

Research Paper

## Culture Shock and Its Effects on Academic Resilience in the Indian Population

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### ABSTRACT

Culture shock refers to disorientation when encountering a new culture with different customs and values. Adapting to a new stressor may create additional challenges, like a new education system and communication styles. Due to this, the academic resilience of students, which is their ability to overcome academic stressors while maintaining a positive attitude, may get hampered. This research delves into the multifaceted relationship between culture shock and academic resilience, focusing on the experiences of 292 individuals who experienced culture shock before the age of 21. Statistical analysis was done to assess the variables' distributions and correlations. The findings revealed that culture shock has a minimal positive correlation with academic resilience. Understanding how culture shock influences academic resilience can contribute to making an inclusive and supportive educational environment for a diverse student population.

**Keywords:** *Culture Shock, Academic Resilience, Migration, Stress, Adaptation*

The term cultural shock was first used by K. Oberg in 1954 in his journal *Culture Shock*. It is a psychological condition experienced when individuals are abruptly shifted into a foreign culture, leading to frustration and anxiety due to the loss of familiar social cues (Oberg, 1954). He divided it into four distinct stages.

The honeymoon stage is when individuals have a fascination with the new culture; however, they interact with those who speak their language. In the hostile and aggressive stage, individuals experience frustration and difficulty adjusting. They criticise and stereotype the host culture. The adjustment stage involves learning the local language, adjusting to the environment and accepting difficulties as personal challenges. Finally, in the acceptance and integration stage, there is a complete acceptance of the new culture's customs and habits, resulting in finding comfort in the host culture.

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### *Theoretical backing*

#### **ABC Model**

The ABC Model of Attitudes, commonly called the tri-component model, is a framework that describes three components of attitudes (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). The affective component is how an individual feels about an attitude object, the behavioural component is how an individual acts or behaves towards an attitude object, and the cognitive component is the belief or knowledge the individual holds regarding the attitude object.

The affective component (emotional aspect) suggests that the process of moving from a place individuals are used to and where they feel at ease to a new place with a different culture, habits and values may trigger a cascade of emotions, which can include homesickness, anxiety, frustration and even depression. Individuals may start linking these negative emotions to their thought process (the cognitive component) and develop a negative perception associated with the place they moved to, as emotions can affect motivation and overall well-being. This can later be reflected in their behaviour (the behavioural component) in the new place and can also be channelled out in the academic sphere, such as not participating in class or having low attendance, which is hypothesised.

#### **Social Identity Theory**

Social identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) postulates that people define their own identities in relation to social groups and that such identification works towards protecting and boosting self-identity. As per our hypothesis, culture shock affects academic performance significantly. In culture shock, individuals find themselves in situations where they encounter a new social group, which may cause them to shift their social identity.

The social identity theory also highlights the concept of in-groups (groups individuals belong to) and out-groups (groups individuals do not belong to). When individuals experience cultural shock, they perceive themselves as a part of the out-group in the new culture, which may lead to a sense of exclusion which may. This feeling of being an outsider can affect an individual's self-esteem and self-efficacy; this can also be applied in their academic environment as it can affect their academic potential.

#### **Cultures and Organisations: Software of the Mind**

This book provides a conceptual framework for studying the relationship between culture shock and academic performance (Hofstede et al., 1991). Hofstede's cultural dimensions, such as individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance, provide insights into how students from different cultural backgrounds may experience challenges when adapting to new academic environments. Discrepancies in these dimensions between home and host cultures cannot lead to culture shock, encompassing emotional stress and behavioural challenges. This theoretical approach posits that culture shock negatively correlates with academic performance as it hinders an individual's ability to adapt to and engage effectively in their new educational context.

#### ***Rationale of Study***

This study stands to fill the research gap in culture shock, a highly unexplored variable. Even though some studies have been conducted concerning international students migrating to other countries, they have not been extensively explored in the Indian context. Furthermore, it has traditionally been studied along with other variables rather than exclusively. Through this research, we have aimed to fill these research gaps and provide an in-depth study of the two variables. The findings of our study aim to educate parents about the effects of culture shock

on their children's academic performance, making them sensitive to their challenges. They can also be used to formulate policies that are culture-fair and holistic.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Various previous research and review papers were explored better to understand the variables of culture shock and academic resilience.

