

## CULTURE SHOCK AS A SOCIAL ISSUE

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**Abstract:** in this article, various social problems are highlighted, the term Culture Shock refers to the feelings of distress and unease when being exposed to a foreign culture. Besides this narrow definition of the actual shock the expression is also used in order to describe the whole process a sojourner goes through during an international encounter.

**Key words:** culture, culture shock, experience, social role, language, climate,

It is not an indisputable fact that culture shock is a social trouble in the world. This is why human supposed to learn language with their culture shock. Rudimentary, "Culture shock" is a normal process of adapting to a new culture. It is a time when a person becomes aware of the differences and/or conflicts in values and customs between their home culture and the new culture they are in. Common feelings may be anxiety, confusion, homesickness, or anger.

International students and culture shock.

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.

- Climate

Many students find the northwest climate can affect them a lot. You may find the grayness and dampness, especially during the winter months, difficult to get used to.

- Language

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 roles

Social behaviors may confuse, surprise or offend you. Such as, 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.

- 'Rules' of behavior

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.

- Values

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.

- Relationship Stress

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.

If you're struggling with the stress of cultural adjustment and would like to learn strategies for coping more effectively with your transition, please reach out to us at the Counseling Center. We would value the chance to meet you and learn more about how you are navigating the differences between your home culture and that of the UW campus. Many international students find that counseling can help them learn new coping skills, generate ideas about how to get connected, and receive support for the many transitions they are experiencing.

By way of conclusion, Though one may not be able to avoid experiencing culture shock, there are many ways to diminish its effects and accelerate its stages. Most importantly, keep an open mind. Don't enter a new culture with preconceived notions of what will be found. Making comparisons to the home country and new country should be avoided. Being open to new experiences and making an effort to learn the local language and culture can bring accelerated acceptance. Making connections and developing a support system provides individuals with help when necessary. Foreign experiences are not only opportunities to learn more about new cultures, but to share of and become better acquainted with oneself.

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