

What is Culture?

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Content Page

Abstract...	p3
Introduction	p3
Background of research	p4
Continue listing both your main topics and sub-topics heading and page # For example:	
Diversity and Multicultural Education	p4
Diversity	p4
Multicultural Education	p4
The Need for Diversity	p5
Respect	p5
Understanding	p5
Tolerance	p6
Dialogue	p6
Response paper	p6
Recommendations, Suggestions, Solution	p10
Conclusion	p11
Annotated Bibliography	p11
References	p13

Abstract

I chose the topic “What is Culture?”, because I will be able to talk about everything from the definition on Culture, values, beliefs, and norms. I will be able to describe how one view culture and compare the similarities and differences. I will as well be able to explain how Culture can define one's identity, how socialization can have an impact on Culture, and how this new era affects Culture. I will as well mention my very own opinions based on everything I will be touching on.

Introduction

When it comes to discussing Culture, it seems as if it is a broad topic but there is so much more to it. Culture can be many things from how one lives, how one socializes, or how one views the world. Moving to New York has taught me many things and I have experienced many types of cultures living in New York compared to when I was living in Florida. The high school I went when I moved to New York was surrounded by many religions and cultures, I learned a lot about many religions and cultures, and I was able to experience some of these as well. Currently, I work in an environment where everyone is different. It is a learning experience every time I clock in. I get to observe how others live their life. For example, one of my coworkers is Muslim and after work we always go on a walk and just talk, and she mentions to me how she cannot do her nails because when

she prays her nails must be all natural, and how she can only do them when she has her menstrual cycle. When I lived in Florida I did not know much about certain cultures and religions, I was never able to experience many cultures and religions as much as I get to see here in New York. As a future nurse it is important to know plenty about one's cultures because this is how they view their life and as a nurse one must be very open-minded about these types of things. One never knows how one feels about something and I feel as if one can know about one's culture, it can help you understand your patient and be able to have that connection with one another. Culture is very important, we see it every day, we socialize with others from different cultures, Culture is everywhere.

Background of Research

When it comes to one's culture, they have their norms and values. Norms are the rules and expectations that guide behavior within a society. Values are the Cultural standards that people use to decide what is good or bad, what is right or wrong. They are quite similar across cultures. Norms and values are important to culture because they are a part of our everyday lives. For example, norms can be taking off your shoes as soon as you walk through the door. There are plenty of norms present in society today, one norm that I am finding hard to get accustomed to is the new rules for Covid-19 where we must wear mask and keep our distance from others, I love being around people and meeting new people and with these

new norms it is making it quite difficult and making me feel very limited. There are cultural taboos as well. A cultural taboo demands prohibition of various cultural laws which are forbidden in different cultures. One cultural taboo I had to observe and learn the way they act inside this unfamiliar culture. It is useful to you experienced is cannibalism. It was when I was in middle school, and I remember this being all over the news where a man was doing drugs and eating people's faces. It was for a couple of days where there was a curfew until the man was caught and arrested.

Socialization is the social process through how we develop our personalities and human potential and how we learn about our society and culture. The agents of socialization are many things including family, family background, religion, work, government, media, school and peers. Socialization is important in a sociological context because this is how you learn EVERYTHING, how you speak, how you think, values, beliefs, norms, etc. The difference between roles and status is the people and environment you are surrounded by. This is important in a cross-cultural context because you are not only learning more about yourself but your surroundings as well. It is difficult for many people from other cultures to adapt to their cultures because one is not familiar with this new culture, and one needs to understand the nonverbal language of a culture because it allows you to understand one's culture and how they communicate with one another. It also allows you to connect with one another. Some potential obstacles to accurately reading the nonverbal messages of other people are being able to comprehend what one is

saying and as well as body language where it can be misunderstood for something else. "Most nonverbal communication is learned on the subconscious level" means that most nonverbal communication is learned in a sense that you are not aware that you are learning but you are because you are picking up information and retaining it. Language is important as a form of verbal communication across culture because it allows people to connect and communicate with one another.

Language is very important in one's culture because this is how we grow, build relationships with people, communicate, and connect with others. The difference between race and ethnicity is race is based on those who share biological, physical, and observable traits that a society thinks is important while ethnicity is based on cultural traits. A minority group are distinguished by physical or cultural difference, that a society sets apart and subordinates. Racial and ethnic inequalities exist because they are based on a person's skin tone and where they are from. Blacks, African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans and other minority groups are far worse than whites because us minorities are looked down upon because to whites, we are not equal to them.

Response to topic

I have many cross-cultural experiences from my travels, my neighborhood, and encounters with people in my day-to-day life. With all these experiences I can see the similarities and differences between all the cultures I have encountered. I have traveled to Medellin and Cartagena Colombia. When I

first arrived in Medellin, I noticed the cold and cool air. I did not know that Colombia had mountains, if one was to look close enough you can see the white snow/ice at the very top. When my family picked us up from the airport the first thing, they did was greet everyone with a kiss on the cheek, I soon noticed that many people did this in Colombia. I learned it was one of their norms and this is how many people would greet each other. When driving to my aunt's house I noticed how my ears were popping because of the altitude, we were going up a mountain. When we finally arrived at my aunt's house, she then offered everyone coffee with cake. Many people in my culture offer this dessert as a "rest down" food. Meaning it allows one to relax and just eat and drink something warm.

After we settled down everyone started to get ready for bed. I remember everyone telling me that there was no hot water I didn't believe at first till I had gone to the bathroom. The water was ice cold, many people in Medellin do not have access to hot water. The time in Colombia is an hour back, while me and my family are getting ready to go to bed, my family in Colombia are wide awake. When touring around Colombia I noticed beautiful women wearing these bright colored dresses, wearing fruit baskets on their head, they were twirling the streets. Many of the malls in Medellin that I went to were outside while the ones that were actual malls, they only had designer stores and outlets. Wealth is one of Colombia's values if one owned a farm, they are considered wealthy.

