Academic Sojourners, Culture Shock and Intercultural Adaptation: a Trend Analysis

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Abstract. The dominant picture of cross-culture adaptation still, with some exceptions, features a reified process of recovering from culture shock or culture related stress. The purpose of this article is to put cross-cultural adaptation back into the perspective and connecting it with the trend of linearity in the developmental communication patterns of academic sojourners studying in Malaysia. This paper examines the trends in intercultural communication (number of casual acquaintances, casual friends, intimate friends, participation in host organizations and use of host mass media) and trends in psychological domain (perceptual complexity, attitude toward the host society and satisfaction level) of academic sojourners over the years in process of adaptation.

The data analysis was reported in terms of: i, general shape of developmental curve, ii. significance of change over time determined by analysis of variance across the five subgroups, and iii. significance of linearity in the developmental patterns i.e., whether the change patterns over the years is linear or non-linear. The results show the linearity of association with the members of the host society was increased with time spent in the host society. The study also holds recovery from culture shock to be the mechanism of accommodation to life in strange lands.