Your Name

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Date

**Culture Shock**

**Introduction:**

Preparing for leaving home for higher studies and adjusting in the new environment can be excited or stressful depending on the experiences. Every student who decides to go for international studies makes his mind and get prepared for the change, still he can face the impact of culture shock and that makes difficult for him to adjust in the new society as fast as he thought. Culture shock is the impact of moving from one familiar culture to the new culture. Culture shock is the combination of factors including, language barrier, environmental change, separation from friends and family, adoption of new tradition and norms, meeting numbers of new people, and new learning methods. Students often decide for international study to get the degree with good grades from a well-known institution. However, even brilliant students lose their grades when they start to study abroad. Culture shock especially the language barrier brings difficulties for the student in academic life (“International Students and Cultural Shock”). Communication gap and struggling for grades impact the mental health of the students. Daily tasks and challenges which seem so easy become difficult to complete. The main purpose of the study is to identify the language barrier for the academic excellence of the students and the overall impact of the culture shock over mental health. Person experience loneliness, isolated, and feels fear of embarrassment and failure.

Humans are the social being by nature therefore, communication is the need for the human to be physical and mentally healthy. The language barrier for an international student is the big hurdle to make new friends and to share the problems with the teachers. With the lack of communication and new friends, these students often feel loneliness and homesickness. This loneliness often resulted in depression and isolation which can create a barrier to learn new culture inside and outside the institution. The reason for the paper is to highlight the fact that international students are more on risk than others. It is accepted that the number of American international students are at a high risk of experiencing chronic illness. Non-white students face more difficulties and feel depressed. I personally experienced culture shock as I am an international student in America. Due to the language barrier and poor English, I got lost when I was new in the city. The experience and other new changes brought lots of pressure on my mind and I was about to give up. It became difficult for me to communicate with people or asking for help because of the language issue. These types of experience can make a person underestimated or less confident. It is not possible to learn the language in a short period of time therefore; beginning in the new place is the most difficult part.

**Discussion:**

From personal experience, I got to know the importance of understanding culture shock, its consequences and recommendation to cope with it. To understand culture shock it is important to know the factors causing it which are climate, language, social roles, values, and rules of behavior. The first thing that disturbs the student or any other immigrant is the climate of the new country. For instance, an individual may have spent fifteen to twenty years in the hotel climate and then shift to the cold climate area. It affects health as a body feel week to control the new climate. Through climate change, the student can face dampness, grayness, and fell sick easily. The second most important factor is language. Language makes it difficult to concentrate on the lecture and reading the course and whenever student face query he feel shy due to his poor English or a different accent. The issue of language made the barrier for me as well. Not only in the institute but also outside the institute language make difficult for me to communicate with the others. This was one of the reasons I got lost one day and felt helpless around hundreds of people.

The third factor is the social roles. Every society has its own culture and tradition; their way of talking, eating habits, and dressing sense is different. Social roles not only confuse the student but they can also offend others. For instance, every country has its major religion and the majority of people follow it. An outsider may fail to follow someone else believes, it is kind of offending or feel like an injustice to own religion as defined in the story published in the famous newspaper (Batuman). A kid whose father was an atheist and mother was a Muslim, faced culture shock when she shifted to the hostel in Istanbul. The kid told her problems that how she faced a communication gap as she could not speak Turkish. She preferred to be quiet and not to say anything for the fear of embarrassment. This was the time Turkey was facing racism around the nation. The nation was divided into white Turkish and black Turkish and religious people were considered as illiterate, conservatives, and lower class. She explained his feeling that how he had to listen to the Azan even when she did not want to because she lived in the Muslim area. She also admitted that she smiled a lot and avoided speaking to the people in public. She even felt a threat when one of the drivers said to her that women should wear a scarf otherwise they can be raped. This story shows two factors that are language and social norms that not only become the cause of hurdles between the lady and her studies but also it cause a sense of fear and threat.

