on their intercultural adaptations in bilingual post-secondary institutions in Ontario, Canada. Acculturation is the process of change that takes place as a result of two or more cultures coming into contact (Berry, 2005).

The research will intend to answer the question: what the preferred acculturation strategy adopted by International Students from Francophone Sub-Saharan African Countries will be?

The study hypothesizes that most ISSAFC will chose integration as their preferred acculturation strategy due to two motivational factors: self-determination of studying abroad and the students' goal to achieve personal growth and career development from a global perspective.

The research will be conducted using a qualitative exploratory research design emphasizing mix-method approaches. The study will include the use of questionnaires, qualitative research interviews and focus group discussion. The research completion will be presented as conference presentation, MA thesis and publications.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

This research will use mix-method approaches comprised of completion of the Personal Information Sheet, and several questionnaires on psychological and sociocultural adaptation of international students in the new environment: 1) Brief Intercultural adaptation Form; Sociocultural adaptation Form; Revised Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students. The completion of the questionnaires will take about 45 minutes in total. We will also ask you to participate in two interviews and one focus group. The interview and focus group will take about 3 hours in total.

Risks and Discomforts:

We do not foresee any risks from your participation in the research. However, it is possible that some questions can cause discomfort. You can withdraw from the participation at any time if you experience any discomfort.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

The research will give a greater understanding of this specific group of students' acculturation process and will enable higher bilingual education institutions to develop more appropriate programs that enhance social support and coping strategies, in various ways to promote integration and lesser acculturative stress experienced by this international student group.

This research will permit the participants to open up about their unique challenges and issues. What can lead to policy implementation to support the integration of international students and change in institutional practices.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer, to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff, or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. Should you wish to withdraw after the study, you will have the option to also withdraw your data up until the analysis is complete.

Confidentiality:

The data will be electronic for the interviews and focus group discussion and hard copy for Personal information sheet and the different questionnaires.

Data will be stored until the completion of the analysis and redaction of the Thesis, approximately until February 28, 2021.
At the end of the project, the hard copy data will be shredded, and electronic data will be erased.

Unless you choose otherwise, all information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research.

The data will be collected using handwritten (field notes), audio tapes for the interviews and video tape for focus group discussion.

Your data will be safely stored in a locked facility and only the researcher, the supervisor and committee members will have access to this information.

The data will be stored for approximately two years or until the thesis completion "February 28, 2021.

All participants will be asked not to disclose anything said within the context of the discussion. By agreeing to participate, you agree to not disclose to others outside this event anything said within the context of the discussion.

Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

The data collected in this research project may be used – in an anonymized form - by members of the research team in subsequent research investigations exploring similar lines of inquiry. Such projects will still undergo ethics review by the HPRC, our institutional REB. Any secondary use of anonymized data by the research team will be treated with the same degree of confidentiality and anonymity as in the original research project.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact me at _____ or my supervisor, _____. You may also contact the Graduate Program in Communication & Culture.

This research has received ethics review and approval by the Delegated Ethics Review Committee, which is delegated authority to review research ethics protocols by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board, and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, Kaneff Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I_----------, consent to participate in **"The Choice of Acculturation Strategies: Intercultural adaptation of French international students from Sub-Saharan African Countries in Ontario"** conducted by _____. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature_____ **Date**_____
Participant

Signature_____ **Date**_____
Principal Investigator

Additional consent (where applicable)

Audio recording

❑ I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

Video recording or use of photographs

❑ I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

I, _____ hereby authorize _____ to Audio or Video record me for the purpose of the project **"The Choice of Acculturation Strategies: Intercultural adaptation of French international students from Sub-Saharan African Countries in Ontario"**. I hereby assign all rights to the release and retention of Audio or Video Records as outlined in this agreement. I understand that Video Records will be used for research purposes only. Any other use will require specific written permission. _____ Initials I certify that I am over 18 years of age. _____ Initials

Signature:_____ Date: _____

Participant: (name)

Formulaire de consentement libre

Date :

Titre de la recherche: « Le choix de l'orientation d'acculturation : l'adaptation interculturelle des étudiants étrangers de l'Afrique francophone sub-saharienne en Ontario »

Informations sur le chercheur principal :

Email:

Renseignement sur la recherche :

Cette recherche est réalisée dans le cadre d'un projet de mémoire. Cette recherche vise à répondre à la question : Quelle orientation d'acculturation adoptent les d'étudiants étrangers de l'Afrique francophone subsaharienne dans les institutions universitaires ontariennes au Canada?

L'acculturation est définie comme l'ensemble des phénomènes qui résultent d'un contact continu et direct entre des groupes d'individus de cultures différentes et qui entraîne des modifications dans les modèles culturels initiaux de l'un ou des deux groupes (Berry 2005). Il sera aussi question de l'adaptation psychologique et socioculturelle de ces étudiants.

Mon hypothèse est que cette catégorie d'étudiants adoptera « l'intégration » comme orientation d'acculturation en raison de sa motivation à faire des études à l'étranger, dans le but d'acquérir des aptitudes de carrière et des connaissances de renom international.

Nous utiliserons une méthode qualitative pour conduire cette recherche : ceci inclura l'utilisation de questionnaires, d'entrevues et de discussion de groupes. Les résultats de cette recherche permettront de compléter mon projet de mémoire, d'écrire des articles et de faire des présentations à des conférences.

Votre participation :

Votre participation à cette recherche consistera à remplir une fiche d'identification personnelle, ainsi que trois questionnaires : 1) l'échelle d'adaptation interculturelle, 2) l'échelle d'adaptation socioculturelle et 3) l'échelle de stress d'acculturation des étudiants internationaux. Nous prévoyons que cela vous prendra environ 45 minutes pour remplir tous les documents. Vous serez aussi invités à participer à deux entrevues semi-structurées et une discussion de groupes d'environ une heure chacune pour un total de trois heures.

Risques ou inconvénients possibles liés à votre participation

Je n'imagine aucun risque dû à la participation à cette recherche. Cependant, il est possible que le fait de raconter votre expérience suscite des réflexions ou des souvenirs émouvants ou désagréables. Si cela se produit, n'hésitez pas à en parler avec la personne qui mène l'entrevue. Bien que les réponses à chacune des questions soient importantes pour la recherche, vous demeurez libres de choisir de ne pas répondre à l'une ou l'autre d'entre elles ou encore de mettre fin à votre participation à tout moment, sans avoir à vous justifier.

Avantages de conduire cette recherche et ses bénéfices pour vous

Cette étude permettra de mieux comprendre les difficultés d'adaptation que rencontre votre groupe spécifique d'étudiants internationaux et de permettre aux institutions d'études universitaires de mettre en place des programmes plus adaptés pouvant faciliter votre processus d'acculturation.

Le fait de participer à cette recherche vous offre une occasion de réfléchir et de discuter en toute confidentialité de votre expérience, de la comparer à celle des autres participants. En gros, cela vous permettra de participer au débat en vue d'améliorer le sort des étudiants francophone de l'Afrique sub-saharienne.

