



Multi-Cultural Society through Religious Belief

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Introduction

What is a multicultural Society? A question, which is asked very often, an answer for it is sometimes very hard to define.

Multicultural society is a society in which there is inclusion of many diverse people. It is a society in which freedom of religion, language, dress, food, religion, customs, can be expressed without the trepidation of persecution. Whilst expressing ones culture they are also learning the main dominant language of the country in addition to abiding by the rules and regulations of the country.

It is a society in which one can observe the different sub cultures, which are differentiated through language, religion, norms and values, pastimes, and culture.

A multicultural society would be composed of people from different ethnic backgrounds and cultures living and working together. In society when people from different backgrounds intertwine with each other's culture shows the acceptance of each other's culture and background.

It is a society that works well; the people have roles and responsibilities they must fulfil. They have the rights to education, healthcare, protection from crime and rights to be helped if in poverty.

Immigration/migration is the action of coming to live permanently in a foreign country. Migration is the movement of people to a new area or country in order to find work or better living conditions.

In Britain multiculturalism has been around for thousands of years. Diversity of different cultures mainly started coming from European countries. At the beginning the first people who came and brought their culture to Britain were the Celts and formed their first communities in the British Isles.



We can see multicultural societies all around world. It's because everyday people migrating from one country to another. All the people have their own culture, religion, language and beliefs also. But this world prove that multi-cultural people can live together in same society without any problem.

Most of the metropolitan cities in the world, we can see more than 45% of people from outside. They came there for work or living or other purpose. Suddenly they can't change their own style that they followed. But gradually they changing day by day to new style.

Why they need to change to new life style? That because if our culture sometimes make someone irritated or something. So we need to analyses our culture and make some small changes.

India: the Multicultural Furnace

India is a big democratic country. I like to call India as the country full of languages, cultures and beliefs. It's because in India about 29 states, nearly 45 writing languages and nearly 185 speaking languages including traditional and tribal languages and lots of cultures. Each state has its own language and culture. If we consider one society, we can see many people with different cultures and religious beliefs living together peacefully. Yes we can do it. First we must try to respect the cultures and beliefs of others. Respecting others cultures and beliefs is one of the greatest things in this world. People have good thoughts, good mind, and big heart only can do this. "in a multicultural diverse society there are countless ways in which people, negotiate the everyday lived experience and reality of diversity". It's the words of Randa Abdel Fattah about multicultural society.

In my knowledge Dharavi is the biggest slums in the world and it's the best example of a multi-cultural society. Dharavi is 2.1 square kilometers area and population around 700,000. 60% of people are really from Dharavi and the remaining are from different places in India. They came to Dharavi for work, business, or other purpose. If you want study about multi-cultural society, Dharavi is the suitable place for study and make research. All the people in Dharavi try to respect each other and understanding each cultures. Dharavi id filled with Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, etc. They living peacefully in Dharavi because of right understanding



and right view of life and cultures. Every people seeing others through the eyes of humanity, not through the eyes of religion or cultures. The most important festivals that celebrated in Dharavi are Ganesha Chadurthi and Ramadan.

Ganesha Chadurthi is a festival giving respect to Lord Ganesha. They making big Ganesha statues and make parade around the city.

At the same time Muslim's one the main festival is Ramadan. They do fasting this time. The fasting start before sunrise and ends after sun set. On fasting time, they even don't drink water also. At the time Dharavi have no open restaurants, the people don't want to persuade the fasting people. It is the best example of multi- cultural society through religious beliefs. People try to understand and try to respect the others culture and religious beliefs.

Every big city in this world is the best example of multi- cultural society. That's because in each city more than 30% of population from another places, came here for work, business or other purpose. Some of them try to change the culture. Some of them not. When I talk with some people they replied me multi- culture concept only in Asian countries. But im not agree with that. Its because in each and every day the migration happening around us. Many people moving from one country to another for better life or something. We can see many people around us from different countries, different language, different culture and different religious thoughts also. But they can sustain there.

Now the days many research and surveys said that Australia is considered as the biggest multi – cultural society in this world. Its because of migrants. The Australian government provide good facilities like good life style, infrastructure, insurance, medical services. So most of the people try to migrate to Australia. From my understanding we can see people from whole around the world in Australia. We can see many cultures and celebrations, their life and life styles, dressing style, varieties of food culture, varieties of religious beliefs also.