These unhappy and unexpected experiences lead to the feeling of having "awkward" and "weird" situation. This is the point where a serious problem arises that is stress. Stress results in other severe psychological problems. Not everyone goes to this extreme point but whoever reaches to it, face dangerous result like chronic diseases or suicidal ideation. The most common symptoms are loneliness, helplessness, anxiety, and depression. When an individual does not get the attention or trust from the people around, he feels helplessness and loneliness. Daily tasks become so challenging in such a situation. When the individual feels helplessness he makes the decision in tension and it is possible that he may make a bad decision. Therefore, various cases indicate that people who fail to fit in a new culture and feel isolated often go against to the new culture and its people. They possibly attract towards hostile relationship and bad decision like alcoholism, violent activities. The extreme consequence of bad mental health due to culture shock is suicide. A number of researches indicate that about 75 percent of students feel depression while 25 percent of students feel suicidal ideation during the adjustment period Therefore, it is important that whenever student feels such feeling he must visit the psychologist as soon as possible otherwise result can be severe. For instance, in an article, a brother highlights the different aspect of society. He had five siblings where he was unable to recognize his family as the big family. With the passage of time, people around him and his own changed thought while living in the different culture told him that parents with the six children are the big family. The other serious detail that he gave was the information about her sister. She has shifted to another place away from the family for studies. He accepted that her sister was not happy and unable to adjust into the new place. She wanted to come back but did not get permission. One day he got the news of her sister's death. Fifteen years old Tiffany committed suicide due to the culture shock (Sedaris). This shows that culture shock is not just a term; it is the big concern and stage of life that every immigrant faces. It does not matter person from the rich background moves to the other place or a poor, feeling of isolation from own culture is the root of all other problems.



America is the country of diversity. Thousands of students come to the country for higher education. Estimation shows that about 300000 international students take admission in different states of America. These students are the cause of globalization, a positive relationship among the nation, and international trade. Canada is becoming another big country for international students. The study had been made based on international students and their problems while adjusting to the new culture. Research results indicate that most of the students faced social difficulty in the new country. The culture shock has a correlation with social interaction. It means students who come along with other members of their society interact less with the host society which increases the communication and relationship gap. The other factors that cause culture shock are family status and status of the host society. However, no such relationship is found between cross-culture difference and culture shock but somehow cross-culture differences have an indirect impact on culture shock. Through the research, it can be identified that communication plays a vital role in the adoption of a new culture. With developing positive communication with the host community it becomes difficult for international students to understand the new culture. Therefore it is necessary that international students get enough knowledge and information from international student advisors and management of the university so that they can understand the pattern of interaction. For the purpose, different programs can be introduced which increase awareness among international students (*Social Skills Difficulty*).

Students often take stress where pressure of study is considered part of life. If the students are able to cope with the difficulties of academic life then the pressure is normal, however, when the student does not understand how to cope the challenges of academic life and feel helpless than it is the duty of the advisers to provide the guidance to the student. International students often fight with their thoughts and do not seek for help while experiencing culture shock. They remain unaware of the consequences of culture shock which lead to serious problems. Every student on his first day feel lots of emotion at the same time. He feels shy, confusing, fear, and happiness. However, interaction with the people at the very first day leaves a great impact on his mind. For instance, the research highlighted the story of the girl who went to the college confidently on the first day but later owns her confidence and happiness turned into the stress when she faced the problem for completing her academic tasks. The researcher explained that it is necessary that advisers should play their role because this stress can lead to other serious mental illness. The student should be guided about the symptoms of culture shock and method to cope with the issue. In addition, advisers who understand other languages are more beneficial for the international students because they can easily share their feelings, emotions, and experiences with the advisers otherwise communication gap can bring difficulty for the counseling of the students (*In Higher Ed’s Mental-Health Crisis, an Overlooked Population*). Therefore, it is understood that students need help while adjusting in the new culture and people around them including, fellows, teachers, counselors, and trainers can help them to minimize their hurdle while adjusting in the new culture. I also faced so many problems in the first two months but with the passage of time, things were getting better. Today after facing so many challenges and culture shock I feel so independent in the new culture.

**Conclusion:**

Hundreds and thousands of students migrate to other countries for better education each year. Every country acquires its own unique culture, language, religion, rules and regulations, norms, and social behavior. International students face various difficulties when they shift to a new country. For instance, I am an international student who faced culture shock because of the language barrier and social norms. Other students also face these problems. Culture shock is not just a term it is the combination of numbers of issues which make difficult for the international students to make the decision on his own. Language is the main factors which create hurdles. Communication gap develops the feeling of helplessness and loneliness that results in the stress. Stress is a psychological issue which is dangerous for international students because it can lead to other severe mental health issues like chronic diseases and suicidal ideation. The language barrier and mental health affect both the personal and academic life of the student. Students become unable to solve their daily challenges and often move towards bad decisions. Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge international students and their issues. These students are the reason for positive international relation, globalization, and international trade. Teachers, advisers, and trainers can play their role to reduce the difficulties of international students. Trainers can make awareness regarding the pattern of the living in the new culture and trainers or psychologist can listen to their problems and can advise them with the best solution. Culture shock is irresistible however, by giving special attention to the international students, in the beginning. It can reduce the chances of bad mental health among them.

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