

CULTURAL SHOCK AND SOCIAL ISSUE

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Abstract: this article details the obstacles people face when they go to another country. It is possible for a student with this background to know the culture of other times and not to do it.

Key words: cultural issues values, language barriers familiar culture, social behaviour.

Leaving home and traveling to study in a new country can be a stressful experience, even though it may be something you have planned and prepared for. Many people are surprised when they experience the impact of culture shock, and it can be helpful to realize your experience is actually quite normal.

Culture shock describes the impact of moving from a familiar culture to one that is unfamiliar. It includes the shock of a new environment, meeting lots of new people and learning the ways of a new country. It also includes the shock of being separated from the important people in your life, such as family, friends, colleagues, and teachers: people you would talk to at times of uncertainty, people who give you support and guidance.

Factors that can contribute to culture

Many students find the new climate can affect them a lot. You may find the grayness and dampness, especially during the winter months, difficult to get used to. Listening and speaking in a new language is tiring. In class, some international students have trouble understanding the lecture and reading materials. People speak quickly and you may feel embarrassed to ask them to repeat what they said. If English is not your first language, you may find you miss your home language. Social behaviors may confuse, surprise or offend you. For example you may find people appear cold, distant or always in a hurry. Or you may be surprised to see couples holding hands and kissing in public. You may find the relationships between men and women more formal or less formal than you are used to, as well as differences in same sex social contact and relationships. As well as the obvious things that hit you immediately when you arrive, such as sights, sounds, smells and tastes, every culture has unspoken rules which

affect the way people treat each other. These may be less obvious, but sooner or later you will probably encounter them and once again the effect may be disorientating. For example, there will be differences in the ways people decide what is important, how tasks are allocated and how time is observed. In business and academic life, keeping to a schedule is important. You should always be on time for lectures, classes, and meetings with academic and administrative staff. If you are going to be late for a meeting, do try to give advance notice. Although you may first become aware of cultural differences in your physical environment, (e.g. food, dress, behavior) you may also come to notice that people from other cultures may have very different views of the world from yours. Cultures are built on deeply-embedded sets of values, norms, assumptions and beliefs. It can be surprising and sometimes distressing to find that people do not share some of your most deeply held ideas, as most of us take our core values and beliefs for granted and assume they are universally held. As much as possible, try to suspend judgment until you understand how parts of a culture fit together into a coherent whole. Try to see what people say or do in the context of their own culture's norms. This will help you to understand how other people see your behavior, as well as how to understand theirs. When you understand both cultures, you will probably find some aspects of each that you like and others that you don't. If your spouse or partner has accompanied you to the U.S., remember that the stress of the transition may cause struggles in your relationship. The transition to a new culture may be very difficult for your partner. Your partner may feel very isolated; he/she has been transplanted from your culture and separated from family and friends. Simple tasks can be stressful due to the language barrier. Often times they do not have opportunities to engage in productive, meaningful activity such as pursuing a degree, and it may be more difficult for them to make new friends.

Reference:

1. <https://www.washington.edu/counseling/resources-for-students/international-students-and-cultural-shock/>.