Indian Journal of Fundamental and Applied Life Sciences ISSN: 2231– 6345 (Online)
An Open Access, Online International Journal Available at www.cibtech.org/sp.ed/jls/2015/02/jls.htm
2015 Vol. 5 (S2), pp. 1991-1998/Veysi
Research Article

SOCIO CULTURAL ADAPTATION AND COPING STRATEGIES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT OSMANIA UNIVERSITY

***Zeynab Veysi**
Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences Osmania University, India
**Author for Correspondence*

ABSTRACT
This research was conducted to examine Sociocultural Adaptation & Coping Strategies of International Students at Osmania University in Hyderabad, India. According to Babbie (2001), a survey is a suitable tool for measuring attitudes or characteristics of a large population; since this study measures socio-cultural adaptation and coping of large Student population. A survey research method was used for this study and the research was conducted in Osmania University Hyderabad. Since cultural differences among participants may influence the variables in this study, participants were limited to only African students and Iranian who have the same native language and cultural background. Respondents were gathered through membership lists of the African Student Association at Osmania, Each participant was given a self-administered questionnaire. A total of 99 participants completed the questionnaires. Pearson product moment correlation analyses were performed to examine the relations between interval variables. Analysis of variance was used to examine gender differences in coping processes and was conducted on Participants were recruited through international students of Osmania University in eight departments in the region of the Osmania. The findings showed that international students 'adaptation difficulties and coping strategies positively related to their socio-cultural adaptation. Behavioral adaptation difficulty has a direct impact on adaptation. Specifically, behavioral avoidance is positively correlated with all of strategies of coping processes and then this affect reflected to socio cultural adaptation difficulty.

Keywords: *Sociocultural Adaptation, Coping Strategies, Behavioral and Cognitive, Coping Strategies*

INTROUDUCTION
Adaptation refers to the development of cultural and social skills, sensibility to the beliefs, values, and norms of the new culture and the acquisition of adequate communication skills for interacting effectively with the host-culture (Castro, 2003).

In our modern society, individuals are exposed to various levels of cultural influence either through sojourners or being members of a society that receives sojourners.

However, although intercultural contact is prevalent in today's society, it is nowhere close to being easier to deal with.

Kim (1988, 1995, 2001, 2002) proposed a structural model of cross-cultural adaptation to explain the mechanism of the differing degrees of adaptation among different people. The structure model consists of six dimensions: 1) host communication competence; 2) host interpersonal or mass communication; 3) ethnic interpersonal or mass communication; host environment; 5) predisposition such as preparedness fop redness for a new environment, difference of ethnicity, and personality; and 6) intercultural transformation as the outcome of the cross-cultural adaptation process.

Each dimension affects, and is affected by, the other dimensions in the process of cultural adaptation. These dimensions can accelerate or impede an individual's cultural adaptation.

In this paper the two terms, adaptation and adjustment will be used interchangeably. Within the framework of acculturation research, adaptation is commonly referred to as the level of fit‖ between the acculturating individual and the mainstream cultural environment (Berry & Sam, 1997), and it is an ongoing process.

Therefore, adaptation can be understood as the continuing psychological outcomes of acculturation processes. Terms adjustment and adaptation will be used interchangeably.

© Copyright 2014 | Centre for Info Bio Technology (CIBTech)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Method and Tools

Subjects were limited to, all international students (undergraduates and graduates) at Osmania University in a region of Hyderabad; three test answer sheet containing questionnaires was distributed to all international students in the university.

To measure the levels of socio-cultural adaptation, I used a modified version of Ward and Kennedy‘s (1999) Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS), which measures the amount behavioral and cognitive difficulties experienced by individuals adjusting to a new culture and society.

The scale used in this study is split into two domains, the behavioral domain with twenty-two items and cognitive domain with seven items.