#### ***Culture Shock in Online Learning***

A review paper of 2021 authored by Dewi Sri Kuning explained the psychological impact of online classes on students and teachers in Indonesia. Results found that culture shock in students is due to limited communication and interaction, higher screening times, and challenges to students with special needs. Culture shock occurred in teachers due to restricted teaching methods, lack of technical skills, less curriculum material coverage and long screen time. Other psychological influences found concerning online learning included frustration, fear, anxiety, stress and depression.

#### ***Cross-cultural Adjustment in International Relocation***

Another paper critically reviewed the literature on cross-cultural adjustments of students amidst international relocation, examining the models of culture shock through time. Authored by Frank Fitzpatrick in 2017, it understood the social constructionist approach to culture, emphasising that culture cannot be reduced to stereotyped categories like nationality or ethnicity. It believes that everyday life should be understood as a dynamic process rather than a static one defined by classifications. The findings argue with the notion of culture shock being about culture, instead focusing on its dynamics of context.

#### ***Approaches to Measuring Academic Resilience***

A 2017 review of research literature elaborated on the various effective methods of studying academic resilience by conducting a computerised literature search of Web of Science, PubMed, PsychINFO, ERIC and SportsDISCUS. While the original search identified 2893 articles, only those were finally included that assessed academic resilience either through a) an assessment of risk and positive adaptation or b) a measuring scale comprising protective factors. The study, published by Kate Elizabeth Tudor and Christopher Mark Spray, concluded that a reliable and valid scale was absent for measurement while suggesting recommendations like including risk, positive adaptation, and protective factors separately in the measure.

#### ***Predictors of Academic Resilience***

Authors Nimisa Beri and Deepak Kumar (2018) conducted a study to understand the relationship between academic resilience and success. Their study was a meta-analysis of 30 research papers that measured the effect of different factors on our academic resilience and determined how much it, in turn, affected academic success. They found that multiple factors, including motivation, confidence, GPA, and socio-economic status, determined academic resilience. Social support from family, peers and community was essential to academic success. Hence, the researchers found a strong relationship between academic resilience and success.

#### ***The Success of Academic Resilience Post-Culture Shock***

Authored by Sarah M. Ginsberg (2018), it was a qualitative research paper that explored the mechanisms that fostered academic development in African-American speech-language pathologists (AASPLs). The paper's results also helped understand the challenges faced by

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professionals in academic careers. Data was collected with the help of interviews from 11 AASLPs with varying degrees of experience in the field. The professionals faced challenges like microaggressions, isolation, and even culture shock to maintain their academic integrity. However, they also identified protective factors, such as personal mentoring, community support, and grit, in maintaining their academic resilience. Hence, culture shock was seen as a hindering factor in this context.

### *Culturally Supporting Academic Resilience*

A participatory study conducted by Susi Woolf and her colleagues (2019) at Charles Darwin University, Australia, identified culture shock as a major challenge most new students face. They introduced a course in the first year called Cultural Intelligence and Capability (CUC107). Sixty-four students who had completed this course were required to fill out a questionnaire on how it helped them. According to the survey, 65% of them found that the course helped their academics and self-awareness. Academic support services, such as library access, have helped these students improve their empathy, punctuality, and optimism. The study proves that the right kind of curricular assistance could, indeed, reduce the anxiety faced by students from new cultures and help them feel a sense of belonging- academically, culturally, and emotionally.

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

### *Operational Definitions*

#### **Culture shock**

The term 'culture shock' describes the disorientation, perplexity, and worry that people go through when they come into contact with a very dissimilar culture. This may occur when people relocate to an area or community with different cultural norms, values, and practices. Uncommon social indications, dialect barricades, and changing everyday customs can be very stressful and uncomfortable. In the measurement of culture shock, subjective evaluations and questionnaires are normally employed by researchers; this helps gauge how individuals react emotionally and psychologically to the new cultural context.

#### **Academic Resilience**

Academic resilience is the capacity of a person to adjust and prosper in the face of obstacles in an educational environment. It entails keeping a cheerful outlook, establishing realistic goals, and handling stress, including traits like tenacity, resolve, self-control, etc. Resilient students are skilled at creating attainable, inspiring goals that keep them motivated and engaged and use practical stress-reduction strategies to deal with classroom demands. With these qualities and techniques, they can thrive academically and overcome hardship, transforming possible setbacks into chances for development and education.