Participation volontaire et droit de retrait

Vous êtes libres de participer à ce projet de recherche. Vous pouvez aussi mettre fin à votre participation sans conséquence négative ou préjudice et sans avoir à justifier votre décision. Si vous décidez de mettre fin à votre participation, il est important de m'en prévenir aux coordonnées incluses dans ce document. A cette occasion je vérifierai si vous m'autorisez à conserver vos données et à les utiliser pour la recherche, malgré votre retrait. Si vous refusez, tous les renseignements personnels vous concernant seront alors détruits. Toutefois, si vous acceptez, elles seront conservées selon les mesures décrites ci-après et qui seront appliquées pour tous les participants.

Confidentialité

Les chercheurs sont tenus d'assurer la confidentialité aux participants. A cet égard, voici les mesures qui seront appliquées dans le cadre de la présente recherche :

Les données seront en format numérique et en format papier (prise de note) pour les interviews et discussions de groupes. Les questionnaires seront en général en format papier.

Durant la recherche:

- votre nom sera remplacé par un code dans tout le matériel et les données de la recherche contenant des renseignements personnels;
- seul le chercheur aura accès à la liste contenant les noms et les codes, elle-même conservée séparément du matériel de la recherche et des données;
- tout le matériel de la recherche sera conservé dans un classeur barré, dans un local sous clé;
- les données en format numérique seront, pour leur part, conservées dans des fichiers encryptées dont l'accès sera protégé par l'utilisation d'un mot de passe et auquel seul le chercheur aura accès.

Lors de la diffusion des résultats :

- les noms des participants ne paraîtront dans aucun rapport;
- les résultats seront présentés sous forme globale de sorte que les résultats individuels des participants ne seront jamais communiqués;

Après la fin de la recherche :

- la liste des noms et des codes sera détruite afin que les données qui seront utilisées dans le cadre d'autres recherches soient rendues anonymes sans possibilité absolue d'identifier les participants les ayant fournies.

Les données seront collectées en utilisant des prises de notes, avec des enregistrements audios et vidéos pour les entrevues et discussions.

Selon la loi, les chercheurs sont tenus d'assurer la confidentialité aux participants.

Les données collectées durant cette étude peuvent être utilisées par les membres de l'équipe de recherche lors d'autres études se rapportant au même sujet. Un tel projet se soumettra aux mêmes procédures d'approbation du comité d'éthique à la recherche de notre institution. Toute recherche secondaire entreprise dans ce cadre par l'équipe de recherche se soumettra aux mêmes exigences de confidentialité et d'anonymat qu'un projet de recherche initial.

Questions sur la recherche?

Si vous avez des questions sur la recherche, sur les implications de votre participation, pour se retirer du projet ou pour recevoir un résumé des résultats, veuillez communiquer avec moi par courriel à l'une des adresses suivantes : _____. Vous pouvez aussi joindre ma directrice de mémoire, _____. Vous pouvez aussi contacter le bureau du programme des études graduées en communication et culture à York par courriel par téléphone au _____.

Cette étude a reçu l'approbation du comité d'éthique à la recherche, qui est l'instance autorisée à réviser les protocoles concernant l'éthique de la recherche avec des êtres humains à l'université York, conformément aux exigences de l'Énoncé de politique des trois Conseils du Canada sur l'éthique de la recherche avec des êtres humains. Si vous avez des questions en ce qui concerne la procédure d'approbation ou le droit des participant à cette étude, veuillez contactez le responsable du bureau d'éthique à la recherche au 5ème étage du Kaneff Tower, York University par téléphone au 416-736-5914 ou par courriel au : ore@yorku.ca.

Droit et Signature:

Je, soussigné(e) _____consens librement à participer à la recherche intitulée : « Le choix de l'orientation d'acculturation : l'adaptation interculturelle des étudiants étrangers de l'Afrique francophone sub-saharienne en Ontario», conduite par_____. J'ai pris connaissance et compris le but, la nature, les avantages, les risques et les inconvénients du projet de recherche et je désire y participer. Je ne cède aucun de mes droits en signant ce formulaire. Ma signature ci-dessous indique uniquement mon consentement.

_____ _____

Signature du participant, du ou de la participant(e) Date

_____ _____

Signature du chercheur principal Date

Consentement additionnel (Veuillez cocher les cases vous concernant)

1. Enregistrement audio

Je consens librement à l'enregistrement audio de mon entrevue.

2. Enregistrement vidéo

Je consens librement à l'enregistrement vidéo de mon entrevue.

Consentement pour Enregistrement Audio-vidéo

Je, soussigné(e) …….., - autorise par la présente _____ à m'enregistrer en audio/vidéo pour le projet de recherche intitulée : « Le choix de l'orientation d'acculturation : l'adaptation interculturelle des étudiants étrangers de l'Afrique francophone sub-saharienne en Ontario».

J'autorise l'utilisation de ces données, sous leur forme enregistrée aussi bien que sous leur forme transcrite et anonyme seulement dans le cadre d'une recherche scientifique à but non lucratif à des fins d'enseignement universitaire pour une diffusion dans la communauté des chercheurs sous la forme d'éventuels échanges et prêts de corpus - prends acte que, pour toutes ces utilisations scientifiques, les données ainsi enregistrées seront anonymes.

Lieu et date: _____Signature_____

Participant

Appendix D: International Students Personal Data Sheet

Identification Code Number: _____ (Please leave it blank).

Student's Name_____

Sex: _____ male _____female

Age_____

Level of study: 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th ☐ Other_____

Native Country_____

Please check the source/s of your financial support while studying in Canada.

Families ☐ Friends ☐ Native government Bursary ☐

College/University ☐ Scholarship ☐ Other☐ Please indicate_____

Language/s proficiency

1. Language preference	French ☐	English ☐	Other (please indicate)_____
2. Language spoken at home	French ☐	English ☐	Other (please indicate)_____
3. Language spoken at school	French ☐	English ☐	Other (please indicate)_____
4. Language spoken with friends	French ☐	English ☐	Other (please indicate_____
5. Language of reading materials	French ☐	English ☐	Other (please indicate_____

Integration Program on Campus

Are you participating in an integration program on campus Yes___ No___

Leadership programs_____ Cultural events_____ peer support_____Other_____
Please indicate_____

Are you participating in any mentorship program? _____Yes_____No
If yes, please indicate_____

What is your financial situation?
Fulfilling ☐ some how fulfilling ☐ I have some financial problems ☐ I have a lot of financial problems ☐

Give some examples:_____

Fiche d'information personnelle

Code d'identification _____ (Veuillez ne rien inscrire ici)

Nom de l'étudiant :_____

Sexe : Masculin☐ Féminin☐

Age : _____

Niveau d'étude : 1er ☐ 2ème ☐ 3ème ☐ 4ème ☐ Autre____

Pays d'origine_____

Veuillez indiquer la ou les sources de financement de vos études au Canada

Famille☐

Amis ☐

Bourse gouvernemental du pays d'origine ☐

Aide financière du pays d'accueil ☐

Aide financière du collège ou université fréquenté ☐

Autre_____

Compétence linguistique

1 Langue préférée : français☐ anglais☐ autre (veuillez indiquer) _____
2 Langue parlée à la maison : français☐ anglais☐ autre (veuillez indiquer) _____
3 Langue d'enseignement : français ☐ anglais ☐autre (veuillez indiquer) _____
4 Langue de communication avec les amis : français ☐ anglais☐ autre (veuillez indiquer) __
5 Langue de lecture : français ☐ anglais ☐ autre (veuillez indiquer) _____

Est-ce que vous prenez part à un programme d'intégration sur le campus : oui☐ non☐

Si oui, le ou lesquels? Programme de leadership☐ Évènements culturels☐

Programme de couplage avec des étudiants canadiens☐ Mentora ☐

Programme de couplage avec d'anciens étudiants étrangers☐ Autre (veuillez l'indiquer)

_____

Comment est-ce que vous vous situé financièrement?

