

# **Diversity and the Need for Multi - Cultural Education**

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**I. Introduction:**

- a. Summary of culture and its different practices
- b. The cause of lack of cross cultural understanding
- c. societal problems of lack of cross cultural understanding:

**II. Body 1**

- a. Personal Encounters or Experience With the lack of Cross Cultural Understandings
- b. Overcoming of this Cultural Divide

**III. Body 2**

- a. how lack of cross cultural understanding causes even a bigger problem in society
  - A. White privileges
  - B. Sterotypes, Discrimination and Racism Towards African Americans
  - C. Racism Towards Latinos and hispanics
  - D. Racism Towards Asian Americans

**IV. Body 3**

- a. Multicultural Education
- b. Why Support Multicultural Education?

**V. Body 4**

- a. Promote Diversity In Classroom
- b. Promote Multicultural Education and Diversity In Workplace

**VI. Conclusion**

## **Summary of culture and its different practices**

There are many different cultures all over the world. Culture is the essence and the heart and soul of every society, group and organizations. According to CliffsNotes, “culture consists of the beliefs, behaviors, objects, and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society”(CliffNotes). It is a way for people to define themselves, adapt to society's shared value, contribute to their society and overall find their identity in the society. With culture, there also comes different practices of norms, values, taboos, beliefs and socializations. norms are the standards people live by. They are expected to follow guidelines of behaviors. Values are

The principles that help you decide what is wrong and what's right in the society. Taboos are a set of behaviors or activities that are not accepted or even forbidden in certain societies. Beliefs is an attitude of accepting something as true or it exists. Socialization is the social process through which people develop their personalities and individual selves and learn about their society and culture. According to Openstax *"Prelude to Socialization"*, "Socialization is the process through which people are taught to be proficient members of a society. It describes the ways that people come to understand societal norms and expectations, to accept society's beliefs, and to be aware of societal values"(Openstax). in other words, socialization is the way people learn the norms and beliefs of our society.

## **The Cause for Lack of Cross Cultural Understandings:**

Being that there are different cultures all over the world, there's going to be a lack of cultural understanding from one culture to another. Misinterpretation is one reason why there may be an issue in understanding cross cultures. Miscommunications between two members of

different cultures creates misunderstandings which ultimately leads to misinterpretations. Another reason for the lack of cross cultural understandings is ethnocentrism. The term “ethnocentrism” can be defined as judging or evaluating other cultures based on one's standard and own culture customs. This concept can lead to cultural conflicts. According to Dini Amanda's “*Cultural Conflict*”, “ In cross-cultural interaction, speakers sometimes assume that what they believe is right, because they have grown up thinking their way is the best. This ethnocentric assumption can result in negative judgments about other cultures”(Amanda,2015). Which furthermore makes it difficult for cultures to mutually understand each other's cultures. Cultural differences also play a major role in the lack of cross cultural understandings. There may be cases where one culture goes against the beliefs and values of their culture. Hence, they disagree with that culture making it hard to adapt. According to Businessstopias “*Cultural Barriers to Communication*”, cultural diversity is also a reason why it's difficult for a certain culture to adapt to another cultures social interactions. They state, “Cultural diversity makes communication difficult as the mindset of people of different cultures are different, the language, signs and symbols are also different”(Businessstopia,2018). So this indicates the different cultures have different meanings of words, ideas, behaviors and gestures. Furthermore, creating barriers in communication within two different cultures. So there are some examples of why there exists the problem of lack of cross cultural understanding.

### **Overall or General Societal Problems of Lack of Cross Cultural Understanding**

Lack of cross cultural understanding can lead to many problems in the society and in general. It can lead to lack of trust between racial groups and different cultures. Not understanding their perspectives and values of the world from different cultures can also lead to

ignorance. In which, ignorance triggers the idea of prejudice towards other cultures. A culture makes biased and unfavorable judgments and evaluation of other cultures. The lack of cross cultural understanding can also make some people uncomfortable and less desirable for embracing their cultural backgrounds. So the problems of lack of cross cultural understanding stirs up societal problems as well as problems with one's identity and relations with their culture.