#### **Effect of Culture Shock on Academic Resilience**

Various factors under culture shock can affect academic resilience. Underdeveloped language proficiency due to language barriers can make it difficult for students to comprehend lectures and communicate effectively. The teaching styles that students are used to in their native country may be very different from those in their newly arrived cultural setting. Academic concentration may be difficult due to the adjustment stress from culture shock when people struggle to adjust to a novel setting, norms, customs, and expectations. Cultural shock can make people feel socially isolated as they may struggle to make friends.

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### ***Research Question***

According to previous research, a positive relationship exists between culture shock and other variables like academic success (Beri & Kumar, 2018). There also exists a negative relationship between academic motivation and culture shock (Yang, 2018). Culture shock was also seen as a hindering factor in academic performance (Ginsberg, 2018). Hence, the research question of our study is: What is the effect of culture shock on the academic resilience of school and college students due to inter-state and inter-country migration?

### ***Aim***

To study the effect of culture shock in the sphere of academic resilience as a result of inter-state or inter-country migration.

### ***Objectives***

1. To find out the relationship between culture shock and academic resilience of school and college students.
2. To find the effect of culture shock on the academic resilience of school and college students.

### ***Hypothesis***

- H1: There is a significant relationship between culture shock and the academic resilience of school and college-going students.
- H2: There is a significant effect on the academic resilience of school and college-going students due to culture shock.

### ***Research Design***

The correlational design employed combines a cross-sectional and causal study. Data was collected from various age groups, analysing their experiences with the onset of culture shock and studying its effects on their academic resilience. In this study, no other variables which may impact academic resilience were accounted for.

### ***Sample and Sampling Technique***

Our target population was participants who had experienced culture shock before turning 21 by migrating inter-state or inter-country. Our sample comprises 292 individuals (173 females, 117 males, and two who responded with 'other') who have experienced cultural shock, selected through quota sampling. Through the individuals acquired in our immediate surroundings, we also reached their social connections who had experienced culture shock in their early lives. This way, we could also gather a more significant number of responses through snowball sampling.

### ***Inclusion Criteria***

- Individuals who have experienced culture shock before 21 years of age.
- Individuals who have migrated inter-state or inter-country.
- Individuals enrolled in any educational programmes (school, undergraduate, etc.)

### ***Exclusion Criteria***

- Individuals previously diagnosed with any mental disorder that may hamper the findings.
- Individuals who have only migrated within the city.
- Individuals who were never enrolled in any educational programs previously.

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- Individuals who did not experience culture shock at any time in their educational years.

### **Variables**

Our study utilises only two variables—culture shock and academic resilience. No other variables were taken into consideration.

### **Tools**

The tools employed in this study are Questionnaires and Surveys. These are commonly used to assess the degree of culture shock and academic resilience, which can be used for quantitative statistical analysis. Our survey included the following four components.

### **Informed Consent**

A form stating the informed consent for this research. Informed consent will protect the rights of the participants and allow the research to be conducted ethically.

### **Demographic Questionnaire**

This can be added at the beginning of our data collection, which allows us to collect basic information about the participants, such as their age, gender, education level, etc., allowing us to categorise the different data groups.

### **Culture Shock Scale**

Some scales can measure the level of culture shock that a person goes through after a change in their environment. These tests allow us to quantify the intensity of culture shock experienced by participants.

**The Culture Shock Questionnaire (CSQ).** D.S. Mumford's (1991) Culture Shock Scale (CSQ) is a valuable tool for scholars exploring this association. The Culture Shock Questionnaire (CSQ) is a 12-item self-report questionnaire developed to assess people's levels of cultural shock. It has two subscales: core culture shock and interpersonal stress. The Core Culture Shock subscale measures the overall stress of adjusting to a new culture, whereas the Interpersonal Stress subscale measures difficulties with communication and social relationships (Mumford, 1991). Each item on the CSQ has a Likert-type scale, allowing respondents to rate their experience's severity (for example, "Do you feel strain from the effort to adapt to a new culture?"). Values are then added to provide a total culture shock score, with higher values indicating a greater level of culture shock experienced. The CSQ's quantitative design makes it ideal for studies on Culture Shock and Its Effects on Academic Resilience. It enables researchers to establish a baseline and track and compare groups.

### **Academic Resilience Scale**

Academic resilience plays a vital role in effective schooling, which can often be disrupted by changes primarily impacted negatively.