Épanoui ☐ moyennement épanoui ☐ J'ai quelque problème financier ☐ J'ai beaucoup de problèmes financiers ☐

Donnez quelques exemples:_____

Appendix E: Revised Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students[3]

As foreign students have to make a number of personal, social, and environmental changes upon arrival in a strange land, this ***cultural-shock*** experience might cause them acculturative stress. This scale is designed to assess such acculturative stress you personally might have experienced. There are no right or wrong answers. However, for the data to be meaningful, you must answer each statement given below as honestly as possible.

For each of the following statements, please circle the number that BEST describes your response. 1= Strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= not sure, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Because of my different cultural background as a ***foreign*** student, I feel that:

1. I am treated differently in social situations. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
2. I feel sad living in unfamiliar surroundings here. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
3. I feel that I receive unequal treatment. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
4. I am treated differently because of my race. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
5. Homesickness for my country bothers me. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
6. I miss the country and people of my national origin. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
7. I feel sad leaving my relatives behind. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
8. I feel rejected when people are sarcastic toward my cultural values. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
9. I feel rejected when others don't appreciate my cultural values. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
10. I fear for my personal safety because of my different cultural background. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
11. I feel insecure here. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
12. I feel uncomfortable to adjust to new foods and/or to new eating habits 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
13. I feel overwhelmed that multiple pressures are placed upon me after my migration to this society. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
14. I feel uncomfortable to adjust to new cultural values. 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐

[3] Sandhu, D.S., & Asrabadi, B.R. (1994). Development of an acculturative stress scale for international students: Preliminary findings. Psychological Reports, 75, 435–448.

L'Échelle de stress d'acculturation pour étudiants internationaux revisitée[4]

Étant donné que les étudiants étrangers sont amenés à faire face à certain nombre de changements personnel, social, environnemental à leur arrivé dans leur pays d'accueil, ce choc culturel peut être la source de stress d'acculturation. Cette échelle est conçue pour mesurer le possible stress d'acculturation vous auriez eu à expérimenter personnellement. Il n'y a pas de réponse parfaite. Cependant pour que les données parlent d'eux même, vous devez répondre aux questions ci-dessous, le plus houement possible.

Pour chaque énoncé, veuillez encercler le nombre qui décrit le mieux votre réponse.
1= fortement opposé; 2= opposé; 3= incertain; 4= d'accord; 5= en parfaite accord.
En raison de mes différences culturelles en tant que étudiants étrangers, je sens que :

1. Je suis traité différemment dans les situations sociales 1☐ 2 ☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
2. Je suis mélancolique dû au fait que je vie dans un environnement Étranger 1☐ 2☐ 3 ☐ 4☐5☐
3. Je suis victime d'inégalité 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4 ☐5☐
4. Je suis traité différemment à cause de ma race 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4 ☐5☐
5. Je suis affecté par le manque du pays d'origine 1☐ 2☐ 3☐4 ☐ 5☐
6. Je suis nostalgique de mon pays et des miens 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
7. Je me sens malheureux de me retrouver loin de mes proches 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
8. Je me sens rejeter lorsque les gens sont sarcastiques face à mes valeurs culturelles 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
9. The me sens rejeter lorsque les gens n'apprécient pas mes valeurs culturelles. 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
10. J'ai peur pour ma sécurité à cause de différence culturelle 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
11. Je ne me sens pas en sécurité ici 1☐ 2☐ 3 ☐4 ☐ 5☐
12. J'ai de la difficulté à adopter à ma nouvelle habitude alimentaire et essayer de nouveaux aliments 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
13. Je suis submergé par différentes pressions depuis mon arrivé and Cette société. 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
14. J'ai de la difficulté à m'adapter aux nouvelles valeurs culturelles. 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐

[4] Sandhu, D.S., & Asrabadi, B.R. (1994). Development of an acculturative stress scale for international students: Preliminary findings. Psychological Reports, 75, 435–448.

Appendix F: Brief intercultural Adaptation Scale[5]

Being in a new culture can bring you happiness and satisfactory it can also be a source of anxiety and make you feel out of place. Please rate how have you felt fitting into the new culture by choosing the answer which well suited you.

1. How long have you been here in Canada? Please indicate_____
2. Before coming in Canada, do you study in another country(ies)? Yes ☐ No ☐
3. If yes, in how many countries have you been?
   a. ☐
   b. ☐
   c. ☐
   d. 4+ ☐

Please indicate

_____

_____

4. Before travelling, how did you feel about coming to Canada?

a. I felt extremely excited ☐
b. I felt somewhat excited ☐
c. I felt somewhat indifferent ☐
d. I felt indifferent ☐

5. Now that you are here, how do you feel?

a. I feel comfortable, at home ☐
b. Somethings are comfortable, I feel homesick sometime ☐
c. I am not comfortable, I am often thinking about home ☐
d. There is something missing here, I cannot stay here ☐

6. Where do you see yourself as Canadian culture?

a. I feel quite well integrated ☐
b. I feel somewhat integrated ☐
c. I feel somewhat disconnected ☐
d. I feel disconnected ☐

[5] Demes, K., Geeraert, N., (2013), Measures Matter Scales for Adaptation, Cultural Distance, and Acculturation Orientation Revisitedhttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/261033508_Measures_Matter_Scales_for_Adaptation_Cultural_Distance_and_Acculturation_Orientation_Revisited [accessed Jul 18 2018].

