

Diversity and the Need for Multicultural Education

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I. Introduction

1. Definition and examples of norms, values, taboos, beliefs, socialization
2. Communication- nonverbal and verbal

II. Cross Cultural Experiences

1. Mexico and poverty
2. Norms, taboos, values, and beliefs practiced in Mexico

III. Lack of Cross Cultural Learning

1. Race, ethnicity, minorities, racism, discrimination, prejudice, and stereotypes
2. Black Lives Matter
3. Personal experiences of inequality and stereotypes
4. Observations
5. Diversity in New York City
6. Social media and awareness
7. Other minorities

IV. The Need for Multicultural Education in the 21st Century

1. Current issues
2. Fight for freedom

V. Recommendations to Promote Cross Cultural Understanding

1. Educate children at school

VI. Conclusion

There is a lack of cross cultural understanding. People fail to realize that not everything is the same in each society. There can be similarities but not all cultures follow the same set of principles. Norms is something that is considered to be usual and expected. An example of a norm in our society can be tipping. It may sound surprising but in other countries tipping isn't necessary and can be found rude. Values are ideas that people practice in their daily lives. A common value many follow is to be respectful to one another. Taboos are typically actions that are considered to be wrong and frowned upon in a society. Beliefs is an opinion that people follow.

Socialization is the process of adapting to norms and ideas that are present in our society. The agents of socialization are where we learn these ideas. These places can be work, school, family, religion, and social media. Socialization is extremely important because it's the main reason why and how people act towards each other. For example in (Libretexs, 2020), it states “Why did three teenagers in a small town beat a gay man and hurl him to his death a quarter-century ago? We may never know, but it seems obvious that they had learned to hate gays from community norms back then and perhaps also from some of the many people with whom they interacted every day”. This implies that the people you surround yourself with have a major influence on who you are as a person. Back then it was normalized to hate and attack people who didn't fit society's expectations. As time went on, it became acceptable to be different but there still are hate crimes being committed to those who are in the LGBTQ community. I've seen it before where people believe that being in the LGBTQ community is wrong because of their cultural beliefs which is the reason why many struggle adapting to other cultures. We can try and change the norms in our society but it does take a lot of effort to change everyone's mind. Although In

the United States being part of that community is normal, It's forbidden in several cultures. Communication is also something that varies within cultures. Nonverbal communication are messages made by your facial expressions, voice, gestures, body movement, and eye contact. It is useful because it is a form of communication that you can use on a daily basis. Every culture has its own way of nonverbal communication. There are differences because it may not be the same in each culture, it can have a different meaning. An example stated is eye contact (Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel, 2015). The lack of eye contact in American culture signifies negativity while in China it can be seen as respectful. Another obstacle can be that you may send an unintentional message. If you were to yawn while talking to a group of people they may believe that you're bored when you can be tired. "Most nonverbal communication is learned on the subconscious level" implies that the way we communicate nonverbally is influenced by the norms and beliefs in our society. We adapt and follow them. Verbal communication is obviously different because each country has its own language. It is important to become educated in other cultures besides your own.

Cross Cultural Experiences

My cross cultural experience was based around the differences between the United States and Mexico. I was born in the United States but my parents were born in Mexico. After several trips and research I have learned how different the two countries are and its people. The first difference that is important is the poverty in Mexico. Mexico and its culture is extremely beautiful but it isn't an ideal place to live. Unless you have a lot of money you won't live in good conditions. The lower and middle class suffer a lot. The currency is very different, as of right now one USD equals to 21.09 Mexican pesos. It's constantly changing and so are the prices of goods . Due to the lack of money many kids are unable to receive proper education. As

mentioned in (Levine, 2007) after primary school, the majority drop out. Not many reach high school or college. Another important benefit they lack is healthcare. The people are not able to get annual checkups or even emergent care unless they have the money to pay for it. It is very expensive to pay especially with how much they get paid by working. The economy isn't doing great in Mexico and the workers are underpaid. In (Naishadham, 2020) it refers to the amount workers get paid which is about 123.22 pesos and 6.53 in U.S dollars. It's not a maintainable wage. Some families don't make enough and struggle to make a living. You will even see children working to help out which is another reason why they drop out. The lack of money is a reason why some can't pay for house expenses such as gas and electricity which are crucial to live.