**The Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30).** The Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) emerges as a valuable tool for assessing students' abilities to handle academic hurdles. Cassidy (2016) developed the ARS-30, a 30-item self-report scale that examines the process-oriented features of academic resilience. Unlike assessments that focus on academic outcomes, the ARS-30 reveals the particular cognitive, emotional, and behavioural responses that students use when confronted with academic hardship. It has three fundamental

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dimensions: perseverance, negative effect and emotional response, and reflective and adaptive help-seeking. Each item on the ARS-30 uses a Likert-type scale, allowing students to score their encounters' frequency or severity. Scores are then generated for each subscale, and a total score is calculated to provide a full understanding of students' academic resilience.

### *Statistical Analysis*

The data collected was tabulated on Google Sheets and processed using Jamovi. With the help of a standardised online Shapiro-Wilk calculator, we found that our data was not normally distributed; hence, we used Jamovi to identify and remove eight outliers from our data to reach normality with 292 participants. We calculated the measures of central tendency and the variability for the data collected under each variable. Using Pearson's rank correlation method, we extracted the correlation coefficient between the two variables. We also used simple linear regression analysis to find the significance value of our hypothesis.

### *Limitations of the Study*

The limitations of our study include the fact that the sample chosen for this study was limited to a specific demographic group, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to a wider population. The use of self-report questionnaires and surveys, while extremely convenient and appropriate for the study, may introduce response biases. The exclusion of extraneous variables while conducting the study presents itself as a key limitation as well. Also, the role of gender in the variables was not explored.

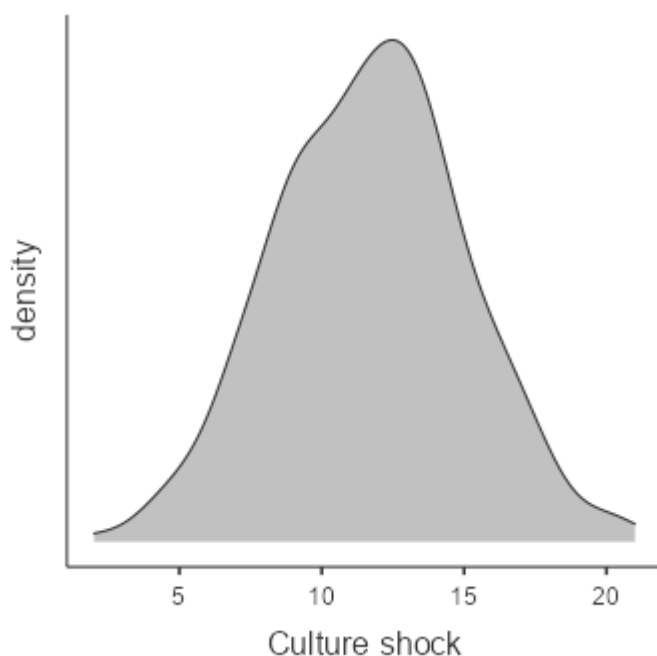
## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

*Table 1 Descriptive Data for Statistical Analysis*

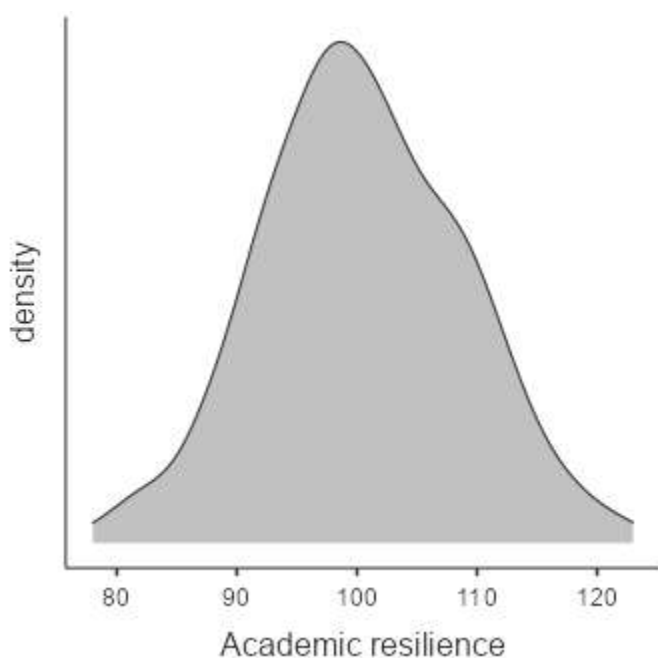
	Academic resilience	Culture shock
N	292	292
Mean	100	11.7
Median	100	12.0
Mode	97.0	13.0
Standard deviation	8.36	3.31
Skewness	0.065	0.011
Kurtosis	-0.169	-0.111
Shapiro-Wilk W	0.996	0.991
Shapiro-Wilk p	0.596	0.067

The current study aimed to investigate the relationship between culture shock and academic resilience among individuals who migrated inter-state or inter-country before age 21. However, this study's findings contradict the widely held belief that culture shock may adversely affect academic resilience. The results showed no statistically significant correlation between the participants' academic resilience and culture shock.