7. How do you feel being away from your home country?

a. I feel a sense of freedom ☐

b. I feel somewhat a sense of freedom ☐

c. I feel somewhat constraint ☐

d. I feel constraint ☐

8. How do you feel about how to behave in certain situations?

a. I feel accepted ☐

b. I feel somewhat accepted ☐

c. I feel somewhat rejected ☐

d. I feel rejected ☐

How do you feel without your [home country] family and friends around you?

a. I feel sociable, making a lot of friends (more than 5 friends) ☐

b. I feel somewhat sociable, making a few friends (2–5 friends) ☐

c. I feel somewhat unfriendly (1–2 friends) ☐

d. I feel unfriendly (no friend) ☐

10. Things in Canada are different from your home country. How do you feel about things that are different in Canada?

a. I feel interested ☐

b. I feel somewhat interested ☐

c. I feel somewhat indifferent ☐

d. I feel indifferent ☐

11. Have you had any frustration adapting to Canada?

a. I feel fulfillment (pleasure) adapting ☐

b. I feel somewhat fulfillment adapting ☐

c. I feel somewhat defeated (anger) adapting ☐

d. I feel defeated adapting ☐

12. How do you feel with your day-to-day life in Canada?

a. I feel enthusiastic ☐

b. I feel somewhat enthusiastic ☐

c. I feel somewhat disinterested ☐

d. I feel disinterested

13. Do you intend to stay in Canada After your education?

a. I have planned to apply for permanent residency after graduation ☐

b. I will may be apply for permanent residency after my graduation ☐

c. I do not think I will apply for residency after my graduation ☐

d. I cannot wait to return home after my graduation ☐

14. When did you make the decision to stay in Canada?

a. Before coming to Canada ☐

b. After coming to Canada. ☐

15. Do you have any other experience you would like to share with us to help us better understand your process of adapting to Canadian culture and society?

If yes, please indicate

_____

_____

Brève échelle d'adaptation Interculturelle

Les études ont démontré que se retrouver dans une nouvelle culture peut vous procurer un bien-être mais peut aussi constituer une source d'anxiété et de désorientation. La présente étude a pour intention d'enquêter sur l'adaptation interculturelle des étudiant internationaux des pays l'Afrique sub-saharienne.

Afin de nous aider à mieux comprendre le sujet, veuillez nous indiquer quels ont été vos sentiments lors de votre processus d'adaptation. Vous voudriez bien choisir la réponse qui s'adapte le mieux à votre situation. **Vos réponses seront anonymes**.

1. Combien de temps avez-vous passé au Canada? Veuillez l'indiquez_____ans
2. Avant votre arrivée au Canada, aviez-vous étudié dans un ou d'autre(s) pays autre que votre pays d'origine? Oui ☐ Non ☐
3. Si vous avez répondu oui à la question ci-dessus, dans combien de pays aviez-vous étudié?

a. 1 ☐
b. 2 ☐
c. 3 ☐
d. 4+ ☐

Si oui, où? Veuillez les indiquer.

_____

_____

4. Avant votre arrivée, quels étaient vos sentiments par rapport à séjour au Canada?
    a. J'étais très excité ☐
    b. J'étais un peu excité ☐
    c. J'étais un peu indifférent ☐
    d. J'étais indifférent ☐
5. Maintenant que vous êtes au Canada, quels sont vos sentiments?
    a. Je me sens bien, chez moi ☐
    b. Je me sens plus ou moins bien, j'ai parfois le mal du pays ☐
    c. Je ne me sens pas bien, j'ai le mal du pays ☐
    d. Il y a quelque que chose qui me manque, je ne peux pas rester ici ☐
6. Comment vous vous sentez par rapport à la culture Canadienne?
    a. Je me sens très bien intégré ☐
    b. Je me sens un peu intégré ☐
    c. Je me sens un peu déconnecté ☐
    d. Je me sens déconnecté ☐

7. Comment vous sentez-vous loin de votre pays d'origine?
    a. Je ressens un sentiment de liberté ☐
    b. Je ressens un peu un sentiment de liberté ☐
    c. Je me sens un peu contraint ☐
    d. Je me sens contraint ☐
8. Comment vous sentez-vous par rapport à la façon de vous comporter dans certaines situations?
    a. Je me sens accepté ☐
    b. Je me sens un peu accepté ☐
    c. Je me sens un peu rejeté ☐
    d. Je me sens rejeté ☐
9. Comment est-ce que vous vous sentez à l'absence de la famille et les amis du pays à vos côtés?
    a. Je me sens sociable, me faisant beaucoup d'amis (plus de 5 amis) ☐
    b. Je me sens un peu sociable, me faisant quelques amis (3 à 5 amis) ☐
    c. Je me sens un peu antipathique, je me suis fait un ami ou deux amis ☐
    d. Je me sens antipathique, je n'ai pas d'amis ☐
10. Les choses sont différentes au Canada comparativement à votre pays d'origine. Comment est-ce que vous vous sentez par rapport à ce qui se fait différemment au Canada?
    a. Je me sens intéressé ☐
    b. Je me sens un peu intéressé ☐
    c. Je me sens un peu indifférent ☐
    d. Je me sens indifférent ☐
11. Avez-vous ressenti des frustrations lors de votre adaptation au Canada?
    a. Je me sens épanouie en m'adaptant ☐
    b. Je me sens un peu épanouie en m'adaptant ☐
    c. Je me sens un peu chagriné (de la colère) en m'adaptant ☐
    d. Je me sens chagriné (de la colère) en m'adaptant ☐
12. Comment est-ce que vous vous sentez par rapport à votre vie quotidienne au Canada?
    a. Je me sens enthousiaste ☐
    b. Je me sens un peu enthousiaste ☐
    c. Je me sens un peu désintéressé ☐
    d. Je me sens désintéressé ☐
13. Envisagez-vous demeurer au Canada après vos études?
    a. J'ai décidé de demander la résidence permanente à la fin de mes études ☐

b. Je pense demander la résidence à la fin de mes études ☐
c. Je ne pense pas demander la résidence permanente à la fin de mes études ☐
d. J'ai hâte de retourner dans mon pays à la fin de mes études ☐

14. La décision de rester au Canada après vos étude a été prise après votre immigration?
    a. Oui ☐
    b. Non ☐
15. Avez-vous autres choses que vous aimeriez bien partager avec nous afin de nous aider à mieux comprendre votre processus d'adaptation à la culture et à la société Canadienne? Veuillez nous l'indiquer ici :

_____

_____

Appendix G: Revised Sociocultural Adaptation Scale[6]

Living in a different culture often involves learning new skills and behaviours. Thinking about life in Canada, please rate your competence at each the following behaviours (1 = Not at all competent; 5 = Extremely competent).

Interpersonnel communication

Building and maintaining relationships.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
2. Interacting at social events.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
3. Accurately interpreting and responding to other people's gestures and facial expressions.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
4. Varying the rate of my speaking in a culturally appropriate manner.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
5. Accurately interpreting and responding to other people's emotions	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
6. Changing my behaviour to suit social norms, rules, attitudes, beliefs, and customs.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Academic Performance

7. Managing my academic.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
8. Working effectively with other students.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
9. Gaining feedback from other students.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
10. Expressing my ideas to other students.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Personal Interests and Community Involvement

11. Maintaining my hobbies and interests.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
12. Obtaining community services I require.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
13. Attending or participating in community activities.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
14. Dealing with the bureaucracy.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Language proficiency

15. Understanding and speaking English.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
16. Reading and writing English.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

[6] Wilson, J. (2013). *Exploring the past, present and future of cultural competency research: The revision and expansion of the sociocultural adaptation construct*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Victoria University of Wellington

Ecological Adaptation

17. Finding my way around.	1☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
18. Adapting to the population density.	1☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Échelle d'adaptation socioculturelle révisée[7]

Vivre dans une culture différente de la nôtre implique un apprentissage de nouvelles habitudes et compétences. Imaginant votre vie au Canada, veuillez évaluer chacun des habiletés suivantes par rapport à vous. (1= ne maitrise pas ; 5= maitrise très bien).