16 previous studies have proven that the scale is reliable with alpha scores (0.75 - 0.91, M = 0.85) for various versions of the instrument (Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

Participants were asked to respond to all questions using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (no difficulty) to 5 (extreme difficulty). Scores obtained from the scale indicated the respondents ‘perceptions when facing difficulties understanding Indian values and cultures. Sample items included statements such as ―Understanding jokes and humors,‖ and ―Dealing with people staring at you. The 29-item scale contains two main parts which can be calculated separately. One part measures participants' Behavioral-Adaptation Difficulty with 22 items (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, and 28), and the other part assesses the Cognitive-Adaptation Difficulty with seven items (items 5, 8, 10, 18, 23, 26, and 29). Average scores of the 29 items were used to measure the overall sociocultural adaptation level. Higher values obtained in the scale indicated greater difficulty in social-cultural adaptation.

Research Hypotheses

1: there are sociocultural adaptation difficulties of International students in Osmania University.

2: international students in Osmania University have used both behavioral and cognitive coping strategies.

3: there is no significance difference between male and female on the social, cultural adaptation of International students in Osmania University.

4: there is no significance difference between male and female on their coping strategies of international students in Osmania University.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Result of _test a tests the significance difference between cognitive adaptation difficulty between Iranian and African students in table 1 shows that; studding means between them say that; because of Iranian students have 16.o2 and African students have 16.24 in means and significance (2-tailed) is 0.850 then there is no significance difference between Iranian and African students in sub scale cognitive adaptation difficulty of socio- cultural adaptation scale.

And also behavioral adaptation difficulty with means 51.59 in Iranian and 48.56 in African; and significance (2-tailed) respectively, for nationality, equal variances 0.326 and 0.327 reveal that there are no significant differences between them in this sub scale and also for overall socio cultural adaptation difficulty study of mean with 33 and 32 shows and significance 0.688 shows that there is no significance difference between them in that. And over all over there is significance socio cultural difficulties for both them; But nod between them.

T‘test applied on coping strategies have revealed that five sub scale of coping strategies each one also study and Shows which in the behavioral approach between the Iranian and African study of means shows that Iranian have 28.0 and African have 29.12 and significance 0.490 that there is no significant difference between Iranian and African In behavioral approach of coping strategy. And also in cognitive approach with means 11.59 and 12.82 shows that they use this approach less than behavioral approached and study of significance 0.205 and 0.204 reveal that there is no significance difference between African and Iranian in using this approach; and also in cognitive Behavioral approach means 15 and 16 and sig

© Copyright 2014 | Centre for Info Bio Technology (CIBTech)

0.306 shows there is no significance difference between nationalities and use that almost equal; However in behavioral avoidance Iranian with mean 21.39 and African with mean 25.20 appear which African students use significantly behavioral avoidance techniques more than Iranian in coping with socio-cultural difficulties because have higher mean in this strategy. There is a significant difference between them with 0.16. In cognitive avoidance means 12 and 13 and significant0. 123 appear that there is no significant difference between them and both using this strategy almost equal; And other dimensions of coping also like this continued.

***Correlation*:**

Table 1: Pearson correlation between variables: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

	mean	sd	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
f1- Cognitive adaptation difficulty	16.13	5.723	1	0.820*	0.868**					
2- Behavioral adaptation difficulty	50.6	15.280			.958**					
3-overal socio cultural difficulty	33.3939	10/04131		.9588**						
4- behavioral approach	28.57	8.022					.607**	4.56 **	.580	.580
5- Cognitive approach	12.21					.607 **				
6- cognitive behavioral approach	16.16					.654 **				
7- Behavioral avoidance	23.31					.580 **				
8- cognitive avoidance	12.76					.580 **	.424 **	.438**	.684	

