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Reverse Culture Shocks Post COVID-19

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Abstract: The nationwide lockdown due to the devastating pandemic attack of COVID-19 have forced almost every citizen of nearly all countries of the world to stay inside their house, to get accustomed with the practices of work from home, children are getting education from schools and colleges through online mode. People are bound to wear facemask and gloves whenever they step out of their home for any work and sanitize themselves with alcohol based disinfectants repeatedly. Daily wage earners are staying foodless day after day. Throughout the day most people are worried about the facts and figures related to COVID-19 in India and abroad. Slowly new habits are getting established in the attitude of the people. The socio-cultural patters are also going to get affected heavily after this pandemic outbreak of COVID-19. This paper aims at identification of probable reverse culture shocks that are going to hit the society as well as in the organizations gradually as post COVID-19 across the globe.

Index Terms - Corona virus. Pandemic, Lockdown, reverse culture shocks

Introduction

Corona virus disease (better known as COVID-19) is an contagious malady caused by a recently exposed corona virus. The virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through biological aerosols spread when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or exhales. These aerosol droplets are comparatively heavier to suspend in the air, and hastily plunge on floors or surfaces. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus commonly experience mild to extreme respiratory illness especially breathing problems. A negligible number of infected people got recovered as on date with special life saving equipments like intubation through Ventilators and pulse oximeters. Only a very few percentage of infected persons get recovery without any life saving medical equipments. Older people and all others with underlying health issues like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness followed by death. The best way to thwart and slow down the outbreak, is be well informed about the virus, the disease it causes and how it spreads. As on date, there are no vaccines or specific treatments for COVID-19 are known to anyone of the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020 declared COVID-19 a Pandemic, pointing to the over 118,000 cases of the corona virus outbreak in more than 110 countries and territories around the world and the unremitting jeopardy of advance global spread. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) mentioned that “Pandemics mean different things to different people,”. “Pandemic is not a word to use lightly or carelessly. It is a word that, if misused, can cause unreasonable fear, or unjustified acceptance that the fight is over, leading to unnecessary suffering and death,” said by Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. As a major precautionary measure to the save the nation from rapid outbreak most affected countries have declared a nationwide lockdown explaining that it was the only way of breaking the CODID-19 infection cycle. “Social distancing is the only way to break the cycle of infection,” mentioned by honorable Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi while declaring the nationwide lockdown in India. This decision was taken to save the countries, save each citizen and save the families. All

are directed not to step outside their houses. The nationwide lockdown due to the devastating pandemic attack of COVID-19 have forced almost every citizen of nearly all countries of the world to stay inside their house, to get accustomed with the practices of work from home, children are getting education from schools and colleges through online mode.

Culture shock is the bewilderment people habitually experience when they have to familiarize themselves to an unfamiliar culture, such as moving to a new country.

Reverse culture shock is when a person fights back with returning to their previous way of life after a extensive period of dearth, for example, expats returning home from abroad or inmates being freed after a prison term.

COVID-19 post-pandemic, many people will be staring at a foreign site, their state of affairs work, finances, lifestyle with numerous changed ahead of detection. The collective changes and challenges will be larger: in particular among rich and poor and those with “safe” jobs and those whose work has been devastated or is almost on the edge. Many relationships will be in chaos or splintered beyond mend. Domestic violence, child abuse, mental health and addiction problems will be obvious. Loneliness, particularly amongst older people, may have emerged into unfathomable melancholy due to untimely demise of spouse or partner. Teens and kids may be anxious, unsettled and oppositional. So people will seek time and support to amend to their habitual life as it was before pandemic attack.

Common Struggles of Reverse Culture Shock

1. People are expected to adore being “back” to previous life

After the lift of the lockdown period, that is in Unlock period people are supposed to be joyful and excited. But it may not be as desired by all because after indulging in whatever one has been desire, and seeing whoever they have missed, they may feel flat at least, there won't be the psychological lift people expect.

If they are, they will celebrate! As it has been noticed in New Zealand, but if they're not, it is suggested to just go with the flow up and down feelings are normal.

