

Cultural adjustment among foreign students: A Sociological study (Specially referred to Nigerian student's cultural adjustment in Davanagere city in Karnataka)

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Abstract: India is gradually emerging as a preferred destination for foreign students and growth in the number of foreign students in India has been impressive.

In today, India is known as a communication hub, and has become popular with international students from all over the world. It is highly attractive due to its forward thinking, its popularity with large multinational companies, and also due to English being the common language of communication. Karnataka is considered as 'Heaven of Foreign students' it have more than 30000 foreign students. Bangalore, manipal, Davanagere city have large number of foreign students. Student coming from different places to get degrees of medical, dental, pharmacy, nursing Bio-technology, engineering, architecture, Fashion designing, interior designing, and hotel management etc.. In this basis I selected Nigerian students in Davanagere city. My research deals with cultural adjustment encountered by Nigerian students such as food, language and academic barriers. I used primary and secondary data in this article.

Key Words: International students, Nigerian student's, Cultural Sociology, Davanagere.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The population of international students is growing day by day. Today, many universities in every country provide and promote a diversity of exchange programs and grants for their students. All those exchanges are a sign of the fact that the world is becoming more globalized. In order to meet and handle new experiences successfully, students must be well integrated in the new environment. Being far from home, many international students face challenges and difficulties on the way to their socio-cultural adjustment. Hence, together with opportunities of studying abroad, there is also a growing amount of research regarding the issues and obstacles that international students encounter. My key improvement consists in the fact that I use the concept and methods of Cultural Sociology.

1.1 Relevance of the study and present status knowledge

Foreign student's enrolment in India is increasing every year and Karnataka is one of the advanced states of India providing higher education through reputed private and government universities. It is seen that a number of foreign students come to Karnataka for their education; therefore they need more attention on their cultural adjustment related issue because cultural variances present critical challenges to these students. Due to multicultural environment, intercultural misunderstanding, tension, and conflicts are increased. It is fact that the understanding of foreign students about cultural adjustment process is still incomplete.

Only few studies conducted on foreign students studying in India and these studies in psychological approach. In Karnataka there is no single study in Sociological viewpoint. So, there is a need to conduct such studies in Karnataka in order to solve the adjustment related issues of the foreign students.

1.2 Theoretical framework

Sorokin's views about socio-cultural dynamics are available to us in his famous volume, 'social and cultural dynamics' in which he tried to establish a link between culture and social change. He has defined culture by saying 'culture in the broadest sense , it may mean the sum total of everything which is connected or arrived by the conscious or interacting with one another or conditioning one another behaviour's in this way he has given very broad definition of the term culture.

The theory of **cultural adaptation** refers to the process and time it takes a person to assimilate to a new culture. Lysgaard (1955) "[we] observed that adjustment as a process over time seems to follow a U-shaped curve: adjustment is felt to be easy and successful to begin with; then follows a 'crisis' in which one feels less well adjusted, somewhat lonely and unhappy; finally one begins to feel better adjusted again, becoming more integrated into the foreign community." He said that an average of six months is needed in order to start feeling normal and to accept the situation.

Even though the re-entry process is personal and can vary, he states that “the experience itself does seem to unfold according to a predictable pattern. For most people this pattern consists of four stages, each marked by characteristic feelings and behaviors. The length and intensity of each stage will be different for everyone, but the sequence seems to be consistent. Over the years there have been numerous adaptations of the different stages of the theory of cultural adaptation. One of the most well-known models was the U-curve proposed by Lysgaard. This model included four different stages: the honeymoon stage, the culture shock stage, the recovery stage, and the adjustment stage.

2. OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESIS:

This research paper is focused on cultural adjustment among foreign students in Karnataka. The study is undertaken in Davanagere city of Karnataka state in India. To investigate the motivational migration factor of students and find out the academic socio cultural problems being faced by foreign students in their host place.

Hypothesis of the study

H1. Foreign students will not adjust easily to our culture

H2. Foreign students will face lot of problem for communication due to language barrier as a result lead to lack of social relation

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is collect from respondents. Using Questionnaire method, for the study. In addition to the primary data the secondary data also use for data collection using books, magazines, government reports. Media, etc...

