

Cultural Differences

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Cultural differences affect communication, interaction and actions among different people. In an environment where little cultural diversity exists, it is likely that cultural differences will have little or no impact on human relations. This paper also discusses the issue of cultural differences in the workplace. Cultural diversity can lead to conflict as well as collaboration within the workplace, depending on whether or not people are willing to embrace people that are culturally different. This paper examines the impact of cultural diversity in the classroom, where teachers are being asked to become more culturally literate so that they can better address the needs of all their students, rather than the few who fall into one or two categories. This paper also explores the issue of students with varying cultural backgrounds that have different perceptions of learning and communicating and the manner in which their needs are met. To understand how cultural differences impact human relations, one must also understand what culture is.

### **Bicultural Conflict**

It is difficult and obviously more challenging to understand cultural differences when two or more, not just one, are present. Research from Dubois' book, *The Souls of Black Folk*, effectively articulates the conflict associated with bicultural identifies, as he says, "his two-ness- an American, a negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unrecognized strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body...longing to...merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost" (nytimes.com, 1984). Thus you might analyses how bicultural conflicts cause people to try and negotiate this duality of consciousness. As a result, their own identity development and how others in society treat this individual become really complex.

Because bicultural conflicts are so complex, it is important to show that research assert that bicultural people do not merely have the luxury to choose which profession is most suitable or what political views seem most appropriate; rather the development of bicultural identity requires a person to make sense of two different sets of cultural values, attitudes and expectations that they have internalized, that are both vying for the same slot for cultural identity within the person's overall identity (thesis.haverford.edu, p 35, 2010).

### **Cultural Identity**

Like the first term, this identify formation is also a highly complex, continual process. As you assess it in terms of understanding cultural differences, you might notice how one's self-identity is intertwined with ethnic identity because people must be cognizant how own ethnic and cultural practices, attitudes, mores, values, customs, beliefs, preferences, and behaviors impact that sense of self.

Research also shows that ethnic self-identity is the integration of ethnicity or race into one's self-concept or self-image. It is the full recognition of one's ethnicity, and the subsequent self-identity that flows from the values, ways, and styles of that ethnic background(s), instead of from the self-concept based on the opinion and prejudices of the larger society towards that ethnic group. Ethnic identity is an identity that develops from within, instead of an image that is imposed by society stereotypes (edweb.sdsu.edu, p 27, 2010).

Cultural differences mean that many people in a society are still not used to the norms of their new country or society. People will different cultures are differently motivated and therefore, it is important to know about the person's culture and to try to find out as much as you can about a particular culture's position toward things such as the amount of physical space

between people who are talking with each other, the amount of eye contact that is appropriate, the significance of voice inflections when asking questions. This will all help choose the right way to motivate people from different cultures; if you know how they respond to different situations and how they interpret them, then you can effectively motivate them. Also, in motivating different people you should pay special attention to the role that gender can play in the cultural dynamics.

In some cultures, for example, it may be inappropriate for a male to be alone in a room with a woman. Knowing such small details, means that you will be a more effective manager and will be a better motivator to your employees. When you motivate people, remember to always stay away from generalities and stereotypes. Just as there are differences between people of the same country, state, and even neighborhood, there are equally significant differences between the people of other countries and religions.

You should always remember that, no matter what a person's culture is, everyone appreciates being treated with respect, and appreciate feeling that their opinion is important and matters to you. People of different cultures also appreciate an opportunity to express themselves. They will also appreciate whatever you can do to reassure them that they will at least be treated fairly.

The United States Army has continually failed to understand the importance of this cultural awareness while conducting military operations both at home and abroad. These failures have hampered several military operations and even affected foreign policy forcing governmental leaders into tough decisions that have affected our standing in the world order. Currently the lack of understanding of certain aspects of Arab and Muslim culture have forced

government leaders to change policies in the current execution of operations in support of the global war on terror. A study of several operations can assist in the understanding of these failures and prevent future shortcomings.

Cultures reflect the human feature of a person's environment; it consists of attitude, morals, customs, and habits learned from others. These culture basics throw direct and circuitous communication to consumers concerning the selection of goods and services. That bring the cause that marketers have to recognize the culture, particularly in an international environment (hostingprod, p9, 2010). Language is a key part of culture because the majority of a society's culture finds its method into the spoken language. Thus, in a lot of ways language embody the culture of the society. Knowing the words of a society can turn out to be the key to considerate its culture.

It is very important to understand backgrounds and cultures and to try to close any cultural gaps. Multiple cultures must coexist, thus cultural conflicts must be resolved. Cross-cultural differences are relative to ethnic, national and religious differences. The selected multicultural concepts explained how vital it is to understand cultural differences. There are the keys bringing the needed changes to resolve the differences that keep us from celebrating one another's cultural and traditional differences. We must continue to provide the resources and opportunities to grow into the environments needed by enabling the bridges that connect us to continue to be built.

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