2. Does anyone care about lockdown experiences?

Yes of course, family members do, but they have most likely shared it, so they are not going to want to pick it over with others. Expats returning home often feel disenchanted because life has swallowed on while the person has been away and no one at home is predominantly paying attention in their experiences in a foreign country. In the similar manner, we have all had immeasurably diverse lockdown experiences and the one most interesting to us is our own.

3. Regular life possibly will overwhelm all concerned.

Covid-19 has given all an enormous break from regular activities of life. It has by force simplified our lives principles and practices, reduced our feelings of duty and responsibility and cut down on all we have to do. When the floodgates open fully again, feelings of overwhelm will be common. So we need to pace ourselves perhaps our kids don't need to do as many activities or sports as they previously did

4. Initially people enjoyed liked lockdown.

Perhaps having time to yourself and the simplicity of life or with an expectation of getting a long break from busy life or work pressure when lockdown was declared. For the first time many people having enough resources at home initially enjoyed the decision without knowing the much details of viral attack. Rather some people preferred for panic buying to have ample stock of food and other necessary items at home.

5. Feeling of wasted all the time doing nothing productive enough

Efficiency took a hit on all fronts and we had to reorganize our prospects. Employees were expected to learn different things, instead. Like how to work remotely using digital platforms, how their kids learn best or how to help in domestic activities.

6. Staying apart from families for longer period

It's an exceptional family, or lockdown cluster, that had no issues at all. Anxiety/worry, tears, anger, frustration and conflict head the list. Primary mental health issues, old wounds and addictions may have made things worse. Some will have found it tougher emotionally than others as they were bound to stay away from families due to distant family patterns for the sake of professional life.

7. It's challenging to get back up and going again with new normal practices.

Being quarantined has buoyant a listlessness that may be tough to wobble. Mental health issues and thoughts of anguish will be prevalent.

Stages of Reverse Culture Shock for Expats

Stage 1: Disengagement/Departure

While a person is still overseas, he/she start thinking about returning back home and moving away from their understanding and the friends or colleagues they have obtained abroad.

Stage 2: Euphoria/The Honeymoon

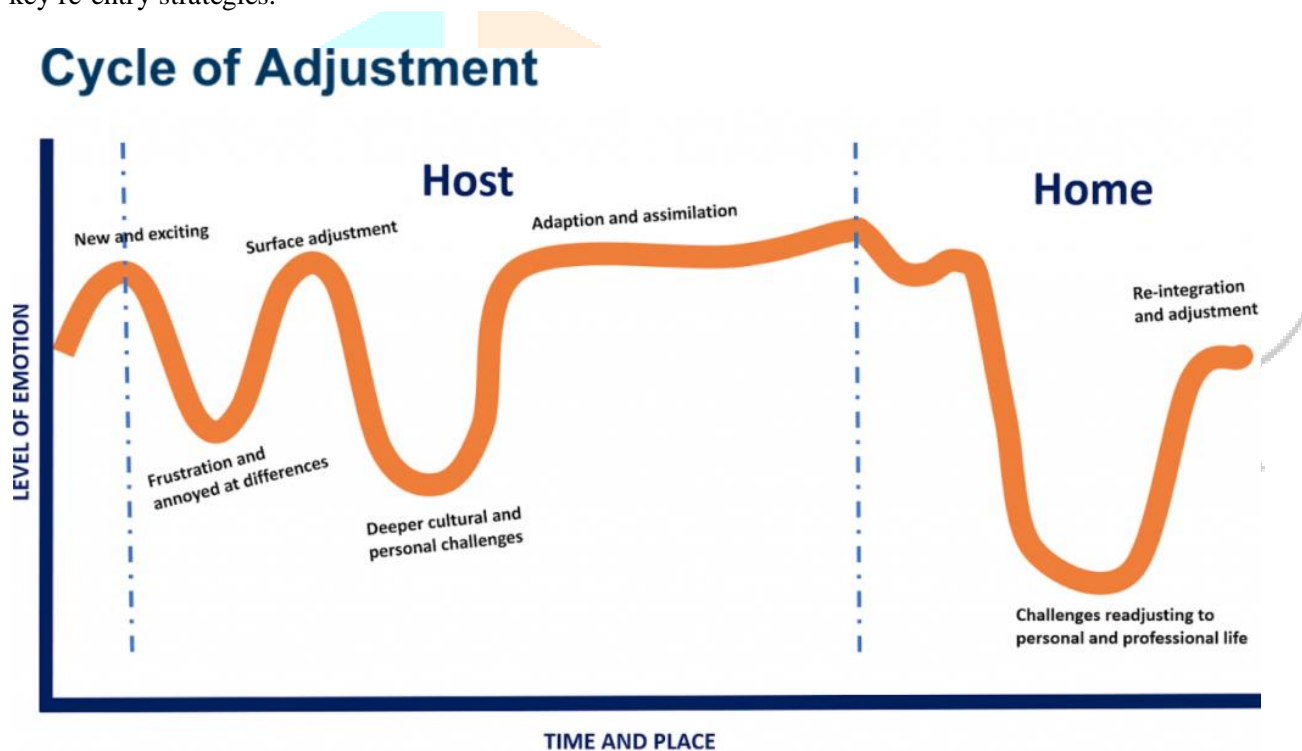
The expat may be very energized to be back home and family members are similarly excited to have him/her back. Expat has the chance to do, eat, see, smell and visit with all of those things he/she missed while they were away from home. Friends and family members put across their happiness in seeing the expat again and listen with excitement to his/her stories. After those few moments, expat may agonizingly recognize that their friends and family are not particularly interested in their experiences and what happened to him/her abroad.