In Cartagena Colombia, the first thing I noticed when we landed at the airport, they were taking everyone off the plane in the runway, all the airports I had been to, the plane usually got connected to the building. The Climate in Cartagena was very hot and muggy compared to Medellin. When we were viewing Cartagena many people were very friendly, everyone was communicating and smiling. One of the norms I noticed was when greeting someone they would grab one's hand and hold it tightly in their own hands. Cartagena is very religious many of their tourist viewings were based on catholic churches. It was very interesting seeing the difference in religions in both Cartagena and Medellin. When visiting my family, the house was very different. The windows had bars, so no one was able to break in the roof, it didn't cover the whole house, and there was no air conditioning because the way the house was built. When we went to the flea markets and malls my family would tell me not to talk because the sellers would know that I am a tourist, even though I do not have the heavy Colombian accent I am still able to speak Spanish. Many people in Cartagena Colombia value power and wealth. If one didn't have money or was known in the country, you were considered a nobody.

Even though Medellin and Cartagena are both located in Colombia, just two different parts of the country, they are very similar and different. The climate is different, but the hours are the same. The food they eat is very similar. Their norms are quite different in gestures but they both have the same meaning. In Medellin their religion is mostly Christianity and Cartagena's religion is Catholic. Living in New York I have many cross-cultural experiences when it comes to the area I live in and areas I visit. I live in Forest Hills and the block that I live on there are many Jewish people. I live near a Jewish school for all boys, and I realized they wear certain clothes and these hats, and they have long sideburns.

They don't have school like a regular public school, they don't attend every day and they always come out before twelve pm. Every time I walk past their school, I always get dirty looks and they always say something under their breath. I noticed they only communicate with one another never the "outsiders". One Cross-Cultural experience I had was when I was visiting my dad in Corona, this area is mostly Hispanics and African Americans. I was walking to my dad's house, and I noticed a lady struggling for help. I told her I can help, and she then started speaking Spanish, but her Spanish was different from mine I tried my very best to explain and help her but then a man approached us and started speaking to her and he understood her and spoke the same language as her. When he was done helping her, he asked me if I was Dominican, and I had said yes. He told me living in this

area allowed him to pick up many different types of languages and ways of speaking.

Recommendations, Suggestions, Solution

When it comes to my travels and my neighborhood, I had noticed a few things.

When traveling to Colombia I would get many stares about my appearances; skinny and curly hair, I don't fit into the "Colombian" beauty standards. One wishes I have the long thick straight hair and a curvy body. My own family asks why I look this way, I am mixed with multiple things; Colombian, Puerto Rican, Dominican and they simply do not understand. I believe to help this stereotype of how ones need to fit and be a part of their countries appearances one needs to be open minded about things like this. We are all born with different hair types, eye colors, body shape and size, one simply shouldn't be born into these beauty standards.

Traveling to another country it made me realize the differences between two parts but in the same country. My grandmother is from Medellin and she did not like how Cartagena did things and vice versa with my sibling's father he did not like how Medellin ran things. They both believe in two different religions as well. One needs to be more open minded about cultural diversity and one needs to understand how other parts of the country and cities do things differently from one another. Not only do other countries and people but as well with religions, in my neighborhood there are a lot of Jewish and Chinese people and I get stares for the way I look and speak. Overall, one needs to be more open minded on ones values, norms, and beliefs.

Conclusion

Culture is everywhere we go, everyone has their values, norms, and beliefs.

Culture can be many things from how one lives, how one socializes, or how one views the world. Moving to New York has taught me many things and I have experienced many types of cultures living in New York. Within my travels to Colombia and my neighborhoods I have experienced many cultures. Culture is very important, we see it every day, we socialize with others from different cultures, Culture is everywhere. It is very important to understand culture and others cultural as well, it is very good to know about ones culture because it allowseveryone to connect with one another.

Annotated Bibliography

Aníbal Monasterio Astobiza. (2017). What is culture in «cultural economy»? Defining culture to create measurable models in cultural economy. *Arbor*,193(783).

Astobiza mention what culture is in a cultural economy. Astobiza describes culture such as values, norms, and beliefs to create better people in a cultural economy. The world is full of culture and one needs to understand what “Culture”is.

This article relates to the text because it allows one to understand culture within many other cultures. One can see norms, values, and beliefs within al the

cultures that were mentioned from Colombia, Jewish, Chinese and other hispanic people.

Cultural diversity & ethnic minority psychology . (1999). [Educational Pub.

Foundation of the American Psychological Association]. Within this book it allows one to get a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and ethnic minorities. It also well explains how minorities feel through emotions and mindsets. This book related to the text because it mentions information about culture diversity and that is how I was able to come up with a solution and it also gives me information how ethnic minorities feel.

Inglehart, Basáñez, M., & Menéndez Moreno, A. (1998). Human values and beliefs a cross-cultural sourcebook : political, religious, sexual, and economic norms in 43 societies ; findings from the 1990-1993 world value survey .
University of Michigan Press.

According to Basáñez and Moreno they talk religion, sexual orientation, and economic norms in many different societies. They discuss many cultures values, beliefs, and norms. This article allows me to get understanding of different cultures values, beliefs, norms. I was able to understand my travels and neighborhoods culture better. It all gave me a brief understanding of cross cultural experiences.

References

Aníbal Monasterio Astobiza. (2017). What is culture in «cultural economy»?Defining culture to create measurable models in cultural economy. *Arbor*, 193(783).

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