### **Personal Encounters or Experience With the lack of Cross Cultural Understandings**

It was a rough time moving to America for the first time. No knowledge of the English language and the American culture and its norms and values made it tough personally. It didn't help that the American culture was totally different from the Tibetan culture. They did have a few shares of similarities in norms and values but, mostly everything was different. One of the main differences between the two cultures were its greetings. In Tibet, the greetings are more formal as there are certain gestures that have to be done. Such as placing two hands together and bowing down a little bit and saying "Tashi Delek". However in America, people greet each other more casually. They usually just say "Hey, Wassup" and just greet by giving a handshake or sometimes a hug. When seeing people in America greet for the first time made me think of the American people as a bit rude and too casual with others. Same thought came when witnessing Americans address each other casually by their names. In Tibet, people address everyone by their seniority. For instance, when someone is older, they should be addressed as "Acha", big sister, or "Chocho", big brother. When someone is a senior or an elder, they are addressed as "Popo", grandpa, "Appa", father or "Momo", grandma, "Amma", mother. They are all addressed formally regardless if they are a part of the family or not. Tibetan culture is very strict and formal when it comes to greetings and addressing other people. So this created the thought that

Americans were not respectful and rude. They don't formally greet their elders nor do they address their elders in formal ways.

### **Overcoming of this Cultural Divide**

Despite having questionable and unfavorable thoughts about the American culture, there was no other option but to try to adapt to the American culture. Some ways that helped with adapting to the American culture was by learning from others, eliminating assumptions and just experiencing the American culture. When it came to learning from others, people taught and exposed the history of American culture. As well as why some American norms and cultures exist. Due to that, my knowledge and understanding of the American culture expanded little by little. Eliminating assumptions about the culture played a major role in overcoming this cultural divide. The assumptions that Americans were disrespectful and a bit rude had to perish. Less assumptions and treating everyone the same really helped. Not only did it help me become more open minded but it also helped with becoming more aware and understanding of the American culture. Lastly, experiencing the American culture strongly helped with overcoming the cultural divide. Going to parades, celebrating American holidays like christmas, halloween and 4th of July, trying out American foods, listening to American music, using American slangs all contributed to the understanding and adaptation of the American culture personally.

### **White Privilege**

The lack of understanding another culture or racial groups leads to one group feeling more superior than other groups. In the case of America, the majority group that is more superior than the other racial groups are the whites. This point is proven by people in the racial group of

Whites having more privileges than other racial groups. According to Ashley Needham, an anti-racist White person, she emphasizes the idea that it is easier to be White in America than any other racial groups. She mentions several examples of the privileges White Americans have. White people don't have to worry about getting shot while handing police officers their license. In job interviews, they know that their intelligence nor their integrity is questioned because of the color of their skin (Needham, 2016). It is also said that these privileges are not earned but rather given to them upon birth. So based on that, it is easier to be White in America than any other racial groups.

### **Stereotypes, Discrimination and Racism Towards African Americans**

Unlike Whites, Black or African Americans face the most difficulties living in the United States. Not only do they have to deal with stereotypes about their race but, they also have to go through experiencing discrimination, injustice and racism. This is due to the lack of cross-cultural understanding. Ignoring the idea that everyone is equal and continuing to support the idea that Whites are more superior causes problems for Blacks and other minority groups. When it comes to stereotypes towards African Americans, it's usually negative stereotypes. Black men are stereotyped as threatening, hostile, aggressive and are associated with guns (Hester, Gray, & Richeson, 2018). An instance of someone getting killed due to these stereotypes was Eric Garner. At the time he was being put under arrest, police officers saw him as threatening and feared his "Black rage" as he was 6'3 and 350lb (Coleman jr, 2019). Due to his presence of being tall, dark and threatening, the police officers subdued him into a chokehold that resulted in his death. Along with negative stereotypes against Black people, they also face the oppression of systemic racism. These systemic racism are the reason why there is a movement called "Black

