

Inequality or deviance paper

Sociology



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Diversity between American and Muslim Cultures Inequality or Deviance

Immigrants in new locations normally face numerous challenges; cultural and socio-economic challenges mainly. Due to the differences and inequalities that immigrants realize they have as they compare themselves to the locals, they often react in various ways. While some will act defiantly in some situations, others will endeavor to maintain their values and remain faithful to the demands of their cultures, albeit with some strain. Deviance in this case encompasses the deliberate violation of cultural norms. Cultural problems are is the most fundamental problems many immigrants face. They are faced with the challenge of how to remain faithful to their own values. They are also expected to respect the value of their host countries so as to make the most successful transition. Socio-economic problems, many immigrants find it hard to accept that the types of jobs accessible to them are the low paying ones. This is due to the fact that their qualifications may not be recognized in the new country, thus forcing them to have low living standards. Rauf Abdul Feisa (2011) states that millions of American Muslims who see no contradiction between being American and being Muslim, are working hard to bridge the cultural gap. They therefore end up being the target of attacks by those who would rather burn bridges instead of building them. This shows that most of the Muslims in Americas are still viewed as foreigners. The traditional societies such as the Muslims tend to be very strict when it comes to dating, courtship and marriage. For example, non-Muslim men traditionally are not allowed to marry Muslim women. The man is expected to convert to the Islam religion before the marriage can take place. They are expected to have Friday-offs so as to congregate for prayers, yet it is a working day for the Americans. On the other hand, in the US,

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Muslim women must observe their dress-code in schools, offices and market places. According to Israr Hasan (2006) Muslims migrants, individuals and families face numerous challenges in America such as moral, religious and cultural problems, which are non-existent in their host countries. This might pose a great problem to them as they try to adjust, since they have to earn their identity with effort. Peter (2008) notes that Muslim newly weds and courting couples are becoming more accustomed to nikah, a legal marriage that entails couples to the entire set of privileges enjoyed by those who are marriage. Currently, the Muslims are becoming more and more lenient on the dating of their young people, using the ' nikah'. This is an old tradition that allows dating; people can go for dates and be in a room together. It is meant to prepare a couple for marriage though they can break up if it does not work. The United States has set up different activities that help the international students cope with life in campus. These include: the international student services which help students with the Visas, American language and culture. Others include students' organizations which help students in making friends. This way, foreigners do not feel lonely and homesick and are therefore better able to concentrate on their studies or duties. Yet again, there are normally counseling services for international students where one is helped to cope with issues they have to face in a new and challenging environment. Surviving holidays involve foreign students staying in campus during holiday seasons. The universities usually offer meals so that they do not feel deserted, though some professors usually invite them for holiday meals. According to the control theory, weak bonds between the society and the person give room for the person to deviate. On the contrary, strong bonds make it difficult to deviate considering the

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associated costs. In view of this theory, many traditional societies strongly impart certain values in their members so as to avoid certain choices or activities during dating. Less traditional societies like the US culture have weak bonds between the society and the individual in so far as dating and marriage is concerned. The US society demands less of dating couples as it is more liberal and provides alternative definitions for their actions.

Traditional societies such as tend to be very conservative as compared to less traditional societies such as the United States. For example, young Muslim men and women are not allowed to be in the same room alone before they marry. For Americans, being in the same room alone at a very early age is a norm. Young people of the opposite sex interact freely in the US without such events raising eyebrows. In fact, they even have sleepovers. Young Muslim men and women are not supposed to date, they do not enter into a one-on-one intimate relationship, spending time alone together. Pre-marital relationships between members of the opposite sex are forbidden in the Muslim culture. The choice of a marriage partner is considered very important and thus requires prayers, careful investigation, and family involvement. However, for the Americans, people are supposed to date and spend time together before they marry. Marriage is a personal decision and one chooses the person he or she wishes to marry. When meeting potential spouses, Muslims families have to be involved. A young person makes a prayer so as to get the right partner. The family then discusses and suggests candidates from the people they know. The parents approach the other family and if they agree, the couple can then meet. If they are compatible, they can pursue marriage but if they disagree they can part ways. In the American culture, the young people just meet and if they fall in love they can

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pursue marriage. In most occasions, their parents might never have met before. They do not have to have prior relationship. The Muslim marriages tend to be long-term; this is because it is a focused courtship. The involvement of family in choice of a marriage partner helps to ensure that the decision is not based on romantic notions. In the American culture however, marriage is based on the romantic notions between the couple. People meet, start dating and in a couple of months they are married. They do not really understand that marriage needs more than love. This may be a contributing factor to the high rate of divorces in the United States.

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