The statistical analysis, correlation was applied in obtaining data Pearson product moment correlation analysis was performed to examine relations between variables means standard deviation and range of scores for these variables applied analyses indicates that cognitive adaptation difficulty was correlated with behavioral adaptation difficulty positively($r=.820, p<.01$) and also was correlated with overall socio-cultural adaptation difficulty (0.868, $p< 0.01$). This relationship indicates that whatever international students have difficulty in cognitive adaptation this difficulty also was seen in behavioral adaptation difficulty and overall adaptation difficulty. Namely whatever think about adaptation have problem behavior also have a problem and after that overall adaptation diff also have problem And means are 16.13 and 50.6 respectively in cognitive and behavioral indicators mean behavioral adaptation difficulty is higher than cognitive and problem and difficulty in behavioral adaptation is more and mean in overall

© Copyright 2014 | Centre for Info Bio Technology (CIBTech)

adaptation difficulty is 33.39 and in cognitive is16.13 that means overall difficulty is higher than cognitive. These IE correlation is significant. in number 2 behavioral adaptation difficulty is correlated with cognitive adaptation difficulty positively (r=.820,p<.01) means whatever difficulty is seen in behavior adaptation also in cognitive adaptation problem difficulty is seen; and behavioural adaptation difficulty is correlated with overall adaptation that is appear problem is seen in both of them (r=.958,p<.01).and overall socio cultural adaptation difficulty is correlated with cognitive adaptation difficulty and behavioral adaptation difficulty with correlation respectively r=.868, r=.958.(p<.01) that appear correlation is significantly in .01 level; that again appear whatever difficulty in adaptation between all of students happened in overall so that in cognitive and behavioral also have difficulty adaptation.in level of coping strategies behavioural approach is positively correlated with cognitive approach (r=.607,p<.01)that reveal students who use cognitive strategy in same way using behavior strategy. mean in behavioral approach is 28.57 and mean in cognitive approach is12.21 that appear students using a behavioral approach more than cognitive approach and that strategy also is correlated with cognitive behavioral approach (r=.654,p<.01); that means students used these two strategies relatively. Mean in cognitive behavioral approach is 16.16 is less than mean in behavioral approach; namely students more using behavioral techniques. And this approach has a relationship with behavioral avoidance and cognitive avoidance with correlations respectively (0.580, 0.580---(p< 0.01) and means are 23.31 and 12.76. That this correlation means use of behavioral approach affect use of behavioral avoidance and cognitive avoidance; and analyses of mean appear all of the students used behavioral avoidance more than cognitive avoidance. Cognitive approach was correlated with behavioral approach –cognitive behavioral approach, behavioral avoidance and cognitive avoidance with r= 0.607, 0.601,462, 424 (p< 0.01) and means in behavioral avoidance is 23.31 IE international students used behavioral avoidance more than all of the other strategies.

Table 2: Nationality Iranian correlation

		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
1: cognitive adaptation	Pearson correlation	1	.833	.908	.159	.118	.007	.375	.185
difficulty	Sig (2tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.276	.419	.962	.008	.203
2:Behavioural adaptation	Pearson correlation	.833	1	.988	.142	.027	.037	.290	.110
difficulty	Sig (2tailed)	.000	-	.000	.329	.855	.799	.043	.452
3:Overall socio-cultural	Pearson correlation	.908	.988	1	.152	.053	.030	.324	.135
difficulty	Sig (2tailed)	.000	.000	-	.298	.717	.837	.023	.356
4:Behavioural approach	Pearson correlation	.159	.152	.142	1	.697	.661	.456	.486
	Sig (2tailed)	.276	.329	.298	-	.000	.000	.001	.000
5:cognitive approach	Pearson correlation	.118	.027	.053	.697	1	.679	.363	.245
	Sig (2tailed)	.419	.855	.717	.000	-	.000	.010	.090
6:Cognitive behavioral	Pearson correlation	.007	.037	.030	.661	.679	1	.257	.376
approach	Sig (2tailed)	.962	.799	.837	.000	.000	-	.075	.008
7:behavioral avoidance	Pearson correlation	.375	.290	.324	.456	.363	.257	1	.621
	Sig (2tailed)	.008	.043	.023	.001	.010	.075	-	.000
8:cognitive avoidance	Pearson correlation	.185	.110	.135	.486	.245	.376	.621	1
	Sig (2tailed)	`.203	.452	.356	.000	.090	.008	.000	-