Lives Matter”. For so long African Americans have been going through the hardships of police brutality, oppression and systemic racism. These actions have led to African Americans getting wrongfully killed. Some names of those who were wrongfully convicted and murdered by officers are Eric Garner, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Ezell Ford and many more (CodeSwitch, 2020). When looking at each person's final moments before being killed by police officers, none of them were committing any crimes or doing anything wrong. But because of their skin color and misjudgment and the idea of systemic racism, police officers killed them. So due to these horrific actions, people have created the movement of “Black Lives Matter”. This movement's goal is to raise awareness on violence inflicted on black communities, protest against those violence and police brutality and bring justice and racial equality for Black people (Schumer, 2020).

### **Racism Towards Latinos and hispanics**

The lack of cross cultural understandings also creates racism towards Hispanics and Latinos. Watching the news and reading reports, there have been multiple incidents of hate crimes against Latinos. Noting that some of them are immigrants, Latinos go through racial epithets, death threats, assaults, robberies, and even murder. The worst part about these situations is that Latinos are fearful of reporting these hate crimes to law enforcement. Some are fearful of the perceived climate of anti-immigrant animosity encouraged by president Trump, and those who are undocumented are fearful of being deported (Mendoza, 2018). In situations where they may get deported, they are first sent to ICE or the immigration detention center. This center is where they hold immigrants while awaiting a determination of their immigration status or potential deportation. However the condition in the detention center is very inhumane and rough.



Adults and childrens are cramped in there, no access to sanitized water, subjected to cold temperatures and overall poor conditions (Joung, 2019). It is also mentioned there have been multiple deaths regarding childrens, some are very sick and others are hospitalized. So these issues of ICE and its detention center and Latinos getting deported is because of the inequality and racism towards Latinos in America. Latinos have come to America for a better life but yet they are getting mistreated. They work hard like any other people and deserve equality and they deserve to be here.

### **Racism Towards Asian Americans**

Ever since Covid-19 arrived, it is not only to my observation but it is very clear that hate crimes and racist remarks against Asians have skyrocketed. Instead of understanding the whole situation with the virus, people see that it started in China and now assume every Asians carry the virus. With this ignorance and lack of cross cultural understandings towards asians, it is only bringing more hardships and backlash towards Asians living in the world. There have been reports of over 100 hate crimes per day against Asian Americans. As well as reports of racial slurs, physical violence, workplace termination, spat on, extreme distancing, etc (Croucher, Nguyen, Rahmani, 2020). Media and government officials have also stigmatized and blamed “Asians” for the spread of Covid-19, in which resulted in increased hatred towards Asians. President Trump has addressed the coronavirus as the “Chinese virus” on many occasions. Even though public health experts and the World Health Organization (WHO) have told him not to address it as “Chinese virus”, because it is inaccurate, inappropriate and dangerous for Asian Americans. President Trump has continued to refer to the virus as “Chinese Virus” (Clausen, 2020). This ultimately led to increased prejudice and hate towards Asians. Covid-19 has also

shut down many Asian businesses. With many beliefs that these Asian restaurants have the virus or carry the virus, people are scared to eat there. Some go out their way to vandalize asian businesses. With the blame on Asians for bringing the virus, people want to get back at them by destroying their businesses (Walker,2020).

### **Multicultural Education**

In a country that's becoming more and more multicultural, the United States has to continue implementing multicultural education in every school. It is stated on the *Digest of Education:2018*, “50.7 million students attended public elementary and secondary schools in 2018, bringing a variety of backgrounds, languages, perspectives, and cultures to the classroom. Since culture and education have an impact on each other, it is important for people of all cultures to value education and for the education system to value all cultures” (NCES). So it's important to implement a multicultural education due to the fact that it helps all students from different cultures to value education. When it comes to defining multicultural education, it is best described as, “what schools implement to establish equitable educational opportunities for all their students. It is also an ongoing process of helping students succeed in their academic and personal lives.” (AUSOE,2020). Ultimately, multicultural education values the cultures of different students and prepares them to thrive in a diverse world.