Sampling size:

40 Nigerian students studying in Karnataka especially in Davanagere

Limitation of the study

The present study is subjected to some limitations. This study is conducted to Nigerian students studying in Davanagere.

I have selected 40 Nigerian students who enrolled in 2015. At various course

Bapuji Pharmacy College – 18

Bapuji Nursing College - 08

JJM Medical College – 14

Analysis and Result:

Nigerian students face obstacles, such as food, language, study shedules and personal barriers.

Food:

Food is a huge part of culture and ‘belonging’, not only in the tastes and flavours but also in the rituals and the etiquette. Being distanced from something so ingrained is difficult to adjust to, even the times at which we eat and the prominence we place on certain meals is vastly different from country to country. Nigerian didn’t like the Indian food style particularly veg food and spicy items. They are all like non -vegetarian in African style only

Food may not factor too highly in motivations and deliberations of students deciding to study abroad, but perhaps it ought to. Lifestyle factors associated with a college are always a major influencer for international students, and the quality and accessibility of food choices is a key part of that. Offering a variety of food to students – particularly one that goes some way to curbing homesickness – could become a key factor in recruiting those from other countries.

Language and ethnicity:

Language is a **communication tool** used by everyone in their daily life as a means to convey information and arguments to others. In this case, the **language** cannot be separated from culture because **language** represents its nation and has close relation to the attitude or behaviour of groups of speakers of the **languages**.

Nigerian students are coming from Kano. In the 40 Nigerians, 4 students are following Christianity and remaining all of Islam. Kano is the commercial nerve centre of northern Nigeria and second largest city of Nigeria. In this city few people speak Fulani language and widely spoken ‘Housa’ (Arabic language) in Kano. Housa and English

language are official language of Nigeria. Below rating table is showing English communication with the host place of Nigerians in daily activities.

Table ~ 1

Field	poor	Average	good	excellent
Academic	-	-	32	08
shopping	12	26	02	-
socialising	-	31	19	-
Bureaucracy	07	22	11	-

Reference: primary data from questionnaire.

Most of the Nigerian expressed their opinion about speaking English is very difficult here even office staff, police couldn't understand our English language. Because of language barrier they are not connect socially. And they notified racism in host place and feeling bad also. English words are same but pronunciation and slant are different to one place to another. Therefore Nigerians faced language challenge in social and academic zone. In academic they were coping with the help of teaching instructor and friends but they faced lot of challenge while doing shopping, visiting in bank, and in police office and other places.

Separation from home:

All Nigerian come to davangere is not in personal or family decision they were selected through agencies and government decision only. Being away from their families is one of the difficult adjustments of the foreign students. While in Davanagere they had no immediate families to convey their needs and problems. The feeling of homesickness is one problem that difficult to overcome.

Academic related problem:

Participants spent a significant proportion of the time discussing study related issues during interviews. All participants, regardless of cultural origins, claimed that their professors were nice, professional, and approachable. However, they noted difficulties in communicating with their professors due to language barriers, cultural differences, and different expectations from professors. Here is the rating scale given by Nigerian student regarding academic environment

Table -2

statements	Not at all difficult	A little difficult	Moderately difficult	Very difficult
a. Understanding teachers	02	27	06	05
b. Writing assignments	-	32	08	-
c. Taking notes during class	-	36	03	01
d. Completing assignments on time	08	32	-	-
e. working on group project	32	06	02	-
f. taking tests or exams	06	34	-	-
g. making oral presentation	-	30	06	04
h. managing your study workload	24	15	01	-
i. asking questions in class	12	08	20	-
j. studying in a different educational system	-	36	04	-

Reference: primary Data

The medium of instruction, pedagogical techniques, instructional focus and classroom interaction are academic related factors which greatly affected the students 'academic and social performance. Most of the Nigerian facing a little difficulties to cope up their academic culture.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the findings of the study, the most common difficulty of Nigerian student coming to the Davanagere is the adjustment to the food and language. Student dislikes the host food. The language is a barrier. It takes time before these students get used to the accent of the teacher. Cultural education must be thoroughly provided to the students while still their country of origin. Each college must setup an office for international affairs, and also language club. It helps to cope up their social life at the time of visiting service sector office and purchasing and travelling.

Student experience a wide range of emotions once they leave home to study another country. It is important for parents to understand what their child is going through, to be patient and supportive while child adjust new culture.

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