Communication interpersonnelle

1. Initier et entretenir des relations 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
2. Interagir lors d'évènement sociaux 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
3. Interpréter et réagir aux faits et gestes d'autrui 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
4. Adapter votre débit de locution selon les conditions culturelles 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
5. Interpréter et réagir efficacement aux émotions d'autrui 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
6. Adapter mon comportement aux normes, règle attitude, coutumes et croyances sociales 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Performance académique

7. Gérer efficacement ma vie académique 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
8. Travailler en groupe 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
9. Accepter les commentaires rétroactifs des autres étudiants 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
10. Expliquer de façon efficace mes idées aux autres étudiants 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Intérêts personnels et participation à la vie de la communauté

11. Continuer mes hobbies et intérêts 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4 ☐ 5☐
12. Avoir recourt aux services communautaires dont j'ai besoin 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
13. Assister et participer aux activités communautaires 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
14. Traiter efficacement avec la bureaucratie 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Compétence linguistique

15. Comprendre et parler l'anglais 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

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[7] Wilson, J. (2013). *Exploring the past, present and future of cultural competency research: The revision and expansion of the sociocultural adaptation construct*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Victoria University of Wellington

16. Lire et écrire l'anglais 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Adaptation écologique

17. Se localiser 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

18. S'adapter à la densité de la population 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Appendix H: Letter of permission

Date

Mr. or Ms.

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Mr. or Ms.:

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at your institution. I am currently enrolled in the master's Degree in Communication & Culture, York University, and am in the process of writing my Master's Thesis. The study is entitled: "The Choice of Acculturation Strategies: Intercultural Adaptation of French international students from Sub- Saharan African Countries in Ontario".

I hope that your administration will allow me to recruit 20 to 24 individuals, men, women; age range 18 to 35 years old, from the school to anonymously complete a 4-pages questionnaire (copy enclosed). They will also participate in two interviews and one focus group discussion. Interested students, who volunteer to participate, will be given a consent form to be signed (copy enclosed) and returned to the primary researcher at the beginning of the survey process.

If approval is granted, student participants will complete the survey at home. The completion of the questionnaires will take about 45 minutes in total. The interview and focus group will take about 3 hours in total and will be held on Campus, York University or Glendon College.

The survey results will be pooled for the thesis project and individual results of this study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. Should this study be published, only pooled results will be documented. No costs will be incurred by either your school/center or the individual participants.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated. I will follow up with a telephone call next week and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have at that time. You may contact me at my email address:

If you agree, kindly sign below and return the signed form in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Alternatively, kindly submit a signed letter of permission on your institution's letterhead acknowledging your consent and permission for me to conduct this survey/study at your institution.

Sincerely,

Approved by:_____ _____ _____

Print your name and title here Signature Date

Enclosures

CC:

Appendix I: Ethics approval York University Delegated Research Ethics Committee

YORK
UNIVERSITÉ
UNIVERSITY

Certificate #: STU 2019-009
Approval Period: 02/13/19-02/13/20

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS (ORE)
5th Floor, Kaneff Tower
4700 Keele St.
Toronto ON
Canada M3J 1P3
Tel 416 736 5914

Fax 416 736-5512
www.research.yorku.ca

ETHICS APPROVAL

To:
Communications & Culture
Faculty of Graduate Studies

From: Sr. Manager and Policy Advisor, Research Ethics
(on behalf of the Chair, Human Participants Review Committee)
Date: Wednesday February 13, 2019
Title: **The Choice of Acculturation Strategies: Intercultural Adaption of French International Students from Sub-Saharan African Countries in Ontario**

Risk Level: ☒ Minimal Risk ☐ More than Minimal Risk
Level of Review: ☒ Delegated Review ☐ Full Committee Review

I am writing to inform you that this research project, **"The Choice of Acculturation Strategies: Intercultural Adaption of French International Students from Sub-Saharan African Countries in Ontario"** has received ethics review and approval by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines.

Note that approval is granted for one year. Ongoing research – research that extends beyond one year – must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

Any changes to the approved protocol must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process by submission of an amendment application to the HPRC prior to its implementation.

Any adverse or unanticipated events in the research should be reported to the Office of Research ethics (ore@yorku.ca) as soon as possible.

For further information on researcher responsibilities as it pertains to this approved research ethics protocol, please refer to the attached document, **"RESEARCH ETHICS: PROCEDURES to ENSURE ONGOING COMPLIANCE".**

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email at: ore@yorku.ca.

Yours sincerely,

Sr. Manager and Policy Advisor,
Office of Research Ethics

RESEARCH ETHICS: PROCEDURES to ENSURE ONGOING COMPLIANCE

Upon receipt of an ethics approval certificate, researchers are reminded that they are required to ensure that the following measures are undertaken so as to ensure on-going compliance with Senate and TCPS ethics guidelines:

1. **RENEWALS:** Research Ethics Approval certificates are subject to annual renewal. **It is the responsibility of researchers to ensure the timely submission of renewals.**
    a. As a courtesy, researchers will be reminded by ORE, in advance of certificate expiry, that the certificate must be renewed. Please note, however, it is the expectation that researchers will submit a renewal application prior to the expiration of ethics certificate(s).
    b. **Failure to renew an ethics approval certificate** (or to notify ORE that no further research involving human participants will be undertaken) **may result in suspension of research cost fund and access to research funds may be suspended/ withheld**.
2. **AMENDMENTS:** Amendments must be reviewed and approved **PRIOR** to undertaking/making the proposed amendments to an approved ethics protocol;
3. **END OF PROJECT**: ORE must be notified when a project is complete;
4. **ADVERSE EVENTS**: Adverse events must be reported to ORE as soon as possible;
5. **POST APPROVAL MONITORING:**
    a. More than minimal risk research may be subject to post approval monitoring as per TCPS guidelines;
    b. A spot sample of minimal risk research may similarly be subject to Post Approval Monitoring as per TCPS guidelines.

FORMS: As per the above, the following forms relating to on-going research ethics compliance are available on the Research website:

a. Renewal
b. Amendment
c. End of Project
d. Adverse Event

Appendix J: Reminder for Invitation

Bonjour M.

Je vous avais parlé de mon projet de recherche sur les étudiants internationaux et vous aviez accepté de participer à la recherche. J'espère que votre offre tient toujours. Si oui, je vous en remercie.

J'espère bien que ce projet permettra d'avoir plus d'informations sur les besoins particuliers des étudiants internationaux venant de l'Afrique francophone Subsaharienne. Ce projet devrait aussi permettre de savoir comment se passe la transition de ces étudiants dans leur nouveau milieu canadien et mettre le point sur les obstacles qu'ils rencontrent dans leur processus d'acculturation.

