

Afganistan war veteran

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The Diversity Role Multicultural Assignment: Afghanistan War Veteran

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Multicultural diversity has often emerged as a contentious issue in our modern day society. My experience on a military tour of Iraq caused me to gain a firsthand experience and appreciation of what was a different culture and way of life. This experience caused me to learn that that although unique in their different ways; our cultures are what essentially make life more interesting.

My unit was called into active duty go and serve the country in the Afghanistan war just as the war was starting. Prior to deployment, I undertook a careful study on Afghanistan as I wished to learn all that I could about the country before we deployed. I researched literature on the country's culture and people, and this served to help me to avoid the common pitfall that most of my colleagues fell into of incorrectly stereotyping the country's people. When we finally landed in the country, I discovered that most of the material I had read on the country had essentially been written during a period when peace prevailed and since then, a number of things had changed with the advent of war.

The Afghani people were initially apprehensive and prejudiced about us and our mission. Years of living under the severely repressive Taliban regime had caused them to grow apprehensive of strangers. However, when we started winning against the dreaded Taliban insurgents, the people became quite welcoming towards us and would often greet us in the streets cheerfully and hail us as their hero's (Kerry, 2010).

In Afghanistan, the majority of the soldiers happen to serve in various

support functions that include accounting, logistics or even laundry. For these officers, the war frontline is essentially the camp's front gate. A typical day for me generally involved getting a briefing in the morning as to the current situation and what was expected to occur during the day. We would then embark on a patrol of the local town and its environs. It was not uncommon for newly deployed troops that were assigned to engage with the local leaders to quickly grow comfortable with these leaders in a case of assumed similarity. These troops would incorrectly assume that these leaders happened to share similar characteristics with themselves and it was thus important that the recruits be accompanied with experienced veterans (Kenny, 1994). These veterans would help the recruits engage with these leaders and locals in a professional manner as the recruits gradually adapted to the country's customs and culture.

After the patrol, we would then report back to the camp and remain on standby for engagement. Occasionally we would be called on backup when a unit or a camp happened to come across the Taliban, or was attacked by the Taliban and needed backup. At the day's end, we normally relaxed, play cards and just be grateful that we had yet again lived through another day. My favorite thing about my service in the country was getting to help free the local population from the oppressive Taliban regime (Barnett & Weiss, 2013). The grateful looks strewn across the people's faces were simply priceless, and children would often run to us and shout their appreciation in halting English. Knowing that I had helped to improve the lives of these people made the entire war effort worth it.

When out on patrols, we would often encounter local villagers who would

swamp us with numerous queries pertaining to how life was like in the United States. They would often paint fantastically beautiful pictures of our country and would ask us to confirm if these depictions were true. The Afghani people feared that we would leave their country allowing for the Taliban to once again overrun the country (Kerry, 2010). In answering their questions on this, we found ourselves constantly assuring them that we would only leave the country once the Taliban had been sufficiently contained.

This diversity role helps in promoting a greater mindfulness of cultural diversities. Different cultures have varied practices and beliefs and it is important for individuals to respect these diversities to enhance mutual understanding. From this diversity role, it can be learned that cooperation can be enhanced between individuals from different cultures through respecting each other and avoiding assumed superiority. The diversity role causes one to realize that although unique in their different ways; our cultures are what essentially make life more interesting.

References

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