© Copyright 2014 | Centre for Info Bio Technology (CIBTech)

Cognitive behavioral approach was related positively with a behavioral approach, cognitive approach, behavioral avoidance and cognitive avoidance r= 0.654, 0.601, 0.344, 0.438and r is significantly in (p< 0.01). Students using the approaches relatively positive. Behavioral avoidance is correlated with respectively behavioral approach- cognitive approach –cognitive behavioral approach-cognitive avoidance. And cognitive avoidance is correlated with a behavioral approach, Cognitive approach, cognitive behavioral approach, and cognitive avoidance. Means this technique has a relationship with those strategies respectively, and affect together. These statements reveal all of the students using some technique more than other and relatively.

Studying by means in Iranian students identifies that behavioral adaptation difficulty and overall socio-cultural adaptation difficulty in Iranian students have more difficulties than others sub scale and using behavioral approach and behavioral avoidance more than others. IN Iranian students cognitive adaptation difficulty was correlated with behavioral adaptation difficulty (r= 0.833 P< 0.01and reveal these two have an effect on together. And again is correlated with overall socio-cultural adaptation difficulty; significant correlation is .908 in level of 0.01. And means Iranian students have difficulties in cognitive and overall relatively IE whatever difficulty in one of them go up in other also go up positively and also have significant correlated with behavioral avoidance r= 0.375.

Behavioral adaptation difficulty has significant correlated with cognitive adaptation difficulty and the overall adaptive difficulty that again means relatively affected together and also have correlated with Behavioral avoidance (r= 0.290, p< 0.05) in level of 0.05significant correlated. Other variables also in the same way have correlation with together according to the table. Cognitive avoidance in Iranian students was Found uncorrelated with a behavioral approach (r=486, p<0.01) and cognitive behavioral approach and behavioral avoidance respectively; Iranian using these strategies relatively with cognitive avoidance.

Table 3: Nationality African correlation:

		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Cognitive adaptation difficulty	Pearson correlation	1	.821	.830	-.135	-.245	-.338	-.008	-.147
	Sig (2tailed)	-	.000	.000	.350	.086	.018	.957	.307
Behavioral adaptation difficulty	Pearson correlation	.821	1	.926	-.059	-.164	-.222	.023	-.109
	Sig (2tailed)	.000	-	.000	.684	.255	.122	.874	.449
Overall socio-cultural difficulty	Pearson correlation	.830	.926	1	-.117	-.195	-.195	-.019	-.150
	Sig (2tailed)	.000	.000	-	.418	.175	.175	.895	.299
Behavioral approach	Pearson correlation	-.135	-.059	-.117	1	.542	.648	.668	.643
	Sig (2tailed)	.350	.684	.418	-	.000	.000	.000	.000
Cognitive approach	Pearson correlation	-.245	-.164	-.195	.542	1	.544	.495	.513
	Sig (2tailed)	.086	.255	.175	.000	-	.000	.000	.000
Cognitive behavioral approach	Pearson correlation	-.338	-.222	-.195	.648	.544	1	.372	.462
	Sig (2tailed)	.016	.122	.175	.000	.000	-	.008	.001
Behavioral avoidance	Pearson correlation	-.008	.023	-.019	.668	.495	.372	1	.705
	Sig (2tailed)	.957	.874	.895	.000	.000	.008	-	.000
Cognitive avoidance	Pearson correlation	-.147	-.109	-.150	.643	.513	.462	.705	1
	Sig (2tailed)	`.307	.449	.299	.000	.000	.001	.000	-

© Copyright 2014 | Centre for Info Bio Technology (CIBTech)

Study of means in African students reveal they have difficulty significance in behavioural and a- potation difficulty more than other difficulties and have high score in overall adaptation and behavioural Approach.in these students cognitive adaptation difficulty is correlated with behavioural adaptation Difficulty and also with overall adaptation difficulty;(r=.821andr=.830) that means this difficulty is related with them and effectively together; other dimension also is like these discriptions.in cognitive behavioural approach in African students was correlated with cognitive adaptation difficulty negatively (r=-.338,p<0.05)sig(2-tailed=016)N=50 .means cognitive behavioural approach have relationship negatively with cognitive adaptation difficulty ie whatever African students more using cognitive behavioral Technique; percent of cognitive adaptation difficulty is become less and low; and this is noted down for using more than of them.