All the things have two sides, coin have two sides, a book have two sides. It doesn't matter which side we like, its depend on their mind. Some people promoting multi-cultural society and some of them protecting. In America march 2015, Dr. Marquita Byrd, Asst. prof, SJSU, she made research with her team about the problems of multi-culture society. She found some problems when a man



with new culture and life style coming to one new society he must face problems in the new society. It's because of colliding of two cultures. Every reaction is very powerful when it starts and its power going down.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism can be defined as cultural diversity or the evolution of it, where people from different ethnicities coexist; it can also refer to an integrative policy adopted by a multicultural nation

The meaning of the term multiculturalism can have many interpretations. Definitions of this term differ according to the references made to:

1. demography of a country (population of various racial, religious, linguistic backgrounds)
2. the normative-ideological aspect (cultural rights of individuals)
3. the political policy-level programs adopted to address ethnic diversity.

Advantages of Multiculturalism

1. Education

There have been changes in the syllabus of subjects, like history, to accommodate a more comprehensive and broader version of the past events. This can be seen as giving more exposure to children, wherein they learn about different perspectives on a given topic. Kids are educated about equality, and thus develop an attitude against racism.

2. Professional

Employees coming from various cultures can contribute with a wider range of perspectives on an assignment. A mix of cultural experiences helps in problem-solving, and can create a strong team. Having a diverse group of workers always enriches the office environment, improving the work culture.

Disadvantages of Multiculturalism

1. Education

Children from ethnic minorities or immigrant families would take time in getting accustomed to a new environment. This may get reflected in their academic performance, when compared with that of the local children.

2. Professional

Although largely it is a benefit, managing a multicultural workforce can be very demanding. Prejudices of employees may work against the people belonging



to a minority. Encouraging cooperation among all the coworkers, especially in collaborating as a team, can be a task.

3. Fear of Influence

Living in a multicultural society, even a cosmopolitan city for that matter, may inculcate a fear among individuals or minority groups, that they would lose their original ethnic identities or lifestyle. Being influenced by other cultures or foreign belief systems, at times create a protectionist tendency among the citizens.

4. Risk of Social Conflict

The possibility of a social conflict occurs due to differences in religious beliefs and practices, ethnic rituals, or certain ways of life that may cause a rift between two or more groups. However, in those countries that have adopted multiculturalism as an integrative policy, it has been noticed that conflicts arose mainly during financial crisis and due to lack of social programs.

Examples of Multiculturalism

There are many nations that can be called multicultural societies. Listed below are a few of them, pertaining to their characteristics as a multicultural nation.

1. Canada: This country officially adopted multiculturalism in 1971. It is based on the principle of *ius solis* or (the right of citizenship by birth). Further, the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 gives all members of Canadian society the freedom to preserve and share cultural heritages, and encourages protection and enhancement of their ancestral languages. It also asks all federal agencies to promote practices ensuring equal employment opportunities and advancement therein.

2. Australia: It sees itself as a country of immigrants. Multiculturalism, in this nation too is based on the right of citizenship by birth. Easy access to the naturalization process and citizenship for immigrants has been established long ago. The government believes multiculturalism to have strengthened the Australian society.

3. Sweden: Different from the above examples, Sweden operates by *ius sanguinis* or (right of blood), which extends the right of citizenship only if one or both parents are citizens of the country. However, the procedures of naturalization here are easier.

4. Other examples of multicultural societies include India, Britain, and the United States of America.



Conclusion

In a multicultural society, people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds living alongside each other. Multiculturalism can bring a great deal of richness to a society, but a multicultural society is not always plain sailing. However, the advantages of a multicultural society far outweigh its disadvantages.

On the positive side, a multi-cultural society can bring a wide variety of benefits to a nation in terms of economic, cultural, and social development. To begin with, the majority of immigrants from different cultural backgrounds are high achievers, including experts, scholars, engineers, business people and other well trained people. Their arrival means an inflow of expertise, experience, investments as well as a dynamic labour force, which are all key factors to the increase of competitiveness, efficiency and productivity of a nation's economy.

The new arrivals know very well the importance of respecting the local traditions and customs. Therefore, they co-operate and collaborate well with the natives. They work very harmoniously side by side in offices, factories and schools. In addition, with a rich blend of peoples, cultures, lifestyles, people in multi-cultural societies tend to be more open minded and tolerant of other people's custom and religion.

On the other hand, multi-cultural also have some problems. Sometimes, people from overseas try to maintain their unique ethnic cultures with their own distinctive characteristics. These differences many seem trivial, but they can cause some conflicts that make it difficult for immigrants to become assimilated into the main stream of the local social life. But multi-cultural society are usually based on equality and diversity, so these problems can eventually be dealt with successfully.

To sum up, it can be reiterated that the multi-cultural societies definitely have more plusses, because of which many countries like Australia and Canada are making great efforts to attract more immigrants from abroad.

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