Veuillez signer le formulaire de consentement, si après lecture vous tenez toujours à faire partir du projet de recherche. Vous voudriez aussi remplir les questionnaires et me les faire parvenir d'ici le 15 avril, si possible. Il s'agit d'un document Word. Vous n'aurez qu'à le sauvegarder et me le faire parvenir par retour du courrier.

Comme je l'ai indiqué dans le formulaire de consentement, la participation au projet est volontaire et vous êtes libre de vous retirer à tout moment si vous n'êtes plus intéressé. Si vous connaissez d'autres personnes qui seraient intéressés, veuillez m'en informer pour que je les contacte.

Je sais que c'est la période des examens et que vous deviez être très occupé en ce moment. Merci de votre aide et j'ai hâte de discuter avec vous du sujet que je l'espère vous intéresse aussi beaucoup!

Je m'excuse beaucoup si vous recevez ce message plusieurs fois.

Veuillez recevoir mes meilleures salutations

Appendix K: Analysis Schedule

Participants' cotes	**Meaning units**	**Code**	**Sub-themes**	**Themes**
Si je dois le mesurer, je dois dire 10 parce que pour moi chacun à sa culture, chacun apporte quelque chose de nouveau. Je suis très ouvert aux autres cultures et je me dis que de la même manière les autres aussi devraient accepter ma culture. J'essaye d'apprendre des autres cultures, personne n'est parfait. Il y a des avantages et des inconvénients à toutes sortes de cultures par rapport à ta culture. C'est un peu ce mélange-là que je fais.	"If I have to measure It, **I have to say 10/10. Because for me Everyone has his culture, everyone brings something new.** I am very open to other cultures and I think that in the same way others as well should accept my culture. I'm trying to learn from other cultures, no culture is perfect. There are pros and cons to all kinds of cultures compared to your culture. **That's sort of the mix I make**." LD (21)	10/10 my culture is important for me	Culture maintenance	**Acculturation strategies**
Moi, à 100 % je veux garder ma culture. On est africain et on doit s'imprégner de sa culture peu importe l'endroit où on se trouve. GD1, NC (20).	**100% want to keep my culture.** We are African, and we have to soak up to our culture wherever we are. GD1, NC (20)	100% I want to keep my culture		**Acculturation strategies**
Ça fait de nous qui on est. Il faut s'intégrer mais ne pas s'oublier. Il ne faut pas oublier sa culture même s'il faut apprendre de la culture des autres puisqu'on est dans leur pays. GD1 DBA (19)	**[Culture] It makes us who we are**. We have to fit in but not forget ourselves. **We must not forget our culture** even if we have to learn from the culture of others since we are in their country. GD1 DBA (19)	Culture make us who we are		**Acculturation strategies**

Je valorise ma culture à 90 %. Moi je ne peux pas rayer ma culture parce que je suis au Canada. Même si on est dans une autre culture, on apprend à habiter au Canada, on apprend parfois à devenir canadien parce qu'on est obligé. Mais ce n'est pas pour ça que je vais dira que c'est fini. Les racines qui sont là, ça reste, même si on veut, on ne peut pas les effacer. MM	**I value my culture at 90%. I do not want to discard my culture** because I am in Canada. Even if we are in another culture, we learn how to live in Canada. **We learn how to become Canadian because we have to**. But, it is not the reason why I will say it is over. **The roots which are here, stay,** even if you want, you cannot wipe them up. MM (20)	09% I value my culture	Culture maintenance	**Acculturation strategies**
Je suis souvent avec les étudiants africains, par forcément les étudiants de mon pays. Des étudiants francophones en général mais aussi quelques étudiants africains anglophones. Mais j'essaye aussi de me rapprocher avec les étudiants canadiens.	"I am **often with African students**, the **students of my country**. In general, with Francophone students. But also, some African anglophone students. But **I'm also trying to connect with Canadian students**". GD2 MRL (23)	Contact with original culture		**Acculturation strategies**
Je participe à des activités du club africain. Je participe à beaucoup d'activités maintenant que je suis à Keele pour l'immersion dans un milieu anglophone Je socialise avec des Canadiens mais c'est très rare. La plupart du temps, c'est toujours avec d'autres étrangers et surtout avec des Africains. Même si je socialise avec des Canadiens, ce sont des Canadiens d'origine africaine.	"**I take part in activities of the African club. I take part in many activities now that I am at Keele, for immersion in an anglophone environment**. I socialize with Canadians, but it is very rare. **Most of the time, it's always with other foreigner and especially with Africans**. Even if **I socialize with Canadians, they are African Canadians.** SS (19)	Contact with both original and host cultures	Contact with fellow international students	**Acculturation strategies**

La plupart ce sont des Africains, mais aussi des noirs, des Caraïbéens. Mais des gens de la communauté noire sont plus solidaires. Mais c'est vrai que la première année il y avait eu la frosh week où moi et mes amis on était dans des groupes différents, j'ai rencontré quelques Canadiennes dans mon groupe avec qui je suis toujours mais c'est vrai qu'on n'est plus aussi proches. Après la frosh week on se voyait plus souvent et on allait au restaurant mais au fur et à mesure on s'est éloignés. Peut-être parce que je suis en résidence et qu'ils vivent chez leurs parents. En résidence on est beaucoup plus entre étudiants étrangers. MJK (20)	'**Most of [my friends] are Africans, but also blacks, Caribbean.** But people from **the black community are more supportive**. But it is true that the first year there had been the frosh week, when me and my friends were in different groups, **I met some Canadians in my group with which I am still with**, but it is true that we are not so close anymore. After Frosh Week we met more often and went to a restaurant but as we moved away, maybe because I'm in residence and they're living with their parents... In residency we are much more between foreign students.' MJK (20)	Contact with both original and host cultures		**Acculturation strategies**
Je n'hésite pas à participer dans des activités sur le campus. Par exemple, je fais des bénévolats pour la journée portes ouvertes et pour d'autres événements sur le campus. Je peux dire que je participe à ces événements avec un mélange des étudiants africains et canadiens anglophones comme francophones. GK (20)	**I do not hesitate to take part in activities on campus**. For example, **I make volunteers for the open house day and for other events on campus.** I can say that I **participate in these events with a mix of African and English-speaking Canadian students as well as Francophones**. GK (20)	Participation in the host culture and the original culture		**Acculturation strategies**

