

A Study on Factors that Influence the Cultural Adjustment Faced by the African and China Students in Higher Learning Institutions in Klang Valley

Sobana Manivannan, Lua Sharmini Satanam

Abstract: *There are numerous higher education institutions based in Malaysia successfully sustaining in the market with huge number of students from all around the world. Yet, there are a number of turnover rates where students fail to adapt the cultural differences while pursuing their studies in Malaysia. With this concern, this project aimed to identify the cultural adjustment faced by the African and China students in selected universities for the purpose of this project. Since there is only a few studies have analysed various factors that influence the cultural adjustment, this study intend to achieve the aim of the study which is to figure out the level of influence that the factors identified as independents variables such as perceived discrimination, language, social support and educational stressor towards the cultural adjustment faced by African and China students in the selected three higher learning institutions at Klang Valley, Malaysia. For this research, convenience sampling was utilized and 120 survey questionnaires were distributed to the African and China students in those universities. Then the 120 respondent's responses were entered into SPSS version 23 one by one to collect descriptive and inferential statistics. At the beginning of the study the hypothesis formed in a way that the independent variables such as perceived discrimination and social support have correlation with cultural adjustment faced by African students but have no correlation towards the cultural adjustment faced by China student. The same thing goes to the educational stressor and language where these independent variables have correlation with the cultural adjustments faced by China students but have no correlation towards the cultural adjustment faced by African students. Meanwhile, the results revealed that perceived discrimination, language, educational stressor and social support are all have a positive relationship and have a correlation towards the cultural adjustment faced by African and China students in selected higher learning institutions. Whereby the null hypothesis formed for this study have proven wrong and the alternate hypothesis are all accepted and proven right in the data analysis made. The findings supported the results from some earlier studies and also bring out several new ideas such as African and China students do facing cultural adjustment due to the examined factors in this study. Thus, it is found that language, perceived discrimination, educational stressor and social support were positively related to the cultural adjustment faced by both African and China students. Furthermore, the results also have a great contribution to the theories built and previous studies on this scope.*

Keyword: *Cultural adjustment, perceived discrimination, educational stressor, social support*

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the earlier years, setting out to places encourage far from the zone of birthplace is once in a while done in light of the fact that it is troublesome and restricted access to transportation. Alongside the coming of the period of globalization which is portrayed by the improvement of innovation and quick transportation, things begun to change (Sumer, 2009). The quick improvement of innovation and transportation has eventually prompted many people from one nation to visit different nations. People who are going to another nation for a particular reason inside a period probably called sojourner (Lee and Sukoco, 2008). Sojourners set out to another nation with an assortment of various interests, for example, in the field of financial, social, political, military, education, et cetera. One zone that is as of now encountering quick development is education. In this 21st century, internationalization of advanced education is a fundamental issue which drives the high level of excitement by numerous understudies. The interest for higher education makes education transformed into the key for every portal. Individuals who live in an outside nation may confront issues of adjustment. International students are not exempted from this procedure. Understanding the procedure of adjustments is essential to the achievement of this sojourner populace. From the entry of international understudies in the host nation, they will experience various and startling issues. Understudies may need to change in accordance with another instructive framework, which varies extensively from the strategies for examine in their own nation (Mehdizadeh and Scott, 2005). There can be a few challenges in adjustment for the non-native in acquiring appropriate convenience and craved sustenance, regardless of whether for religious or individual reasons. There could be the likelihood that the host nation may not give adequate support to the abroad understudies. Late research recommended that international understudies' adjustment is affected by different culturally diverse factors, for example, the measure of contact with have nationals, length of living arrangement, fund, and convenience. Moreover, past researches have recommended that the change of international understudies contrasts as per the nation of beginning and nation of study. What's more, a scope of monetary and psycho-social components that influenced adjustment has additionally been distinguished in the past research (Mehdizadeh and Scott, 2005; Misra and Castillo, 2004).

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As per Misra and Castillo (2004), every international understudy experience the way toward changing in accordance with another instructive framework and social condition. Acclimation to these new situations can be a distressing procedure (Li and Gasser, 2005) since they need to adjust to new social esteems, nourishments, climate, and so on. Albeit past examinations have investigated alteration through the estimation of one or a set number of factors, this investigation tries to research a scope of factors that appear to influence the cultural adjustment faced by African and China understudies in three higher learning institutions at Klang Valley, Malaysia. Along these lines, the present research inspects the relationship between language, perceived discrimination, educational stressor and social support on cultural adjustments faced by African and China students in three higher learning institutions at Klang Valley.