There are many norms that surprised me because it isn't really common here in America. In Mexico and other foreign countries it is normal for women to take the role of a "housewife" it is a norm that I find disrespectful. I know that in the United States it's not a common norm anymore but I do notice how many foreign parents force that idea onto their children especially girls. A belief that is associated with being a housewife is usually that women don't have the ability to maintain themselves. I see girls serving food to their father and siblings. They even do activities such as washing their clothes or cleaning up after them, I don't agree with the idea. I'm not saying that girls shouldn't do anything, I just believe that they shouldn't have to live to take care of a man. They need to be treated equally and shouldn't have to do something just because they're a woman. It's extremely toxic to believe that a man should have to financially take care of you and that you're supposed to listen and follow them. It can lead to physical and emotional abuse especially when allowing someone to have so much control over you (Watson, 2015). Sexism has been an ongoing issue. It doesn't need to be normalized in other countries. I am

grateful that although my mother has lived with that idea, she hasn't made me follow it. The “norm” should be abolished but since not many are willing to go against it, it's impossible. Although I don't agree with it, it was very interesting how countries still practice that idea. The second is pregnancy at a young age. Due to the fact that many kids drop out of school what usually is next in their life is marriage or starting a family. In Latin America, the rate of teenage pregnancy is always increasing. As mentioned in (Crowder, 2020) Mexico is the country with the highest rate of pregnancy in teens. The third norm are celebrations because we celebrate so many holidays and events. Some main celebrations are quinceañeras, Christmas, El día de los muertos, fiestas de los pueblos, día de la Virgen de Guadalupe, and etc. The last norm is working children. Compared to the United States, the kids over there don't have free time. They are always working, in school, or helping out around the house.

Some taboos I have observed are throwing away food or insult someone's cooking, being disrespectful to anyone especially your parents and elders, same sex marriage or relationships, being disrespectful to religion, not greeting the people you meet, refusing to eat or drink when offered, not showing up to events when invited and not having manners . The most important values are family and respect. It is important to take care of your family but to also be there for one another. An example of taking care of your family would be to make sure everyone is able to eat and that they are safe. Being surrounded by your family in good or bad is a must. A way respect is shown is by hand gestures especially when meeting someone. Another way people show their respect is by calling you señor, señora, señorita. In English they are called ma'am and sir.

Another difference I noticed was religion, in the United States we know all the different types of religion but in Mexico the people are mainly catholic. Religion also plays a huge role in their

daily lives. The norm is going to church on Sundays. They pray to la Virgen de Guadalupe. She was used as a symbol for freedom during war and is a role model. We even have a holiday which is her birthday that occurs on December 12. They have a celebration in honor of her. A song we sing is called "Las Mañanitas" which is a traditional Mexican birthday song (Huffpost,2017) .

Overall Diversity is extremely important because it is what makes American culture. Everyone is from different backgrounds which allows us to learn from each other. What I learned from my cross cultural experiences is that there are so many differences within cultures such as norms, beliefs, and values. I did face culture shock because of when I learned about El Dia de los Muertos. I am Mexican, so my mother always tries to inform me more about our background. Although we don't live in Mexico we do celebrate some of the holidays. For example, Dia de los muertos. It's usually a day in which you celebrate the dead by making food and having parties (Day of the Dead). At first when I learned about it, I was shocked. It didn't make sense as to why you would celebrate someone's death but then it was explained to me. The whole point is to demonstrate love and respect to those who have passed away. Instead of mourning, it's a time to honor them. One of our main beliefs in Mexico is La Virgen de Guadalupe. As i've stated before, she is very important to our culture. People believe that she appeared in Mexico and that she can grant miracles. Our main do's and don'ts in Mexico is to have respect for everyone and to not disrespect our/other cultures. The only norms I have grown up with have been to respect older people, to not take the life I have for granted, and to take off your shoes when entering someone's home. This experience allowed me to view Mexican culture in a different perspective and become aware of why I was raised with certain beliefs.

