Introduction

This case study highlights communication anxiety faced by a girl who moved from a traditional household to a liberal surrounding. It further shows that when people from different cultural backgrounds communicate they can experience discomfort or apprehension. This can lead to communication anxiety or apprehension which is the level of anxiety triggered by the real or anticipated communication. The purpose of this case study is to inform the audience regarding the consequences of communication anxiety.

Background

This case that we are analysing revolves around communication anxiety and how it may also affect our decision making process, undermine our social skills and we may end up giving up opportunities in life due to this fear. It discusses the story of a girl who moved from Islamabad to Lahore to attend a liberal arts college and the difficulties she faced during communication because of her anxiety. According to calm clinic 56% of the people can’t get their message across due to communication anxiety. They overthink each and every word they’re saying to make sure they say the right thing. This puts a lot of pressure on them and as a result they end up stuttering. The fear of judgment from the audience and self-image is what fuels this anxiety. This can be seen in case study when Arfa tries to tell her peers about quinceañera and as a result of her anxiety she is unable to get her message across. The World Health Organization (1948) also defines health as, “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease” (Rapaport, Clary, Fayyad, Endicot. 2005). By that definition, and according to Folk (2015), approximately 37% of the human population is mentally unhealthy since they don’t share what they’re feeling. This often leads to them avoiding social situations and missing out on important life experiences. This can also be seen in the case study when Arfa started college she felt extremely out of place since she couldn’t relate to any of the things other students were experiencing rather than talking to them about how she was feeling she decided to distance her self from the situation so she doesn’t have to deal with it.

Alternatives

1. To overcome communication anxiety we must get to the root of the problem. Therefore, one can easily tackle his/her hesitation by pinpointing the weaknesses in one’s communication. Therefore, it is better to create an anxiety hierarchy to help you better understand the problem. For example, how to say hi to someone, talk to them in neutral situations and tackling them in negative situations. After that you can improve communication by improving in the points you have constructed in the hierarchy.
2. Another alternative would be to practice casual and distressing situation conversations by speaking in front of the mirror. This way one can not only improve his/her public speaking but also refine all the non-verbal cues such as gestures, facial expressions, postures etc. that one emits while being in a conversation.
3. Another alternative way is by using relaxing techniques such as deep breathing, visual imaginations and self-guiding imagery that will help one gain confidence as well as psychological stability and bring one’s heart and brain to a state of confidence and relaxation. This way one can feel at ease while conferencing with others.
4. The last alternative is to polish one’s skills by rehearsing practice conversations with a friend who’s from a different culture to perfect one’s communication skills.

Proposed solution

The first alternative in not that beneficial as no matter how many time you simulate a situation, you are not really prepared for it until you face it in real time.

Although mirror practicing is an efficient but talking to a number of people from different cultural background is quite different than to oneself in isolation. You must understand your audience, know their state of mind, find the best method to convey your message and keep them interested in conversation. All these conditions can never be met while talking in front of a mirror.

In our opinion, conversing with a friend from different culture is the most beneficial method as it will not only enhance our ability to talk with others but our friend will also help us in strengthening our weaknesses and also inform us about the blunders that we make while talking to people of different culture. This will also help us in keeping our cultural knowledge up-to-date. Also, we will be able to tackle the negative thoughts that come into our mind by consulting with our friend. Research conducted in 2016 by Harvard Medical School’s psychology department shows states that who rehearse the art of communication with other people have a 49% more chance of development than the people who rehearse it in solitude. Also, it is a mixture of all the other alternatives.

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Strategics that can be applied for our proposed solution to deal with communication anxiety involves:

1.Arranging trips to areas where individuals can experience the traditions and customs of people of different culture. By understanding their traditions and customs, one can easily communicate with people from different region.

2. Communication anxiety can be resolved by arranging seminars or events where people from all over the country are involved and sessions are being held to familiarize themselves with others.

3. There are several things you can do to manage the physiological effects of anxiety. Before beginning your speech, pause for a moment, look at the audience and smile. When someone smiles back, it will help alleviate your fears. You should also learn how to pause and breathe in the course of your speech. Walking around the room during the presentation is another great way of channeling your energies. It would also be advisable to have some vocal warm ups before speaking. This will get your voice ready to speak. In addition, you could carry out some exercises which can help relax your shoulder and neck muscles.