Stage 3: Alienation

In this stage, expat experiences dampened euphoria with feelings of alienation, frustration and anger. Expat may even feel like an outsider or a foreigner in his/her own country. Expat some time feel irritated with others and impatient with their own ability to do things as well or as quickly as they hoped. Bitterness, seclusion, bewilderment and even a sense of helplessness may encompass in expat.

Stage 4: Gradual Readjustment

The fourth stage of re-entry includes a gradual readjustment for expat back to life at home. It is important for expats to remember that the shock of returning home will progressively disperse over time and with the accomplishment of a number of key re-entry strategies.



(Source : <https://internationalconsultantscentre.com/2020/05/13/reverse-culture-shock-after-covid-19/>)

Working in intercultural training, commonly reverse culture shock is found relevant in the context of expats coming back to own country after an assignment from abroad. Though exactly the same experience may not come out of COVID lockdown but will definitely pose challenges to us nevertheless, and in many ways that we won't unavoidably anticipate. Reverse culture shock is the shock of coming back to old practices at home after getting accustomed with new culture or sub-cultures. It engages the go again to life 'as it was before' and is often, unexpectedly become more difficult than adjusting to a new culture or context. It is an element of the sequence of fine-tuning and is characterized by preliminary exhilaration followed by a poignant low, before recovery and ultimate acceptance. The opening pleasure that awaits all now is the chance to meet colleagues and friends; which will be followed by deferment of social activities, revisiting preferred places, and returning to work in the office premises leaving apart the new normal practices of work from home (WFH). . But I it is for sure that life won't go back to the way it was because lot of changes took place among individuals and in society. Perhaps we are enjoying the slower pace of life or all are appreciating the transitory cessation of hostilities.

Embrace the positives

Some valid questions one need to justify like: What are the optimistic changes that you have made during lockdown? How do you want your existence to be diverse going advance? If there are lockdown practices that you want to keep, notify them to emphasize them, before you get caught up in your old ways and fail to remember the fresh ones.

Stay allied but socialize slowly maintaining physical distance as when required

As physical distancing measures lift, relieve yourself into public activities. Start by meeting your close family and friends to start with, for combating the COVID curse as well as your mental wellbeing. Then, over the coming months prioritize community and activities that are most significant, rather accepting every temptation you come across.

Return to work thoughtfully

Sometimes distancing yourself can help you to see things more clearly. What are the opportunities you now see presented in your work? Can you identify areas for positive change? If you've been working from home reassess your previous routine and consider reintegrating to the physical workplace gradually.