Lack of Cross Cultural Learning

The lack of cross cultural understanding is even a bigger problem in society because not understanding a culture or society can lead to judgement and disrespect. People, especially children need to be aware that there are different cultures and that they aren't the only ones to exist. It is such an amazing experience to learn about other cultures and it has many pros. According to (Outist, 2020) some pros can be that it can minimize stereotypes , prevent ethnic and racial division, you could improve the way you communicate by learning a new language, and you make new experiences.

The difference between race and ethnicity is that race is used to differentiate people and put them into groups who share the same biological traits. Ethnicity is a group of people who share the same cultural background. A minority group is a group filled with people who receive unequal treatment because of their race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and etc. In terms of race and ethnicity, a minority usually refers to anyone who isn't white. They aren't influential compared to the majority group because of the lack of power. A majority group are people who have the largest population in a society. According to (CrashCourse, 2017) minorities occupy a lower status in society. The reason as to why the majority group has power is because of the society we live in, those who are minorities aren't considered to be the "norm" so they lack equality. Stereotypes are overgeneralized beliefs about groups of people. Prejudice is the judgement against a group (thoughts) meanwhile discrimination are negative actions being made against a group. Racism is believing that one race is superior which leads to mistreatment towards minorities.

Throughout many years, the United States has changed. There have been some issues being resolved while others are still occurring. A main issue you see that is still present in our society is racial inequality. The reason as to why there is inequality is due to the fact that there are some

people who believe they are superior. The name of the group who receive this kind of hatred are called minorities. There have been many movements against this inequality such as the Black Lives Matter movement. The Black Lives Matter movement is occurring because of the injustice Black people are receiving by the police. Thousands of people have lost their lives due to police brutality. During quarantine, we have seen people fight back and bring awareness to this issue on social media. We also saw the creation of the all lives matter movement. The movement was created to invalidate Black Lives Matter and it is disrespectful. People who have privilege created the all lives matter movement and they failed to recognize that the BLM movement means that Black lives matter too. It was extremely disrespectful because Black people are trying to get justice and people decide to make it about themselves. Surprisingly there are many people who are against this movement . It doesn't make sense how anyone would be against equality. The current president of the United States, Donald Trump and his supporters had so much hatred towards it. Citizens were using their voice and protesting so police officers decided to harm them and Trump did nothing about it. According to (Cathey, 2020) , Trump claimed those assaults against the protestors were “fake news”. He is also very biased because recently, his supporters were at a polling count station with guns according to (Sullivan and Geller, 2020). They were protesting saying “ stop the count” and there were reports of Trump supporters intimidating some voters in (Collman, 2020) yet Trump took no action against it.

I have had many experiences with my own ethnicity and culture. Being hispanic, specifically Mexican has shown me the differences between cultures and the treatment received by others. A topic that many associate with being Hispanic is immigration. For the longest time, many hispanic or latino people have received mistreatment. An experience I have witnessed is that many assume because you are hispanic that you are an immigrant or just because you are

Hispanic it means that you're automatically Mexican. There are multiple instances where you will be treated unequally because you aren't a citizen. According to (Mendoza, 2018) it reports the numerous amount of crimes being made against Mexicans whether they were immigrants or citizens. It is a form of racism and the victims most of the time don't report it. Some fail to realize the reason behind immigration.