II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The approach of this study is deductive and approach known as theory testing where researcher builds up a hypothesis by in light of pervious hypothesis and outlines a research method to the detailed hypothesis (Kennedy, 2009). The research questions, objectives, the knowledge, accessibility of time and assets will manage the research strategy according to Saunders, et al. (2009). The research strategy in this study was based on a survey. The research questionnaire was first pilot tested before distribution. Pilot testing here means analysing the relevance of the questionnaire with a small group audience before distributing to the selected target group. Thus, a number of fifteen students selected in Asia Pacific University to conduct pilot testing to test the relevance of the questionnaires going to be distributed for this research. While doing this test the participants were randomly selected from African and China students equally. Furthermore, these participants also explained thoroughly regarding the research scope before conducting the test.

In this study, essential information gathering was through disseminating the survey to the respondents. The surveys were embraced from past studies and the questionnaires circulated physically to the respondents. The objective zone of the questionnaire dissemination was Asia Pacific University, Sunway University and Inti University. The respondents for this study were conveniently chosen from African and China students. Meanwhile, data gathered through the literature review for the secondary data accumulation. All the literatures gathered were discussed on both independent and dependant variables in this research in order to guarantee the unwavering quality and the legitimacy of the data. The

factors that got from the literature reviews were additionally researched through the primary data.

There are two sections in the outline of the survey. The initial segment got some information about their statistic attributes. Then secondly the dependant and independent variables tested. Furthermore, the survey contained organized questions with Likert-type scales since researchers have connected Likertscale organize in this study in light of the fact that the scale was reasonable for self-regulated survey (Kyzar, et al. 2012). An aggregate of 120 respondents' points of interest entered into SPSS one by one, and the individual information was dissected on a group basis. Furthermore, the statistical package for the social science (SSPS) was utilized to decipher the information after gather the data from the respondents. The outcome was show in graphical presentation, for example, histogram, bar diagrams and pie outlines are utilized to make the translation work less demanding. The measurement was incorporate both of the elucidating and inferential insights, Pearson Moment Correlation test, to look at the legitimacy of the hypothesis, which enables elucidating the connection between language, perceived discrimination, educational stressor, social support and cultural adjustment and attempt to surmise what the delegate populace considerations.

III. RESULTS

According to the analysis from the previous chapters, it is noticeable that there are more female than male from the respondents answered the survey questionnaire. Moreover, there were equal number of African and China students from three selected universities such as Asia Pacific University, Sunway University and Inti University. Surprisingly, there were equal number of respondents from the three universities have participated in answering the survey questionnaires which forms 40 students from respective universities. Furthermore, most of the respondents known to be pursuing their bachelor's degree at the time of conducting the survey. Majority of the respondents also were stated that they are living in Malaysia for almost 3 – 5 years.

Pilot test has been conducted from the first 15 set of completed questionnaires in chapter 5 in order to test the reliability of the variables in this survey. Based on the results of this research (Table 1), it is proven that all the independent variables are reliable where its Cronbach's Alpha has the maximum value of 0.833 (83.3%). Consequently, all the variables in this survey are considered reliable and are applicable for this research.

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Items
Cultural Adjustment	0.720	5
Language	0.700	5
Perceived Discrimination	0.833	5
Educational Stressor	0.723	5
Social Support	0.829	5

Table 2: Correlation Analysis for African Students

Based on the results generated (Table 2 & 3), it is proven that the independent variables used in this survey, namely, language, perceived discrimination, educational stressor and social support are significant. There are positive relationship and correlation between all the variables towards the cultural adjustment. As a result based on the significance level and Pearson Correlation value of all the variables, it has proved that the hypothesis (H1, H2, H3 and H4) that are supported by the literature review in chapter two are accepted where the previous researchers

have found out that these nationality students are being influenced by those factors analysed at different geographical areas. Meanwhile, the hypothesis (Ho1, Ho2, Ho3 and Ho4) are all proven wrong in the data analysis. Thus, it is proven that there is a relationship between language, perceived discrimination, educational stressor and social support with cultural adjustment faced by African and China students in the higher learning institutions that have been selected for this study.