Gender Result

Also shows t‘ test were applied on obtained data and studding of means reveals male and female have means respectively 16.62 and 15.63on cognitive adaptation difficulty with significance 0.393 that appears there is no significant difference between male and female in this subscale; and also in be in behavioral adaptation difficulty and overall socio-cultural adaptation difficulty have very high score that shows both of them have problem in adaptation but not in compare together; M=50.82and F=49. In behavioral adaptation difficulty; sig= .620=M and sig = 0.619=F.in coping strategies, also there is no significance difference between male and female in their using coping strategies only in behavioral avoidance to means 24.88=M and 21.71=F to significance 0.047and 0.046 respectively for male and female have little difference in using this technique.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 predicted that there are cultural adaptation difficulties of international students in Osmania is The results from the t‘ test analysis and correlation analysis to study of means revealed that there was a behavioral adaptation difficulties with means of 51 in international students and their socio-cultural adjustment. This shows oath Iranian and African students have problems and difficulties in adapting to a new culture. And these difficulties in overall adaptation difficulty also was seen . These are canned because of unknowing norms and differences in two cultures and unknowing value and how is good behavior in this country and absence of good talking because of language problems and lack of communication and speaking with other people and classmate because of this problem in the language and unknowing of education system in India and living hardly and alone in here for students. Universities have a short history of enrolling international students. In the university, the enrollment of international students becomes very much people.

The lack of experience with international students may result in less networking activities organized within the same ethnic groups by the university. Without the opportunity for students to retreat into these same-culture groups, they may be eager to have more contact with their professors, Indian classmates, and local communities after school to enlarge them. Interventions (support groups and culturally sensitive programs) as well as regional efforts that can augment intercultural education. Discrimination, difficulty in communicating with locals and other foreigners and dealing with departments and agencies Major adjustment bars. Barriers concern living adjust me (accommodation, food and climate), language, racism and discrimination.

Though there is less distance between the home and the host sociocultural environment interesting However, scarcity of literature on international student adjustment in Asian universities has limited regional comparisons. In conclusion, the paper reviews the implications of local Adjusting to another country, especially one that is socially and culturally different, can be an overwhelming and sometimes even a daunting experience for students. In fact, adjusting to a new culture is the first problem that is typically faced by the international students’ adjustment, socio-cultural, multicultural, intercultural education international festivals, home stay and holiday invitations) may accelerate international students‘ socio-cultural adjustment. **Hypothesis 2** stated that international students use both behavioral and cognitive coping strategies to notice to results proved. International students using behavioral approach and behavioral avoidance more than other techniques and African used behavioral avoidance little more

© Copyright 2014 | Centre for Info Bio Technology (CIBTech)