In foreign countries it is extremely hard to live a good life unless you are rich. Not many receive proper healthcare, education, and opportunities as mentioned in (Levine, 2007). Both of my parents migrated from Mexico to the United States. They mentioned their lives back in the day which was very eye opening to hear about. There are unhappy people which leads them to try and fight for a better life which may lead to migration. From personal experience, I have gone to Mexico about three times. Although it is extremely beautiful it isn't a great place to live. If people were open to learning about different cultures then they would understand immigration instead of being disrespectful. The stereotypes Mexicans receive on a daily basis have been that we are criminals, rapists, or illegal. To overcome the struggles many Hispanics ignore it and continue trying to make a living because if not they won't be able to provide for themselves or their family. An issue that is in relation with immigration is the ICE detention centers. In those centers many immigrants from different countries receive racial inequality. They are located in the United States and they do call it the "land of the free " yet the way people get treated there appears that they aren't free. People are forced to live in cruel and awful conditions. They even separate the children from their families. There have been multiple deaths by those who are being detained according to (Joung, 2019) and nothing has been done to prevent it . As time goes by the numbers of missing children and deaths increase. There needs to be a stop to inequality, just because someone isn't born in this country it doesn't mean they deserve the worst.

Living in the United States especially in New York, others including myself have been introduced to diversity. An example of how we are introduced to diversity can be by meeting people from different cultures, eating food, living in a specific neighborhood, and by going to events such as parties or museums. My experience with diversity has been based around the area I live and the people I meet whether it's at school or outside. Going to school has allowed me to meet many people who are from different ethnicities. I met a friend who is Arab. She always talked to me about her culture because there were so many differences between us. When she talked about her culture, I was told that religion was important to her. My friend was able to educate me about her religion which is Muslim. She also shared her story of her encounters with racism and stereotypes. A stereotype she found common because of her ethnicity was that Arabs or muslims were considered to be terrorists. It is called islamophobia, according to (Gallup, 2020) the definition is the fear, hatred, hostility towards Muslims and Islams due to the stereotypes being created. This led to an encounter with racism. My friend was walking home from school one day and was being harassed by a white man, he used those negative stereotypes that some believe about muslims. She wanted to fight back but I understand why she didn't. We live in a world with so much hatred. If she were to fight back it could have put herself in so much danger which is why minorities are often scared to fight for themselves. Although we are considered to be free and equal in the United States, there are still many hate crimes or actions being made against minorities.

Social media is a platform in which people are able to share their daily lives and experiences. An incident that happened in New York, specifically in Long Island was when a Black woman and her family were getting harassed by their neighbor. Her name is Jennifer McLeggan; she is a nurse that lives in Valley Stream. She shared her story on the internet so that serious actions

could take place. There was a racist neighbor who would go around her house with guns and even trash the outside of her home. She knew that it was dangerous so she would call 911 but an officer told her to stop calling them and try to get along with her neighbors according to (Griffith, 2020) . There was proof that she was being harassed due to her skin color but police did nothing to help her, legal action was taken once there was awareness being brought to the issue. Social media can be both good and bad. It was awful knowing that if her story didn't become viral, she would have lived without any justice. Another observation I have witnessed was during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Being home has allowed me to watch the news more often and what I have seen were the attacks towards Asians. An estimate of 100 cases per day about discrimination, violence, and racism are reported towards Asians according to (Croucher, Nguyen, & Rahmani, 2020). It mentions that the hatred is caused by the media and government officials placing the blame on the virus to Asians. A case was reported on a New York city subway in which a man assaulted a woman and called her a disease.

In connection, a topic that is different but similar to the fight for equality is Women's rights. Women have the same rights as men but are still being treated differently whether it's a workplace or somewhere else. During the last four years, I feel as if we have gone back in time instead of growing as a country. The Trump administration was wanting to take away our accessible healthcare and equal pay according to (Laviertes, 2020). We still have to battle for our rights. With all the experiences I have observed, I believe that the fight for equality will take longer. It is sad but the reality is that not everyone wants equality. There will always be people against it for some odd reason. As time progresses, not much has changed because minorities are constantly receiving unfair treatment.

The Need for Multicultural Education in the 21st Century

Living in our current society has exposed me to the issues. Many including myself have faced stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination and racism because of my cultural background. I have heard people call Mexicans illegal, criminals, and racial slurs. These experiences have made me and others feel unequal. All the reasons below explain why I support multicultural education because it is awful knowing that after years of fighting minorities don't receive equal treatment. Although we do have freedom as mentioned (Independence Hall Association) which refers to the Bill of Rights, many minorities are still being treated unequally. Educating people on current issues will bring awareness and may stop it from continuing.