A very weak association between the variables was indicated by the correlation analysis using Pearson's parametric test, which produced an R-value of 0.132 and an R<sup>2</sup> of 0.017. With an F-value of 5.13 and a p-value of 0.024, the overall model test performed using Jamovi further confirmed this conclusion, indicating that although there may be a very little relationship, it is not strong enough to be considered statistically significant.



*Figure 1 Scores on the Culture Shock Questionnaire*



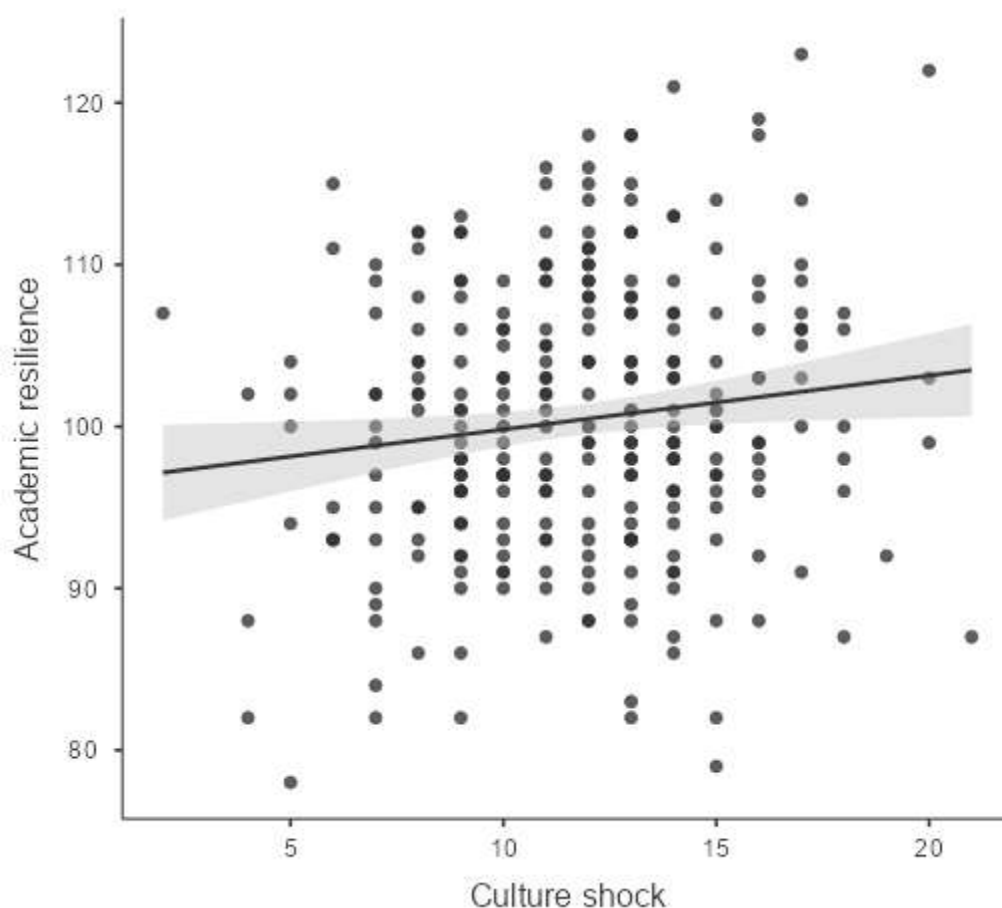
*Figure 2 Scores on the Academic Resilience Scale*

The descriptive statistics revealed that the academic resilience scores of participants had a mean of 100, a median of 100, and a mode of 97.0 with a standard deviation of 8.36. The scores showed low kurtosis (-0.169) and skewness (0.065) in their distribution. The Shapiro-Wilk test revealed that the data were normally distributed ( $W = 0.996$ ,  $p = 0.596$ ). Similarly, the culture shock scores displayed a standard deviation of 3.31, a mean of 11.7, a median of 12.0, and a mode of 13.0. The culture shock data also showed minor kurtosis (-0.111) and skewness (0.011). The Shapiro-Wilk test ( $W = 0.991$ ,  $p = 0.067$ ) confirmed the normal distribution of the data.