		Average_culturaladjustment	Average_Language	Average_Perceiveddiscrimination	Average_Educationalstressor	Average_SocialSupport
Average_culturaladjustment	Pearson Correlation	1	.847**	.842**	.541**	.487**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	60	60	60	60	60
Average_Language	Pearson Correlation	.847**	1	.875**	.220	.666**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.091	.000
	N	60	60	60	60	60
Average_Perceiveddiscrimination	Pearson Correlation	.842**	.875**	1	.353**	.836**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.006	.000
	N	60	60	60	60	60
Average_Educationalstressor	Pearson Correlation	.541**	.220	.353**	1	.164
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.091	.006		.211
	N	60	60	60	60	60
Average_SocialSupport	Pearson Correlation	.487**	.666**	.836**	.164	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.211	
	N	60	60	60	60	60

Table 2: Correlation Analysis for African Students

		Average_culturaladjustment	Average_Language	Average_perceiveddiscrimination	Average_Educationalstressor	Average_socialsupport
Average_culturaladjustment	Pearson Correlation	1	.773**	.763**	.569**	.276**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.033
	N	60	60	60	60	60
Average_Language	Pearson Correlation	.773**	1	.811**	.227	.531**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.081	.000
	N	60	60	60	60	60
Average_perceiveddiscrimination	Pearson Correlation	.763**	.811**	1	.418**	.777**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.001	.000
	N	60	60	60	60	60
Average_Educationalstressor	Pearson Correlation	.569**	.227	.418**	1	.177
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.081	.001		.177
	N	60	60	60	60	60
Average_socialsupport	Pearson Correlation	.276**	.531**	.777**	.177	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.033	.000	.000	.177	
	N	60	60	60	60	60

Table 3: Correlation Analysis for China Students

The research has also passed the multiple regression analysis, as all the independent variables in this research are proved to have influence on the dependent variable, cultural adjustment. Besides, according to the ANOVA test in this research, it is also shown that the overall model fits the data properly. The independent variables are also proven to be significant in the coefficient test. Based on the results in Table, all the independent variables have positive influence on the cultural adjustment and the beta value for all the variables are the same. Yet, the entire hypothesis formed in chapter one is not accepted as the data collected proven that both Africa and China students are influenced by the independent variables.

In a nutshell, all the research questions formed for this study been answered where there is a relationship between language, perceived discrimination, educational stressor, social support and cultural adjustment faced by the African and China students in Asia Pacific University, Sunway University and Inti University at Klang Valley, Malaysia. Although the half the hypothesis formed for this study been proven wrong and rejected, it is known than all the factors analysed in this research have an influence on cultural adjustment faced by African and China students at certain range of correlation and relationship. Furthermore, the theories build for the research also proven right. For instance, for the U-Curve cross cultural adjustment theory, based on the one way ANOVA analysis proves that students living more than three years in Malaysia facing the least cultural adjustment which means they are went through all the stages of U-curve and now being at Malaysia for more than three years they are facing less cultural adjustment compare to the respondents. Furthermore, for the social exchange theory the one way ANOVA analysis proving that despite the number of years being at Malaysia, both African and China students are

being influenced by social support factor for facing cultural adjustment.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the overall aims and objectives of this research have been achieved. The findings of the study revealed that language, perceived discrimination, educational stressor and social support were significantly positively related to the cultural adjustment. All these four independent variables were found to significantly positively contribute to the prediction of cultural adjustment and this made the entire hypothesis formed partially accepted and rejected. It is proven that all four factors studied in this research, namely language, perceived discrimination, educational stressor and social support are correlated and have a significantly relationship with cultural adjustment. The objective of this research is to study the influence of language, perceived discrimination, educational stressor and social support towards cultural adjustment faced by African and China students in Asia Pacific University, Sunway University and Inti University at Klang Valley, Malaysia had been achieved. The implications of the study are provided for the management of these universities to manage the relationship with their African and China students more effectively. Furthermore, useful recommendations are also given to the future researchers to help them to provide a better quality project.

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