

PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL ADAPTATION OF ARABIC-SPEAKING STUDENTS TO EDUCATION CONDITIONS IN RUSSIAN UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

Psychological adaptation when entering into a different cultural environment is a set of psychological effects, including a clear understanding of individuals and ethnic identity, good mental health and overall ability to achieve a sense of personal satisfaction from the existence in a new for the individual community of residence. The concept of psychological adaptation in terms of the theory of acculturation is interpreted by modern researchers as the result of the analysis of the effects of culture shock. Psychological disadaptation, that arising at the initial stage of training, is the cause of the learning difficulties. Therefore, the present study was aimed to review and discuss specific conditions promoting and hindering the process of adaptation of foreign students to the educational environment of a foreign university. We discuss the main factors influencing the process of adaptation of students from Arabian countries to disclose adaptive features of their stay in the environment of another culture. Our focus is the Arabian students who study in Russian universities.

Keywords: Adaptation, Educational Environment, Psychological Effects.

INTRODUCTION

Adaptation (Latin adaptare-to adapt), in the broadest sense is defined to changing external and internal conditions. Human adaptation has two aspects: Biological and psychological. The biological aspect of adaptation is common for the man and animals (Anderson, 1994).

The pedagogy deals with the psychological aspect of adaptation, which is partially overlapped by the concept of social adaptation and includes the adaptation of person as an individual to life in society, in accordance with the requirements of this society and own needs, motives and interests (Kim & Gudykunst, 2005). The most important way of achieving successful social adaptation is the general education and upbringing, work and professional training, as well as cohabitation (Asio & Khorasani, 2015).

Modern understanding of adaptation is associated with the processes of acculturation (Berry & Sam, 1997). The most well-known in the field of acculturation have become the work of the Canadian psychologist Berry & others (2007). They identified the so-called acculturation strategies based on two factors. The first factor influencing the choice of acculturation strategy-is the maintenance and development of the ethnic identity of the individual in society (Berry, 2002). Another factor is the motivation, which corresponds to the desire of the individual to contact representatives of other ethnic groups, other groups of communicators. Therefore, the

present study aims to review and discuss specific conditions promoting and hindering the adaptation process of Arabian students to the educational environment of foreign universities. We discuss the main factors influencing the process of adaptation of students from Arabian countries to disclose adaptive features of their stay in the environment of another culture. Our focus is the Arabian students who study in Russian universities.

METHODOLOGY

The subject of our analysis has main factors that affect the success of the psychopedagogical adaptation of Arabic-speaking students to the conditions of the environment of Russian universities. Let's define the difficulties that arise for Arab students when entering a foreign language culture and which may impede the efficient process of obtaining a degree.

This analysis was aimed to determine the difficulties that Arabic students encounter while entering into foreign language and culture that can impede the efficient process of degree obtaining and also raise doubts about the correctness of the choice which consequently results in stress in the students.

Features of the host community can become a real obstacle to adaptation. From the first days of stay in Russia Arabic-speaking students are faced with a completely different way of life, significantly different from the usual for them world of prevailing for centuries patriarchal traditions. Wherein, even not knowing the language does not interfere understanding, that the organization of life in Russia and home life and living conditions at home are diametrically opposed. Here are the factors of Russian reality, causing in Arabic-speaking students surprise, discomfort and serious difficulties in adapting to the new conditions.

1. The attitude to women and their position in society and a large number of working women, including in heavy work or in managerial positions. Female director is puzzling and subsequently, irritating, if the female director is making a remark or giving instructions. (This may be the commandant of a hostel, Head of Department, Dean of the Faculty, the administrator at the hotel, realtor, etc.). The head of the Arab family is by far the father and the mother is considered a holy and revered as a saint, as Muslim tradition claims the mother-the second person in the world after the Prophet Muhammad.
2. Mode of operation of government agencies and commercial organizations: From 9.00 to 18.00 and the beginning of the week is not on Saturday, but on Monday.
3. Public transport. In Arab countries, the residents mostly travel by their own cars or taxi. So the first time of travelling in public transport causes Arabs discomfort. On the bus, trolleybus or minibus Arabic-speaking students are forced into close proximity to strangers, "foreign" women, which causes a feeling of unease.
4. The uncontrolled and excessive alcohol consumption and the presence of a large number of drunken people on the streets (including women).
5. The smoking ban not only in public places but also in rented apartments. In Arab countries-Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Palestine-smoking is allowed almost everywhere. A guest in the house is offered cigarettes on par with coffee and sweets.
6. Free communication of young men and women, as well as their public expression of feelings and sympathy. In Arab schools, boys and girls in public schools are studying separately, which explains the lack of communication experience with the opposite sex. In the first months of stay in Russia contacts and displays of any affection are limited. But after a time and with the proficiency in language, this problem ceases to be relevant.
7. The architecture of the city, layout of apartments and accommodation conditions. The Arabs do not understand what a "one-bedroom" apartment is and why you should always sleep on the couch. They also do not perceive life in a dormitory, where common areas need to be "shared" with a lot of neighbors.
8. The system of education, teaching methods and monitoring system in schools and universities.