### **Why support Multicultural Education?**

Multicultural education offers a lot of benefits for the students. Not only does it offer equal learning opportunities for students of all races and cultural backgrounds. It also encourages and promotes diversity. According to Kristine Tuckers “*Pros & Cons of Multicultural*

*Education*”, “It encourages diversity by promoting respect and appreciation for cultural differences, and helps students recognize and combat social injustices, such as bias or prejudice”(Tucker). It removes any stereotypes and encourages equality to all students. It is also stated, “With multicultural education, students develop strong identities based on their interests, abilities, family values and cultural background -- not the color of their skin”(Tucker). So this creates more freedom to students in finding their identity. They don't have to make choices based on their race or color of the skin but rather, their interests and likings. Students are also able to gain a better understanding of culture and society, which prepares them for the real world that is very diverse. With multicultural education, students also become more knowledgeable and inclusive. For instance, when reading textbooks, they get to get a wide cover of the history of different cultures and its historical backgrounds instead of just the white culture. So all in all, multicultural education offers a lot of benefits to students. Hence, it is right that classrooms and schools implement this education in their schools.

### **Promote Diversity In Classroom**

Among schools, it is important to promote, teach and encourage diversity in the classrooms. According to Drexel University School of Educations “The Importance of Cultural Diversity In Classroom”, “Teaching diversity exposes students to various cultural and social groups, preparing students to become better citizens in their communities”(Drexel). A way to promote diversity in a classroom is by implementing a culturally responsive education. It would inform students about different races and ethnicities and would help them become more respectful of the different cultures and its people. With this,students become more empathetic towards those who face prejudice, students gain a better understanding of other backgrounds and

cultures and students become more open minded. All in all, it's very important to teach diversity and multiculturalism in schools. Not only does it bring multicultural awareness to students, it also encourages acceptance and helps prepare students to thrive within the diverse world. This would also result in the reduction of discrimination and racism in the world.

### **Promote Multicultural Education and Diversity In Workplace**

Businesses and companies can benefit from multicultural programs or educations being taught within the workplace. As stated on Ruth Mayhews “*How to Implement Multicultural Programs in the Workplace*”, “workplace could benefit from a multicultural program that exposes employees to both differences and similarities among coworkers and colleagues”(Mayhew). Not only does it benefit the employees at workplaces, it can also benefit employers that embrace the need for diversity and multicultural education in the workplace. According to Sherrie Scott’s “*Cultural Diversity Training & Education in the Workplace*”, “Employers that invest in cultural diversity training can benefit from improved employee relations as well as an enhanced ability to interact and manage employees from several perspectives” (Scott). In other words, multicultural programs allow employers to be more open towards their employees' cultural backgrounds. As well as making it easier for them to understand and acknowledge their employees' perspectives of their job and the outside world. A to promote diversity and multicultural education are teaching business ethics to employees. Business ethics focuses on the matter of moral values and influences people to treat one another differently based on their culture. It is stated “diversity training can help employers and employees identify the values that are important in supporting cultural differences. In addition, education initiatives that focus on how different cultures demonstrate their principles and beliefs