Que ce soit Canadiens ou autres étudiants internationaux, cela m'importe peu. Je fais des activités avec les deux groupes pour pouvoir bien m'intégrer à la société et pour avoir des relations un peu partout.	**Whether it's Canadian or other international students, it doesn't matter to me.** I do activities with both groups **so that I can integrate into the society** and socialize with others. MRL (23)	Contact with both original and host cultures.	Integration	**Acculturation strategies**
Sur le campus, je socialise beaucoup avec les étudiants, pas forcement francophones, mais de l'Afrique de l'ouest, centrale, du Nord. D'un peu partout. Pendant mes heures libres, je socialise beaucoup plus avec les étudiants d'Afrique sub-saharienne. C'est plus facile de socialiser avec les gens avec lesquels vous partagez les mêmes cultures.	On campus, I socialize a lot with students, **not necessarily francophones,** but from **West, Central, North Africa. From everywhere**. During my free time I **socialize much more with students from sub-Saharan Africa. It's easier to socialize with people with whom you share the same cultures**. LD (21)	Contact with the original culture	Culture maintenance	**Acculturation strategies**
On a besoin de s'imprégner aussi des réalités d'ici parce qu'il y a des codes, des manières de fonctionner et en côtoyant des Canadiens, ça peut nous ouvrir les esprits, parce qu'on a une manière de faire, une manière de penser qui ne s'applique pas forcément ici. C'est important d'avoir un cercle d'amis canadiens.	"**We need to learn the host country realities.** Because **there are codes and ways of doing things and being around Canadians can open our minds**. Because we have our ways of doing and thinking which do not necessarily apply here. **It is important to have a circle of Canadian friends.**" GD1 KM (25)	Host culture learning is important	Integration	**Acculturation strategies**
C'est important d'apprendre leur culture si on veut s'intégrer ici. GD2 MRL (23)	**It is important to learn their culture if we want to integrate here.** GD2 MRL (23)	Host culture learning is important	Integration	**Acculturation strategies**

Je valorise aussi la culture canadienne à 90 %. Je ne suis pas canadienne mais il y a des choses dans leur culture que j'aime beaucoup et d'autres que je n'aime pas. Mais ce n'est pas pour ça que je vais dire que je n'aime pas leur culture.	**I also value Canadian culture at 90%**. I am not Canadian but **there are things in their culture I like a lot and others I do not like.** But it is not a reason to say that I do not like their culture. MM. (20)	Host culture valorisation	Integration	**Acculturation strategies**
J'essaye d'apprendre des autres cultures, personne n'est parfait. Il y a des avantages et des inconvénients à toutes sortes de cultures par rapport à ta culture. C'est un peu ce mélange-là que je fais.	**I'm trying to learn from other cultures, nobody's perfect. There are pros and cons to all kinds of cultures compared to your culture.** That's sort of the blend I make. LD (21)	Host culture learning is important	Integration	**Acculturation strategies**
Moi ça m'importe peu. D'ailleurs dans mon programme, il n'y a pas tant de Canadiens que ça. GD1	"**I don't mind really.** Anyway, there are no many Canadians in my programme". GD1 DBA (19)	Less importance to contact with the host culture	Separation	**Acculturation Strategies**
Avec qui je socialise, ce ne sont que des Africains et pour moi, je ne m'arrête pas pour me dire qu'il faudrait que je sois ami avec des Canadiens. GD	"With those I socialize, **they are only Africans and for me, I do not stop to tell myself that I should be friends with Canadians**". GD1 DBB (20)	Less importance to contact with the host culture	Separation	**Acculturation Strategies**
Je ne vais pas me dire que je n'ai pas d'amis canadiens, donc c'est un problème pour moi. J'ai un ami canadien, on se parle souvent, on sort ensemble mais il n'y a pas plus d'affinités entre nous. HV (18) GD1	"I'm not going to say I don't have Canadian friends, so that's a problem for me. I have a Canadian friend, we talk a lot, we go out together, but there's no much affinity between us." GD1 HV (18)	Less importance to contact with the host culture	Separation	**Acculturation Strategies**

Quand on dit ça, on peut dire que c'est dommage, on vient jusqu'ici et on n'a pas d'amis canadiens. On ne fait pas beaucoup d'efforts parce qu'on à portée de main des Africains. C'est la culture et on veut apprendre des autres, on veut être amis avec les autres dans le cadre de l'école mais après on reste qui on est, on ne partage pas les mêmes cultures et on ne va pas se forcer non plus si ça ne marche pas. Et ici à Toronto il n'y a pas autant de Canadiens que ça, il y a plus des Italiens, des Indiens, Iraniens, Ukrainien, etc. GD1 HV (18)	When we say that, we can say that it's unfortunate. We come here, and we have no Canadian friends. We do not make a lot of effort because we are at hand of Africans. It is culture and **we want to learn from others, we want to be friends with others in the university setting, after** that, we stay who we are, we do not share the same cultures and **we will not force either If it does not work**. And here in Toronto, there are not as many Canadians descendants, there are more Italians, Ukrainian Iranian Indians, and so on". GD1 HV (18)	Less importance to contact with the host culture	Separation	**Acculturation Strategies**
Ce n'est pas une priorité pour moi, mais si je n'en ai pas ce n'est pas grave. GD2 EM (20)	"It's not a priority for me, but if I don't, it's okay. GD2 ME (20)	Less importance to contact with the host culture	Separation	**Acculturation Strategies**
Quand je ne travaille pas je socialise avec des autres étudiants internationaux. Il y a des Ivoiriens, des Congolais aussi. Beaucoup plus avec des Africains. En fait mon cercle d'amis est très restreint. Je travaille aussi avec les Africains. BC (20)	When I'm not working, **I socialize with other international students. There are Ivorians from the Congolese as well. Much more with Africans,** in fact my circle of friends is very small. I also work with Africans. BC (20)	Contact with the original culture	Contact with the original culture	**Acculturation Strategies**

Ma culture a une certaine importance mais si ça ne tenait qu'à moi je m'en foutrais. Ici j'hésite à garder certaines cultures.	**My culture has a certain importance**, but **if it was up to me, I will not care about it.** Here, **I hesitate to keep certain cultures.** NE (20)	Less importance to the original culture		**Acculturation Strategies**
Ma culture, cela m'importe peu, parce que je me dis que la culture ce sont des valeurs que tu as mais c'est beaucoup plus dans la tête.	**Culture doesn't matter to me**. Because I think culture is a value you have, but it's a lot more in your head. DG2 ME (20)	No importance to cultures	Marginalisation	**Acculturation Strategies**
Discrimination				**Acculturative Stressors**
Moi non, j'ai des amis qui me disent ça mais moi je ne me laisse pas toucher par ces genres de choses. Tant que tu acceptes d'être là, le reste, ça ne compte pas. MME (20)	"I don't, I have friends who tell me that, but. **I don't let those kinds of things get to me. As long as you agree to be here, the rest doesn't matter".** ME (20)	Was not discriminated against	Discrimination	
Je n'ai jamais eu de situation de racisme. Mais les gens m'en parlent. Mais je me dis que c'est souvent dans la tête. Pour moi quand je me regarde je me dis que personne n'est au-dessus de moi et personne n'est en dessous.	**I've never had a situation of discrimination.** But **people tell me about it.** But I tell myself that **it's often in the head.** For me, when I look at myself, I tell myself that no one is above me and no one is below me. LD (21)	Friend were discriminated against	Discrimination	
Peut-être que j'ai été victime d'actes racistes mais je ne fais pas attention à ça.	"Maybe I've been **a victim of racism but I'm not paying attention to that**". LD (21)	Ignored act of discrimination	Discrimination	