Understanding the new education system-is one of the important conditions of the foreign student's successful adaptation. Arab students do not like the monotonous, repetitive work and tend to build their own learning through communication with the teacher. They see the teacher as a person who engages in the communication with them and is interesting as a carrier of new unlearned information. However, it should be noted that the education of many of the Arab countries is based on monologic teaching methods; students are not used to asking questions and engaging in constructive dialogue.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Equally important for the adaptation of Arab students is the climatic factor. The geographical location and weather conditions in the home country of students are significantly different from the climate in Russia, even in the southern regions. The presence of two seasons-summer and spring-autumn, the lack of sub-zero temperatures and lots of sunny days in the home country and a sharp change of weather, differences in atmospheric pressure, strong winds, low temperatures, high humidity and a small number of sunny days in Russia are becoming an irritant and can affect the health of the student. Abrupt climate change often leads to stress and sometimes goes into a protracted depression (until spring).

However, some natural phenomena cause the Arabic-speaking students positive emotions. For example, rain during the summer months which are not typical for the Arab countries, the clouds in the summer sky, snow, seen for the first time, a large number of parks and gardens. Arid climate teaches residents of Arab countries carefully and lovingly treat the nature and the sun significantly imprints on the character of the students-immigrants from Arab countries. Better part of them-are emotional, temperamental and very sociable people. However, the language barrier of first days in Russia does not allow realizing their natural abilities and opportunities. But after three or four months to get the basics of language and wait for warm sunny spring days, Arabic-speaking students start to study in detail the city and its attractions. That is why the Arab students in spring significantly reduce the intensity of training, more often miss school, preferring walks in the city.

Religion also affects the successful education of students from Arab countries. The Arabs, who profess Islam, to varying degrees, are able to perceive and absorb scientific material. But Islam as a religion has a positive effect on learning process. It should be kept in mind that in the last few years the summer session and entry exams coincide with Ramadan-month of obligatory fasting when Muslims give up on food and water during daylight hours. At the time of strict fasting month of Ramadan, the Muslim students experience physical and psychological problems and it is difficult for them to study. Classes on Friday also are at first cause inconvenience for the Arabs, as this day is for prayer and visits to the mosque. In the first weeks Muslim students do not even have a choice-its either classes or mosque attendance. However, gradually they realize that the need for studying on Fridays is not due to a desire to infringe on the religious feelings of Muslim students. Laws and traditions of the host country-Russia-dictate conditions of foreign students' education.

The main difficulty for the adaptation process by Arabic-speaking students is called the language barrier. The language barrier arises primarily in connection with the necessity of mastering the educational information in the language of the host country. Russian language becomes the language of education. As a rule, students are more likely to see problems in the learning communication related to the receipt of future profession than the difficulties in communicating with other participants of the educational process.

As practice shows, Arabic speaking students have the natural ability to learn foreign languages. Their native language has all the sounds that are available, particularly in the Russian language (except for [ц, ы]). While studying in schools they have to memorize large amounts of material that can serve as a good basis for memorizing and mastering new lexis in Russian. However, the natural slowness and laziness, as well as a real awareness that they are better than other students (from Africa, China and others.) have mastered the material, reduce the quality of language learning. As a result, having a large vocabulary, Arab students actively enter the speech, but with a lot of grammatical errors.

It should be emphasized, the faster a foreign student learns the language, the more effective adaptation takes place and the sooner the barriers in communication are overcome. The student ceases to experience stress while communicating, when handling their requests and questions in Russian, knowledge of new becomes available, which is an important component of effective educational process to foreign students.

Getting into a different socio-cultural environment, foreign student feels the need to adapt to it from different positions:

1. As representative of his country, i.e. as the carrier of national culture, traditions, customs and norms of behavior, value systems;
2. As a young man i.e. as a socialized individual with inherent in him specific personal characteristics;
3. As a student, i.e. as the subject of educational activity, a member of the pedagogical process and as the object of the impact of the educational environment.

CONCLUSION

Despite the many problems that exist for the foreign student, he, like all the students of the world, is trying to spend his time usefully and to learn a profession (Activities, 1989). It is necessary to ascertain the need for the creation of a number of conditions of adaptogenic nature of the wide range of actions to optimize the process of adaptation of foreign students to the educational process of the university. Adaptation should be considered as a complex psychological and pedagogical problem, the successful solution of which is determined by multiple parameters and criteria that allow improving the quality of education of foreign citizens and achieve the best academic results of the learning process with the least negative consequences.

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