A new challenge awaits. As restrictions are lifted and a return to 'normal' is on the horizon, we might struggle to acclimatize back to the life that once was and even feel a sense of anxiety at the thought of it.

Few Propositions for Staying Psychologically Strong

COVID-19 is affecting almost every sphere of life worldwide, so there is good motive to do a mental and emotional health check-in as well.

- *Give consent to yourself to be distressed:* When employees' job contract or study abroad or out station occurrence ends without any prior notification, they lose a piece of themselves. People lose an experience they were fully emerged in and losing no matter which those meaningful calls for some brokenhearted. The best way to get through anguished is to allow own self to do it. So its better to hold close that epoch for however long it lasts.
- *Live full of life:* Meditate or exercise boosts the mood. The encouraging information is that even if someone is in lockdown or quarantine he or she can still get outside life from rooftop or balcony; and do some exercises in own home. Many videos in channels of YouTube are offering free access to online fitness classes.
- *Practice self-care :* Regular practice of self care through healthy food habit and keeping yourself busy in activities like reading new materials, trying out long lost hobbies. Pampering yourself with preferred music can give better mental peace.
- *Be guarded of media intake:* Aimlessly following social media hoax or pranks which is a major pastime when you have a lot of time on your hands, but some media outlets are not helping the corona virus situation by sharing misleading death tolls and non-stop dissemination of cooked stories for higher TRP/ viewership. If you want to stay informed, rely upon trustworthy sources like Arogya Setu App, World Health Organization, Center for Disease Control, ANI etc and be acquainted with it's time to log off for a bit.

Propositions for Dealing with Reverse Culture Shock

Spending any amount of time working out of own home town is an impactful experience. While many employees have had their job experience out station occurrence cut short as a result of the corona virus attack, that doesn't take away from the impact it's made. For migrant laborers whose job tenure ended early because of COVID-19, not only are dealing with reverse culture shock but the fact that something they have likely been planning for and working towards for years did not go as planned. These can be challenging for them to find an alternative options for sources of earning, to stay psychologically and physically fit and cope with this exceptional changes. Some suggestions for the students who have returned home from abroad or out station can be as mentioned below

- *Stay linked with your friends through social media networks :* These days no matter where in the world you are, it's easy to stay connected to people through social media. Try creating a standing group date with friends from your study abroad group. Fixing to a explicit time to meet up will keep communication unswerving and give something to look forward to.
- *Focus on online courses via remote teaching methodologies :* For many students who have been sent home as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic situation worldwide, they are covering up their teaching learning pedagogy online. Its reality that taking study abroad classes from bedroom is much dissimilar than from host country/town, but it's an significant moment in time to stay on top of studies
- *Scrapbook your travels :* With a variety of lockdowns and mandated quarantines going on, there's plenty of time to utilize for coding, programming or any other creative activities which are out of practice since prolonged period of time due to academic or professional pressure which happened to be your passion at one point of time in life.
- *Take benefit out of the resources:* Whether you were abroad for three weeks or three months, reverse culture shock hits the same. So, spend time in gaining knowledge out of reading from different sources to overcome the reverse culture shocks.

Conclusion

Unavoidably, every single individual of this world have been directly or indirectly got affected by the pandemic and faced the consequent changes in day-to-day lives, and that can have a intense and extensive impact. One might have experienced a swing

in values and outlook, noticed things they had not noticed before and accustomed to a newer approach of being that they were not ready to let go of. It has no doubt been strong, but many families have enjoyed having more time together, without the pressures of daily routines, Working-from-home is the norm and introversion was acceptable. A return to 'reality' can feel awe-inspiring, with its unremitting choices, compulsions and human contact. Now slowly all need to be aware that we cannot just collapse back into how it was before COVID-19. Of course, isolation from office or institute has not been without its challenges, but it has helped many of us reassess the way we lived our pre-lockdown lives, shown us how compliant we are and possibly made us tamper with what really matters in our life to survive in this world. We might be happy to cut unfastened from the intense restrictions of lockdown, but we might not want to be who we were before. It has been a life-changing incident, so maybe our own personal, perfect way of being is somewhere in between.

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