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PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL ADAPTATION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN THE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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This research is aimed at framing theories regarding the study of psychological and sociocultural adaptation of international students to the host culture.

Introduction. Studies focused around international students are enormous and are conducted in different, but interrelated fields of science: psychology, communication, education, management, sociology and their subfields.

Studies addressing international students in these fields are concerned in advancing knowledge and understanding of theory, research and practice in cross-cultural adaptation for various purposes. These studies have their applications in the areas of higher education, health, social welfare and organizational and community development.

It must be noted that the rapid development of research in the field of cross-cultural contact is attributed to the increased movement of migration where migrants have to deal with people from different cultural backgrounds; to globalization of workforce, media and telecommunication means, which brought different cultures to almost each and every home in the planet. Global migration has increased the number of students travelling to other countries for higher education.

The focus of research regarding international students and cross-cultural contact in general developed gradually from addressing intercultural contact in terms of cultural shock and assuming a rather passive attitude of the cross-culture traveler who is confused and overwhelmed by the new environment and suffering from the outcomes of transition and requiring medical care and gradually moving in one direction to assimilate with host culture; to approaching the topic using the terminology of acculturation viewing the cross-cultural traveler as rather an active figure who is in interaction with the host environment and who is engaged in culture learning to develop the required behavioral skills to navigate through life in host society, using stress and coping techniques to control emotional stressors of the process of acculturation, and identifying one's self with both culture of origin and host culture.

Theoretical Frameworks and Empirical Investigations of Adaptation of International Students.

Studies of adaptation of international students in host culture are various. The adopted theoretical frameworks in these studies also vary excessively. Ward et. al. in their book 'The Psychology of Cultural Shock' (C. Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2005), introduced the Affective, Behavioral and Cognitive (ABC) Model as a comprehensive theory that synthesizes various frameworks of cross-cultural contact: stress, coping and adjustment; culture learning; social identification theories.

Alongside the body of research that corresponds to the ABC model, there is another mass of research specific to international students, which addresses: (1) Their problems while studying to ensure quality service and to develop programs of orientation and adaptation; (2) The predictors of academic success since students are aimed to get a degree including literature concerned with international classroom.

Methodological approaches of research concerned with international students distinguish between longitudinal studies concerned with pre-entry and post-entry variables, and studies of the re-entry process to homeland.

Conclusion. The ABC model of studying intercultural contact gives a comprehensive theoretical base to the study of the adaptation of international students to the culture of the host country. Each of the components of the ABC model gives an approach to studying sociocultural and psychological

adaptation of international students. The cognitive component of the ABC model, which corresponds to theories in culture learning, will be further used to address the adaptation of international students to the culture of the Russian Federation.