J'avais un prof. J'étais arrivée en retard J'ai eu une semaine de retard et je suis allée la voir pour m'excuser et tout. Elle a été très méchante avec moi. Elle ne m'a pas écoutée en fait et elle a dit qu'elle ne sait pas pourquoi je suis arrivée en retard. Et il y a un français qui est arrivé deux semaines après, encore plus en retard. Mais elle l'a super bien accueilli. Comme si de rien n'était, il l'a même arrangé pour qu'il rende ses devoirs à temps.	'I had a professor. I was late, **I was one week late,** and I went to see her to apologize and everything. **She was very mean to me. She didn't actually listen to me and said she didn't know why I was late.** And there was a **Frenchman who arrived two weeks later, even more late**. **But she welcomed him very well.** As if nothing had happened, he even arranged for him to return his homework in time.	Discrimination on campus	Discrimination	
Oui, on a fait face à une situation de discrimination dans le métro qu'on a ignorée.	**I faced an act of discrimination in the subway and just ignored it.** GD2 MRL (23)	Discrimination off campus	Discrimination	
Je devais aller au supermarché avec des amis, une femme dans le métro nous a regardés de loin, et dès qu'on est passés devant elle, elle nous a traités de sorcières et de sales noires. On n'a pas voulu répondre, mais ça nous a beaucoup choquées. Une autrefois dans le métro encore une autre personne a commencé à nous menacer de mort. Que les noirs ne méritent pas d'être ici. Que pourquoi on est dans leur pays, de retourner chez nous qu'il n'a pas peur de nous tuer.	I had to go to the supermarket with some friends, **a woman on the subway** looked at us from a distance, and as soon as we passed her, **she called us witches and dirty Blacks.** We didn't want to answer, but we were extremely shocked. Once in the subway, yet another person started threatening us with death. That **blacks don't deserve to be here.** That why we're in their country, to **go back home, that he's not afraid to kill us.** MRL (23)	Discrimination off campus	Discrimination	

Appendix L: Questions for Interviews and Focus Groups discussions

Interview questions

Acculturation Strategies:

How much do you value your culture?

How much do you want to keep certain value of your home culture?

How do you feel without your [home country] family and friends around you?

How much do you value Canadian culture?

Where do you see yourself as Canadian culture?

How much do you want to adopt certain value from Canadian culture?

Student friendship

Do you participate in recreation activities on campus?

What kind of students do you participate in recreation activities with?

What are the reasons which limit your participation in social/recreational activities?

What kind of students do you socialize with during your free time?

What kind of students do you study with during your study sessions?

Student adaptation to university

Are you satisfied with the number and variety of courses available on Campus?

Are you satisfied with the caliber of courses available at university?

Are you satisfied with the program at the university?

Are you thinking about changing program?

Are you satisfied with the professors you have in you courses?

Are you satisfied with your academic situation on campus?

Student sense of belongingness

Do you fit in well as part of the university community?

Are you involved in social activities on campus?

Do you have a lot of close friendships on campus?

Overall, do you have a sense of belonging to the campus community?

Do you feel that your university community honors diversity and internationalism?

Student social cultural adaptation

How do you feel about your decision to attend university in Canada?

How do you feel about your decision to attend this particular university?

Are you satisfied with your decision to attend this university or are you thinking about transferring?

Have you participated in any inclusive curricula (courses that involve multicultural, ethnicity, gender, class, or religion content)?

Have you participated in any course that involves dialog about issues of race, gender and culture?

Have you participated in any courses that involved intergroup dialogues (interaction among students with different backgrounds and beliefs)?

Focus group questions

How much do you value your culture?

How much do you want to keep certain value of your home culture?

How do you feel without your [home country] family and friends around you?

How much do you value Canadian culture?

Where do you see yourself as Canadian culture?

How much do you want to adopt certain value from Canadian culture?

Have you found yourself in a situation where you think people treated you differently? If yes, could you provide a brief example?

What stressful situations do you think affect your life?

What has caused you the most stress living in Canada and/or attending university?

In which situations do you find yourself lonely?

Questions pour entrevues

Modes d'acculturation

Dans quelle mesure accordez-vous de la valeur à votre culture?

Dans quelle mesure voulez-vous conserver certaines valeurs de votre culture d'origine?

Comment vous sentez-vous sans votre famille et vos amis de pays d'origine?

Quelle valeur accordez-vous à la culture canadienne?

Que pensez-vous de la culture canadienne?

Dans quelle mesure voulez-vous adopter des valeurs de la culture canadienne?

Amitié chez les étudiants

Participez-vous à des activités récréatives sur le campus?

Avec quel genre d'élèves participez-vous à des activités récréatives?

Quelles sont les raisons qui limitent votre participation à des activités sociales/récréatives?

Avec quel genre d'étudiants socialisez-vous pendant votre temps libre?

Avec quel genre d'étudiants étudiez-vous pendant vos séances d'étude?

L'adaptation à la vie estudiantine

Êtes-vous satisfait du nombre et de la variété de cours offerts sur le campus?

Êtes-vous satisfait du calibre des cours offerts à l'université?

Êtes-vous satisfait du programme à l'université?

Envisagez-vous de changer le programme?

Êtes-vous satisfait des professeurs que vous avez dans vos cours?

Êtes-vous satisfait de votre situation scolaire sur le campus?

Le sens d'appartenance des étudiants

Faites-vous bonne figure dans la communauté universitaire?

Participez-vous à des activités sociales sur le campus?

Avez-vous beaucoup d'amitiés sur le campus ?

Dans l'ensemble, avez-vous un sentiment d'appartenance à la communauté du campus?

Pensez-vous que votre communauté universitaire respecte la diversité et l'internationalisme?

L'adaptation socioculturelle des étudiants

Que pensez-vous de votre décision de fréquenter l'université au Canada?

Que pensez-vous de votre décision de fréquenter cette université?

Êtes-vous satisfait de votre décision de fréquenter cette université ou envisagez-vous un transfert?

Avez-vous participé à des programmes inclusifs (cours qui impliquent le contenu multiculturel, ethnique, de genre, de classe ou religieux)?

Avez-vous participé à un cours qui comporte un dialogue sur les questions de race, de genre et de culture?

Avez-vous participé à des cours comportant des dialogues intergroupes (interaction entre des étudiants ayant des antécédents et des croyances différents)?

Questions pour les groupes de discussion

Dans quelle mesure accordez-vous de la valeur à votre culture?

Dans quelle mesure voulez-vous conserver certaines valeurs de votre culture originale?

Quelle valeur accordez-vous à la culture canadienne?

Que pensez-vous de la culture canadienne?

Dans quelle mesure voulez-vous adopter des valeurs de la culture canadienne?

Vous êtes-vous trouvé dans une situation où vous pensez que les gens vous traitaient différemment? Si oui, pourriez-vous nous donner un bref exemple?

Selon vous, quelles sont les situations stressantes qui influent sur votre vie?

Qu'est-ce qui vous a causé le plus de stress au Canada ou à l'université?

Dans quelles situations vous sentez-vous seul?