will help workers understand each other's points of view better" (Scott). Companies can also try to find common grounds in the environment that is rich with different opinions and perspectives. In other words, create a multicultural workplace. This way employees and employers can succeed and operate optimally with the efforts of supporting diversity in the workplace. In which, "Diversity education encourages thoughtfulness and consideration between co-workers of different nationalities and backgrounds" (Scott). So the promotion of diversity and multicultural education in the workplace is beneficial to anyone associated with the workplace. People in there get to be more open and understanding of different opinions and perspectives.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, society truly does lack understanding of cross-cultural Perspectives and practices. Not only is there a lack of cross cultural understanding, but there are issues of racism, discrimination, stereotypes and prejudice from one culture to another. It is because of different cultural practices, perspectives and beliefs. Main importantly, it is the effect of not having proper teaching of diversity and multicultural education in classrooms, workplace and society as a whole. Without any of these programs and education, people aren't exposed to different perspectives and opinions from other people from different cultures. This leads to people not being open to these different perspectives and not giving the chance to understand these different perspectives of the world. Hence, it is important and a must to implement multicultural education in schools and workplaces. With the implementation of multicultural education in schools, students are all given equal opportunities for education regardless of their skin color. They also gain more freedom in finding true identity as they don't have to make choices by their race or backgrounds but rather, their interests and likings. They also get to be taught different cultures'

histories. Which gives them the opportunity to be more empathetic towards other cultures and gain a better understanding of other backgrounds and cultures as they become more open minded. Same can be said with workplaces, the implementation of multicultural education can benefit people in that environment. People in the workplace get more exposed to different perspectives and opinions. This allows them to understand and acknowledge those different perspectives. Ultimately this leads to a much more diversity in the workplace.

### Annotated Bibliographies

Clausen-Somvichian, Austa. “*Trump's use of the term 'Chinese Virus' for coronavirus hurts Asian Americans, says expert*”. The Hill.

<https://thehill.com/changing-america/respect/diversity-inclusion/489464-trumps-use-of-the-term-chinese-virus-for>

Austa Clausen examines the effect coronavirus had on the whole world. Clausen provides examples such as deaths, sickness, business shutdowns, stock market crashes and increase in unemployment. Clausen talks about how President Donald Trump has harmed the Asian Americans by calling the virus, “Chinese virus”. Even though he has been criticized and informed not to address it as “Chinese virus”, he still does it and puts harm on the lives of Asian Americans.

Clausen provides strong evidence regarding her claim that president Trump's use of “Chinese virus” for the coronavirus has increased racism towards Asians. She uses sources from an Chinese American women to demonstrate the increase in xenophobia and racism towards Asian Americans.

Croucher M. Stephen, Thao Nguyen, Diyako Rahmani. (June 12, 2020).“*Prejudice Toward Asian Americans in the Covid-19 Pandemic: The Effects of Social Media Use in the United States*”. Frontiers.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fcomm.2020.00039/full>

The authors focuses on the increased incidents of racism, vioence and discrimination agaisnt Asians. In which, those were caused by government officials blaming Asians for the

spread of the virus. But mainly, it is caused by the hatred towards Asian Americans via social media.

The authors provide well written information on how social media are the evident reason for which Asian Americans are getting harassed. The authors explore the links between prejudice/hatred towards Asians and social media.

CodeSwitch. (June 5, 2020). “*A Decade of Watching Black People Die*”. Kpbs.

<https://www.kpbs.org/news/2020/jun/05/decade-watching-black-people-die/>

The author covers the tragic events of Black or African Americans wrongfully getting killed by police officers. The article goes over how African Americans plead for their lives but are still getting shot and killed. It emphasizes on how systemic racism and police brutality are destroying the Black communities.

This article contains well-researched data in regards to police brutality and wrongful murders of black people. It brings up data like since January, 1252 black people have been shot and killed by the police. They also provide names of those who were victims and their last moments before getting killed.

Hester, Neil. Kurt, Gray. Jennifer A. Richeson. (March 13, 2018). “*For Black men, being tall increases threat stereotyping and police stops*”. Proceeding of The National Academy of Sciences.

<https://www.pnas.org/content/115/11/2711#ref-20>

The authors reveal the differences in being tall when someone is white and when someone is black. For white people, if they are tall, they are deemed as successful. However for



black people, if they are tall, they will receive attention from police officers. Being tall as a black person is looked as threatening to officers.