Recommendations to Promote Cross Cultural Understanding

In the United States we have diversity because many people from different races and ethnicities live here. The United States is proven to become more diverse in the upcoming years than it already is according to (Budiman, 2020). Multicultural education is the learning of the different types of races, ethnicities, and culture. It helps us understand more about culture whether it's about the norms, traditions, foods, taboos, and etc. We can teach about the experiences of injustice minorities face. For example throughout history, in schools it has been taught to children about segregation and slavery. They should also teach about the current racism and discrimination because it is an issue still occurring. An example can be the reasoning behind the Black Lives Matter movement and the hatred you see on social media or personal experiences. Schools should promote cross cultural understanding because at most schools there is diversity all around. Living and going to school in New York City has allowed me to meet people from different backgrounds. Another discussion they can talk about is the different types of minorities because it isn't just race and ethnicity it can also be gender, religious, and etc. In an article by (Barbieri & Ferde, June 2020) it provides other recommendations on how we can

promote this type of education. Some suggestions are to support schools in making education policies that promote diversity and by recruiting teachers in a diverse manner. Children should learn how to respect and understand a culture. By learning about them in schools it would avoid any possible disrespect in the future.

In summation, there has to be more actions that promote cross cultural education. People are constantly exposed to diversity especially those who live in New York City. We are able to share and learn from different cultures whether it's by one on one interaction or food. In the article by (McGinniss) It refers to the numerous activities we do on a daily basis that exposes us to these cultures. Being aware about other cultures is important so you know how to communicate without disrespecting people and their beliefs. There are only positive outcomes from learning about diversity. We shouldn't hide or avoid talking about the injustice minorities receive to children. My experiences with diversity have allowed me to view and understand cultures in different perspectives. Socialization does play a role in how you are raised. The country your parents were raised in will affect how you are raised. They may raise you with the same beliefs, traditions, and values that are considered to be the norms in their society. We shouldn't allow people to be closed minded and only know about their culture. It can lead to them believing that their culture is "right" or superior which will become a never ending cycle. Overall learning more about my culture has encouraged me to try and learn from others. What is interesting are the difference in norms, values, taboos, form of communication, and beliefs. It won't hurt teaching kids about other cultures besides their own because it opens their minds to new ideas. Accepting the fact that there is still prejudice, racism, discrimination, and stereotypes present in our society is the first step to change.

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<https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-calls-tear-gas-reports-fake-news-protesters/story?id=71052769>.

The author found and included news reports of those who were being tear gassed while protesting. Donald Trump claimed it was fake . There were multiple reports of injuries. The author includes the opinions of others saying that it wasn't okay to use weapons on a peaceful protest.

The article provided evidence that although it was said to be fake by Donald Trump the pictures and reports say otherwise. People were exercising their rights but then weapons were used which then created conflict.

Sullivan, T., & Geller, A. (2020, November 7). Increasingly normal: Guns seen outside vote-counting centers. AP NEWS.

<https://apnews.com/article/protests-vote-count-safety-concerns-653dc8f0787c9258524078548d518992>.

The author provided photos and statements of Trump supporters protesting outside vote counting centers with guns. In some states there are laws in which you are allowed to carry firearms in public but because of the election it can create violence or intimidation. Multiple claims of people against this act. People feared for their lives, specifically the employees.

This is strong evidence of the bias Donald Trump and the police have with his supporters. They are protesting with guns but when people decide to do the same with Black Lives Matter except without guns they get attacked. It shows the unfair treatment.

Collman, A. (2020, October 31). 4 times Trump supporters have been accused of voter intimidation in 2020, from a Trump mask-wearing cop to a landlord threatening to double rent if Biden wins. Business Insider .
<https://www.businessinsider.com/2020-election-trump-supporters-accused-voter-intimidation-list-2020-10>

The author found video evidence of Trump supporters harassing and threatening people near a polling place. The woman who experienced the harassment called the police but they appeared to have not cared. An owner of a trailer park also said the rent will increase if Biden won. A picture of a police officer with a political mask.