**Table 2 Correlation and Ranked scores**

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Overall Model Test			
			F	df1	df2	p
1	0.132	0.017	5.13	1	290	0.024



**Figure 3 Correlation between Academic Resilience and Culture Shock**

The purpose of this study was to look into the relationship between cultural shock and academic resilience in a sample of 292 people. With a Pearson's  $r$  value of 0.132 ( $p = 0.024$ ), the results showed a statistically significant positive association between academic resilience and culture shock, suggesting that higher levels of culture shock are linked to stronger academic resilience. This research raises the possibility that going through culture shock may help students adjust to and succeed in academic settings, even in the face of difficulties.

The reliability of this link is further supported by the degree of freedom ( $df = 290$ ) and the  $p$ -value ( $p = 0.024$ ), which imply that the observed relationship is not the result of chance. The results' stability is further enhanced by the sample size ( $N = 292$ ), which offers a suitable foundation for applying the findings to populations that are comparable to oneself. It's crucial to remember that the effect size is actually relatively small, as Pearson's  $r$  value shows. This suggests that although culture shock plays a part in academic resilience, it is probably just one of many variables that influence this multifaceted concept.

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Regression analysis showed a very poor correlation between academic resilience and culture shock, with an R-squared value of 0.0174. The results indicate that culture shock is responsible for a relatively small amount of the variance in academic resilience scores, even if it is statistically significant at a p-value of 0.024, which can be raised as a debatable threshold.

The 292-person sample size gives adequate statistical power, and using a parametric correlation (Pearson's) is appropriate for data that may not fit the assumptions of a non-parametric test. Larger and more diverse sample sizes in future research could give us a better understanding of how culture shock affects academic resilience. This might help us identify other factors that could influence this relationship.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The current study aimed to investigate culture shock and its effects on academic resilience experienced by individuals who have migrated inter-state or inter-country before 21 years of age. A Google form survey was conducted, and it included Questionnaires and Surveys, namely the demographic questionnaire, The Culture Shock Scale (CSQ) and The Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30). The data was collected from 292 participants, and analysis was conducted using the statistical software Jamovi. The results revealed that there was a statistically minimal positive relationship between the variables, suggesting that culture shock has a negligible impact on academic resilience.

#### *Conclusion*

Since our p-value ( $0.024 < 0.05$ ), we reject the alternative hypothesis. This means that no significant relationship exists between the two variables. A statistically negligible correlation can be found between the variables.

#### *Future Recommendations*

1. Building strong backup systems in schools, such as counselling, peer groups, culture exchange programs, and inclusive curricula, can ease challenges faced by international students. Glass (2019) noted in their study that inclusive curricula ease cross-cultural interaction.
2. Future research should examine how gender affects the factors of interest to find out if there are any notable variations or interactions. This could entail running distinct analyses for each gender or adding gender as a factor in the statistical models. Blaze (2019) has incorporated gender as a variable in their study and has found notable variations in how men and women perceive social support.
3. Longitudinal research would be beneficial in figuring out the temporal dynamics and causality of the occurrences being examined, explaining how the variables and their interactions change over time. Demes and Geeraert (2015) studied the long-term effects and levels of stress from culture shock in individuals, allowing them to examine the effects of acculturation on specific individuals.
4. A mixed-methods approach incorporating quantitative and qualitative data could benefit future research, providing a more comprehensive perspective. A study (Fanari et al., 2021) to understand self-disclosure on reverse culture shock used quantitative data to find the relationship between both variables, while qualitative data was used to analyse reasons for self-disclosure.

### *Ethical Consideration*

- The participants were informed about all the details of the study prior to taking their informed consent. There was no coercion.
- Confidentiality was maintained. The results were disclosed to those who wished and were destroyed after analysis.
- The participants faced no mental or physical harm. No interventions were used, so there was no need for debriefing them.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Correlation matrix**

		<b>Culture shock</b>	<b>Academic resilience</b>
Culture shock	Pearson's r	—	0.132*
	df	—	290
	p-value	—	0.024
	N	—	292
Academic resilience	Pearson's r	0.132*	—
	df	290	—
	p-value	0.024	—
	N	292	—

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$