than Iranian. That high score in this strategy indicates deficient coping. Avoidance coping strategies in long time add the stress of a person and result in psychological strain and pathologies in some cases. This student may be because of high difference in her or his culture in comparison to Indian culture have high scores in avoidance strategy.. One possible explanation for this is that international students with a greater expectation of academic achievement, personal growth, and future career, tend to have higher used coping strategy. More international students expect to achieve when studying abroad, the more attention that they will pay to adjusting themselves to local culture, which may reduce the difficulties associated with adapting to Indian society. International students who have a higher preference for avoiding uncertainty tend to have lower expectations in being successful in a new culture. For example, many international students, especially Asian students (i.e., Chinese, Taiwanese, and South Iranian), return to their own countries immediately after they graduate from American universities. This phenomenon may be because these students know, maybe before they come to study in Indian, that they will have a better career path in their own countries where there is less uncertainty international students‘ preference for their own society‘s beliefs about the norms and practices. This finding shows that international students may prefer life in their own countries and tend to have low expectations of achievement when studying in India. Internationals students with a higher tendency for avoiding uncertainty have more perceptions, feelings, and behaviors originating from their ethnic group. Hypothesis 3 stated there is no significance difference between male and female on socio-cultural adaptation to notice the result of gender is proven. Studding of mean between them appear that male and female, both of having difficulty in adaptation but no different together. And this is stated that environmental education in India and another dimension of living oath are same effect in female and male. And they have difficulty in behavioral adaptation more than other difficulties that indicate they have problem in behave in faced with environment. And hypothesis 4that stated there is no significance difference between male and female on their coping strategies also to respect to result is supported because in coping strategies also both of same using 5 techniques of coping processes bot little difference in behavioral avoidance is seen between male and female in means 24,21 that is reveal male more than female are dysfunctional coping in this country.in study of coping process behavioral avoidance and cognitive avoidance whatever have low score in that is better. And because of environment have equal effect in female and male in India on socio cultural difficulty adaptation so that both of them in the same way using coping strategies in faced of problem of living in society and educational system.

REFERENCES

Babbie E (1990). *Survey Research Methods,* 2nd edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company).

Babbie E (2001). *The Practice of Social Research* (Australia: Wadsworth Thomson Learning).

Babbie E (2001). *The Practice of Social Research,* 9th edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning).

Berry JW (1990). Psychology of acculturation: Understanding individuals moving between cultures. In: *Applied Cross-Cultural Psychology,* edited by Brislin R (Newbury Park, CA: Sage) 232–253.

Berry JW (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology* **46** 5–68.

Berry JW (2006). Stress perspectives on acculturation. In: *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology,* edited by Sam DL and Berry JW (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press) 43–57.

Berry JW and Sam D (1997). Acculturation and adaptation In: *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology, Vol. III: Social Behavior and Applications,* edited by Berry JW, Segall MH and Kağıtçıbaşı Ç (Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon) 291–326.

Berry JW, Phinney JS, Sam DL and Vedder P (2006). Immigration youth: Acculturation, identity, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology* **55** 303-332.

Castro VS (2003). *Acculturation and Psychological Adaptation* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press).

Kennedy A (1994). Personality and psychological adjustment during cross-cultural transitions: A study of the cultural fit proposition. Unpublished master’s thesis, University of Centerbury, New Zealand.

© Copyright 2014 | Centre for Info Bio Technology (CIBTech)

Kennedy A (1998, April). Acculturation and coping: A longitudinal study of Singaporeans studying abroad. *Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Australian Social Psychologist, Christchurch, New Zealand.*

Kim YS (2003). Host Environment, Communication, and Psychological Health: A Study of Cross-cultural Adaptation Comparing Korean Expatriates in the United States with American Expatriates in South Korea. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK.

Kim YS and Kim YY (2005). Communication patterns and psychological health in the process of cross-cultural adaptation: a study of American and Korean expatriate workers. *Paper Presented at The Annual Meeting of the National Communication Association, Boston, MA.*

Kim YS and Kim YY (in press). Communication patterns and psychological health in the process of cross-cultural adaptation: a study of American and Korean expatriate workers. *International and Intercultural Communication Annual*.

Kim YY (1988). *Communication and Cross-Cultural Adaptation: An Integrative Theory Clevedon* (Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters).

Kim YY (2001). *Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-Cultural Adaptation* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage).

Kim YY (2005). Adapting to a new culture: An integrative communication theory. In W.

Ward C, Okura Y, Kennedy A and Kojima T (1999). The U-curve on trial: A longitudinal study of psychological and sociocultural adjustment during cross cultural transition. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* **22** 277±291.

© Copyright 2014 | Centre for Info Bio Technology (CIBTech)