

## THE PROBLEMS OF CULTURE SHOCK

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**Аннотация:** В данной статье рассматривается понятие культурного шока. Также приводятся различные виды причин культурного шока

**Ключевые слова:** культурный шок, формы культурного шока, коммуникация

**Key words:** culture shock, forms of culture shock, communication

**Abstract:** This paper examines the concept of culture shock. The authors bring different types of causes of culture shock

Most experts call the impact of stress of a new culture on a person as a "culture shock". Sometimes people use a similar concept of "*transition shock*" or "*cultural fatigue*." In a greater or lesser degree almost all immigrants who find themselves in a foreign culture go through this phenomenon. Cultural shock causes a disturbance of mental health, a more or less expressed mental shock. The term "culture shock" was introduced into scientific circulation by the American researcher Karl Oberg in 1960, when he noted that the entering into a new culture is accompanied by a number of unpleasant feelings. Today it is considered that the experience of a new culture can be unpleasant or shocking, on the one hand, because it can lead to a negative evaluation of one's own culture. Usually, there are *six forms* of culture shock expression:

- Tension due to the efforts being made to achieve the psychological adaptation;
- The sense of loss due to the deprivation of friends, his or her position in society, profession, property;
- The feeling of loneliness (of rejection) in a new culture, which can be transformed into negation of this culture;
- Violation of role expectations and a sense of identity;
- Anxiety, turning into anger and disgust after realizing the cultural differences;
- A sense of inferiority due to an inability to cope.

The main reason of culture shock is the difference of cultures. Each culture has a lot of symbols and images, as well as the behavior stereotypes in which people can automatically act in different situations. When a person is in a new culture, the usual orientation system becomes inadequate, because it is based on other views of the world, other norms and values, stereotypes of behavior and perception. Usually, being in frames of his culture, a man does not realize that it has a latent, not outwardly visible part of the culture.

The condition of cultural shock is directly related to the process of communication. Everyone perceives their ability to communicate as a matter of course and is not aware of the role played by this ability in their life, until he is in a situation of misunderstanding. Unsuccessful communication as a rule gives to a person a sense of heartache and disappointment. It is not just about the ignorance of the language, but also about the ability to decode the cultural information of a cultural environment, the psychological compatibility with other carriers of culture, the ability to understand and accept their values.

For the first time the mechanism of development of culture shock was described in detail by Karl Oberg, who claimed that people go through certain stages of culture shock experiences and slowly achieve a satisfactory level of adaptation. Today, there are five stages of adaptation

- The *first stage* is called "*the honeymoon*": most of the migrants, being abroad, seek to study or work; they are full of enthusiasm and hope. In addition, their friends often prepare for their arrival, and the first time these migrants receive care and may have some privileges. But this time passes quickly.
- At the *second stage* the unusual environment and culture are beginning to have a *negative effect*. These psychological factors caused by lack of understanding of local residents. The result can be disappointment, frustration and even depression. In other words, there are all the symptoms

of culture shock. Therefore, in this period, migrants are trying to escape from reality, dealing mostly with their countrymen.

- The *third stage* is critical as culture shock reaches its maximum. This can lead to physical and mental illnesses. Some migrants give up and return home. But most of them find the strength to overcome cultural differences, start learning a new language, get acquainted with the local culture, and acquire local friends.
- At the *fourth stage* there is optimistic spirit, as a person becomes more confident and satisfied with his position in the new society and culture. The adaptation and integration in the life of the new society are going on very well.
- The *fifth stage* is achieved by full adaptation to the new culture. The individual and the environment from now mutually correspond to each other.

Depending on the above factors, the process of adaptation can last from *several months to 4-5 years*. [2]

It is interesting to note that when a person who has successfully adapted to the foreign culture goes back home, he faces with the need to go backward through adaptation to his own culture. This phenomenon is called a "*shock return*". The first time a person is happy to return, to meet his friends, but then he begins to notice that some features of the native culture seem to him strange and unusual, and he is re-adjusting to life at home.

The degree of culture shock and intercultural adaptation duration depends on many factors. They can be divided into two groups - *the internal* (individual) and *external* (group).

The first group contains individual factors of person characteristics - *gender, age, features of character*. It is believed that *age* is a critical element in adaptation to another society. The older the man, the harder he adapts to a new cultural system,

it takes him more time to go through the culture shock, slowly takes the model of a new culture. Thus, young children adapt quickly and successfully, but the students are experiencing great difficulties, and older people are incapable of practical adaptation and acculturation. *Gender* also affects the process of adaptation, and the duration of culture shock. Previously it was thought that women are more difficult to adapt to the new environment than men. But this applies to women from traditional societies, which are in a new place doing housework and have limited contact with new people. Women from the developed countries do not show differences in their abilities to acculturation as compared to men. Even there is evidence of American women, according to which they are more likely than men to adapt to the new circumstances.

Recent studies show that one of the most important factors is to adapt *the education factor*. The higher it is the more successful is adaptation. Education, even without taking into account the cultural content, expands the internal human potential. The more complex picture of the world has the person, the easier and faster he perceives innovation. [1]

The *internal factors* of adaptation and overcoming culture shock are the circumstances of human life experience. Here the most important thing is the motivation to adapt. The strongest motivation is usually from emigrants who want to take up permanent residence in another country and want to quickly become full members of the new culture. Much worse things are seen with internally displaced persons and refugees who do not want to leave their homeland and do not want to get used to the new living conditions. Considering the motivation of migrants much depends on how well they learn the language, history and culture of the country are they were going. Such knowledge certainly facilitates adaptation.

*The external factors* affecting the adaptation and culture shock are: cultural distance, cultural characteristics, the conditions of the host country, etc. [4]

The problem of the "*culture shock*" in the modern world will always exist as long as there is migration of the world's population. People will always cross the borders of foreign countries for their penetrating into the foreign culture and in settling their in order to adapt, get used to and be able to survive on the foreign territory. Of course, the culture shock does not have only negative consequences. Modern researchers see it as a normal response and a part of the normal process of adaptation to the new conditions. Moreover, in this process, a person acquires not only knowledge of a new culture and its norms of behavior, but he becomes more developed culturally, although under stress. As a main result he acquires the ability to live in an ever-changing world in which the borders are of little importance and direct contacts between people are become increasingly important.

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