The authors provide reports and studies on how being tall as an African American has affected them negatively. Within those studies, it shows that tall black men receive disproportionate attention from officers.

Joung, Madeleine. (July 12, 2019). “*What Is Happening at Migrant Detention Centers? Here’s What to Know*”. Time.

<https://time.com/5623148/migrant-detention-centers-conditions/>

Joung explains what exactly is the immigration detention center. She emphasizes the condition inside the center which is very rough and poor. People are cramped, they have no access to sanitized water. Kids are dying in their due to sickness and other factors. The debates on ICE have been an ongoing topic for a long time between congressmen and congresswomen.

Joung provides her information regarding what’s happening inside the detention center with data. There is data in regards to how many people are currently in the center, how many have died from the center and the purpose of ICE detention center.

Jr. Coleman F. Charles. (July 16, 2019). “*Eric Garner: Tall, Dark and Threatening*”. Ebony.

<https://www.ebony.com/news/eric-garner-tall-dark-and-threatening-405/>

Coleman draws attention to the long history of police brutality against African Americans. He points out the idea that police officers find the presence of black men as threatening. In the case with Eric Garner, they feared his “black rage” and found it threatening. Which resulted in them choke holding Garner and killing him.

Coleman himself is a tall black man and demonstrates his fear of being looked as a threat. The example and evidence of Eric Garner just proves how dangerous it is being a black man.

Mendoza, A. (August 22, 2018). "*Rising Hate Drives Latinos and Immigrants Into Silence*". Center for Public Integrity.

<https://publicintegrity.org/politics/rising-hate-drives-latinos-and-immigrants-into-silence/>

Mendoza makes a point of the increased hateful crimes against Latinos. They are getting death threats, assaulted and harassed. However, they can't do much about these problems as they are fearful of reporting these incidents. They fear the actions that might be done by president Trump or some fear getting deported.

Mendoza provides reports, studies and surveys in regards to the hate crimes against Latinos. He uses data to show how it has increased throughout time and Latinos can't really take actions to solve these problems.

Needham, Ashley. (October, 2016). "*It's Easier to Be White In America. How Can We Fix It?*". Humanity In Action.

[https://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledge\\_detail/its-easier-to-be-white-in-america-how-can-we-fix-it/](https://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledge_detail/its-easier-to-be-white-in-america-how-can-we-fix-it/)

Needham gives insights on the differences of living in America as a White person compared to any other racial groups. She mentions how whites don't have to go through stereotypes, systemic racism or discrimination in America. Unlike minorities and other racial identities, Whites have privileges.

Needham herself is a white woman, and she provides examples and reasoning to why it is true that living in America as a white person is easier than any other racial group. She gives her own personal experiences and stories to back up her point.

Schumer, Lizz. (June 4, 2020). *“What Black Lives Matter Means (and Why It's Problematic to Say "All Lives Matter")”*. Good Housekeeping Home.

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/a32745051/what-black-lives-matter-means/>

Schumer's main point of this article is to provide the deeper meaning and reasoning behind the “Black Lives Matter” movement. This movement is created to bring awareness to the violence against black people and bring justice and racial equality to African Americans.

Schumer proves her claim that it's problematic to say “All Lives Matter” with well written reasonings. Her main reason is all lives can't matter until black lives matter.

Walker, Amara. (October 26, 2020). *“Hopefully our dream is not broken.' Asian American businesses hit especially hard during pandemic”*. CNN.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/24/us/asian-americans-covid-racism-xenophobia-unemployment/index.html>

Walker states the problems caused by the pandemic and covid-19. Asian businesses are shutting down and some are being destroyed. Asian Unemployment has skyrocketed. Overall, asian people are suffering most from the effects of Covid-19 and the pandemic.

Walker provides reports of incidents of Asina businesses being vandalized and destroyed. Alos reports on asian unemployment rates. These data are used to show how Asian Americans have been suffering from Covid-19 and hatred from other groups of people.

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