

# Differences between American and International Students in the United States

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**Abstract:** Due to the high standards of education in the United States it is one of the top priorities of students' from all parts of the world. One of the primary differences between the American students and the international students lies in their educational classroom structures. American students are familiar with the English language and it makes it easier for them to read, write and understand what is being taught to them. The pressure of studies itself is a lot for the students to handle and when these challenges are added to their struggle, it either makes them or breaks them by the end of the semester.



## Introduction

Over the past there has been a huge inflow of international students in the United States for the purpose of pursuing further studies. United States offers one of the world's best educational institutes and learning environments for its fellow American citizens as well as foreigners. Due to the high standards of education in the United States it is one of the top priorities of students' from all parts of the world. United States is a very developed and advanced country as compared to most of the countries around the world and this is the reason why there is a huge inflow of international students in the United States.

## Literature Review

Affording education in the United States is not a very cheap task and it requires a lot of money. Because the quality of education is so high in the United States so are the tuition fee and

living expenses. As a result the international students are always under pressure of doing well in studies so that they do not disappoint their parents who are spending a lot on them. The American students on the other hand can apply for loans because their country provides such privileges and do not have to handle much external pressure like international students. “Some companies are reluctant to issue credit cards to international students, as they do not have an established credit history in the United States.” (Student, 2015)

In future there is a high possibility that there would be an increase in the numbers of international teaching assistants on several universities across the country. The undergraduate students are taught by the graduate students at every well ranked university in the United States. For the reason that these international teaching assistants come to the United States and experience changes in their culture, living and learning environments, they might suffer with adjusting themselves with the new environment in the start. In the beginning they may experience a culture shock and several other challenges that they may have to deal with but with the passage of time people get used to it and adapt to the changes in their environments.

One of the primary differences between the American students and the international students lies in their educational classroom structures. It is quite common to see in most countries that teachers provide their students with materials to memorize and that is how they pass their tests and exams. Well things actually do not work in this way in the United States and

people who come from such a background may face a hard time in learning the concepts being taught to them.

“The differences in the American students’ and international students’ backgrounds and perceptions of university life revealed in the study indicate a need for the inclusion of cultural content in the orientation of ITAs.” (Sue S. Minchew, 2003)

Schooling and learning in the United States is all about grasping concepts and clearing any misconceptions and this is why these students tend to learn and perform better than those students who are taught to just memorize what they are taught. The key factor behind the difference in the class room structures is the fact that the American institutions teach in a way where the students learn new concepts and use their brain in order to develop new ideas. They do not teach their students to just memorize what they are taught.

“One needed area of orientation for ITAs involves the interpersonal dimension of classroom teaching, which includes not only culture-specific knowledge and communication skills, but adaptability and self-knowledge as well (Jandt, 1995).”

On the other hand language barrier is also another very vital difference between the American and the international students. American students are familiar with the English language and it makes it easier for them to read, write and understand what is being taught to

them. They can also clear their misconceptions or discuss their problems well enough with their teachers because both parties are aware of using English proficiently. On the other hand as far as the communication of international students is considered, it is quite evident that international students face problems communicating with their teachers because they are unable to use English well enough to express themselves. Due to the communication gap the international students may not be able to clear their doubts or misconceptions and at the end of the day it can result in decreased performance and grades of the students.

Some students come from big cities whereas others come from small towns or cities. For instance when a student living in a small town goes to New York to pursue further studies the environment may be very different for them to settle in. students may expect similar educational learning mechanisms that they were accustomed to back home and this can really demotivate them in class.

There is no doubt that international students have to work harder than the American students because of the additional problems that they carry with them. In order to compete with the American students in academics the international students may have to give more time and efforts towards solving issues in the new environment. The pressure of studies itself is a lot for the students to handle and when these challenges are added to their struggle, it either makes them or breaks them by the end of the semester.

An area where the international students have greatly suffered in recent years is finding part time employment in order to meet the high expenses of their education and living. After the slump of 2008, the international students have faced a lot of problems finding employment. Even though the government has set a minimum wage level for work but many businesses in the United States do not follow this rule and prefer foreign students for employment over American students for the reason that they can settle on lower wages than set by the government. The Americans do not work at these rates because they are aware of the rules and regulations and the businesses feel that the locals have a higher chance of taking them to court. Because international students are here for a smaller period of time they are quite certain that they will work on a lower wage and will not make any issue about it whatsoever.

In my opinion I feel that the basic difference in the educational structure of the American students and the international students of grabbing concepts or memorizing what they are taught plays a huge role in developing and nurturing the whole personality of a child. I feel that even animals such as monkeys could be taught to do tricks but they cannot be taught to develop new ideas. The educational system of the United States develops and nurtures a person in a way so as to polish their talents and abilities and teaches them how to apply these in practical life.

Conclusion

In conclusion United States offers one of the world's best educational institutes and learning environments for the students which is why there is a huge inflow of international students from different parts of the world. One of the primary differences between the American students and the international students lies in their educational classroom structures. Some students require more time to adjust and get familiar with the difference in the classroom structures as compared to others and it all depends on the background the student comes from. However there is no doubt that international students have to put in more efforts than American students to meet their academic obligations.

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