

‘CULTURE SHOCK’ – A THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

*Elizabeth Paul Chakkachamparambil, Assistant Professor & Research Scholar,
Research Department of Commerce, St. Joseph’s College (Autonomous) Irinjalakuda*

*Dr Josheena Jose, Assistant Professor & Research Guide,
PG Department of commerce, Christ College (Autonomous) Irinjalakuda*

Abstract

In the modern world ‘Culture shock’ has several negative effects in the field of education and in the workplace. Most international students and foreign workers experience culture shock. In India since the IT boom took place, salaries are at an unbelievable high. Due to the attractive salary packages offered in the IT sector, this sector has attracted employees from all parts of the country and even from across the globe. The workplace has become a meeting place of various ‘cultures’. Yet little research exists which has investigated the factors leading to culture shock. In this paper an attempt is made to investigate the factors leading to culture shock.

Key Words: Culture, Culture Shock, Globalization, Social withdrawal and Emotional discomfort

Part 1

1.1 Introduction

“Culture Shock” has been a topic of research for over 30 years by European and American anthropologists and psychologists (Eickelmann, 2006). It is usually used to describe the physical and emotional discomfort experienced when someone moves to a completely new environment, although it also may result in a positive learning experience leading to increased self-awareness and personal growth (Adler, 1987). Paul Pedersen (1995), a cross-cultural psychologist and a professor of educational Syracuse University in the Department of Human Services, defined culture shock as the process of initial adjustment to an unfamiliar environment. He pointed out that this psychological construct of culture shock has been used to describe the adjustment process in its emotional, psychological, behavioral, cognitive and physiological impact on individuals. Geert Hofstede, one of the pioneers on the field, an international authority on cross-cultural social psychology; the aforementioned personality Paul Pedersen and Gert Jan Hofstede, son of Geert Hofstede, a senior researcher in Information Technology at Wageningen