This is evidence of voter suppression which is a crime. It supports the argument that Trump will not tell his supporters to follow the law. He is favoring his supporters.

Mendoza, A. (2018, August 22). Rising hate drives Latinos and immigrants into silence. Center for Public Integrity.

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

The author uses the experiences of Latinos and immigrants regarding racism. Hate crimes towards Latinos aren't just name calling and intimidation, it can also be robberies, assault, and murder. Many fear to report these crimes because of deportation.

The experiences suggest and support the idea that immigrants and Latinos are also minorities who experience racism. They fail to report because of fear.

Levine, R. (2007). CASE 9: Improving the health of the poor in Mexico. Center For Global Development. <https://www.cgdev.org/page/case-9-improving-health-poor-mexico>.

The author explains the reasons why Mexico has such bad health rates, education, and etc. Money plays a huge factor. It would cost a lot for the lower class to receive benefits. There are plans to change the lifestyle of the lower class.

The case study by Levine provided evidence towards the poor healthcare, education, and overall life the lower class has. This also contributes to the meaning behind immigration. Due to the poor life many receive they migrate to the United States for a better life.

Joung, M. (2019, July 12). What Is Happening at Migrant Detention Centers? What to Know. Time. <https://time.com/5623148/migrant-detention-centers-conditions/>.

The author exposes the truth behind ice detention centers. States and shows the awful conditions multiple families or people have to live in. Describes the conditions and explains how dangerous it can be such as improper hygiene, the cold temperatures, and overcrowding.

This article is evidence that inequality still exists, because they are immigrants the treatment they receive is unjustifiable. It also explains the deaths and the increased number of people getting sick.

Griffith, J. (2020, November 1). *A Black woman says she was racially harassed for years. Police acted only after her story went viral.* NBCNews.com.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/black-woman-says-she-was-racially-harassed-years-police-acted-n1244220>.

The author wrote about a racist experience that Jennifer McLeggan went through. Explained the awful actions that were made against her such as feces and dead squirrels being thrown at her house. It also explains how the media helped her gain justice because before the story went viral, the police ignored her.

This is evidence of the racial inequality minorities face. Just because Jennifer wasn't white it caused so much problems with her neighbor. Also, it proves how the police didn't care until her story went viral. If her story hasn't gone viral the neighbour would be walking freely without any consequence.

Gallup. (2020, June 8). *Islamophobia: Understanding Anti-Muslim Sentiment in the West.*

Gallup.com.

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/157082/islamophobia-understanding-anti-muslim-sentiment-west.aspx>.

Gallup explains the meaning of islamophobia and uses data to prove how many people are against Muslims. A chart is provided that shows in western cities, most of them don't respect Muslims because of events by terrorists

The evidences implies that Muslims receive prejudice just because of terrorism. People believe because you are Muslim that you are a terrorist which is a stereotype. It is a reason as to why they get harassed.

Croucher, S. M., Nguyen, T., & Rahmani, D. (2020, May 22). *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>.

In Croucher, Nguyen, and Rahmani's article there is research that shows how Asians are receiving even more racially targeted attacks because of COVID-19. The media has had some part in it because of the misleading titles for example "Chinese virus". The authors also show that social media is now a place full of hatred towards minorities.

This proves that because of the media, some are now believing that Asians are the ones with COVID-19. It has resulted in attacks which are still increasing.

Lavietes, M. (2020, November 12). Biden win called a 'restoration of sanity' for women's rights. Reuters.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-women-rights-election-trfn/biden-win-called-a-restoration-of-sanity-for-womens-rights-idUSKBN27S3AO>.

The author writes about the hopes many Biden supporters have after he won the election. The Democratic administration wants to reverse the moves made by Trump such as women's rights. Biden wants to avoid gender pay gaps (women and men get paid equally), wants the victims of sexual assault to receive justice, and easy access to contraception.

This proves that while Trump was in office, he has managed to not help women. We are still struggling for our rights and it is something other minorities have in common.