

Cultural competency challenges see details and use only provided sources

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Running Head: CULTURAL COMPETENCY CHALLENGES Cultural competency challenges Cultural competency challenges Muslim is a religious group with many followers all over the world but it is dominant in countries in the Middle East. It is the second most populous religion in the world with diverse cultures, wide ethnicity, social and economic classes. The word Muslim culture can be described as traditions or customs that are characteristic of the Islamic believers across different countries in the world. Culture is described through clothing, foods and eating habits, wedding or marriage practices, respect for the elderly and language (American Psychological Association, 2004, p 6). Islam's have been conservative in preserving their traditional cultural heritage. They religious leaders have formulated such stun measures that govern the interaction of Muslims with the other cultures since they fear that Western culture may dilute their authentic cultures. The Muslim culture put a lot of emphasis on families since they form the basic unit which is a foundation to propagating religion. Families go hand in hand with marriage which is both striking features associated with the Muslim culture. This is because despite all the pressure that a family goes through especially for the extended families where a man is allowed to have more than one wife, the family as an institution still remains strong. Modernization is quickly setting in and the practice of polygamy is under threat because of the changing economic times. In addition, most of the Muslim women undergo female genital mutilation which is mainly practiced among Muslims women in Africa. Authentic Islamic culture strongly discourages the use of family planning methods. Muslim cultures encourage couple to have many children as a way of preserving their religion although

this belief is slowly dying among the Muslims living in Western countries.

Unlike many other cultures that have transformed because of civilization, the Muslims accord respect according to age. Family elders together with elderly parents are believed to have a lot of experience and life skills. In addition, the culture encourages the youths to take care of the aging in their old age since it is a blessing from Allah (Gallardo, Johnson, Parham & Carter, 2009, p 430). Muslim women have for a long time been oppressed by their culture which portrays them as inferior creatures who can only be liberated by men and this has prevented them from progressing. The culture encourages segregation of sexes as a way of discouraging illegitimate relationships between the young boys and girls. Physical contact between male and female is discouraged until marriage where the man automatically takes over the leadership position of heading and providing for the family. From the above description of the unfamiliar Muslim culture, it is evident that it is a hard task to maintain competency in inheriting traditional cultures. Other cultures come in along the way and dilute the original cultures that were set forth by the forefathers (Sue, Capodilupo & Holder, 2008, p 333).

Muslims have been stereotyped for many things including terrorism, brutality, polygamy and wife battering. Such biases and misconceived attitude can water the credibility of a research conducted detailing the Muslim culture. In reality some of the cultures are only a generalization made due to a misconception or information. Media has been on the forefront for associating the Islamic religion with terrorism. There is no proven record that all Muslims are terrorists; in fact there are people of other religions who have been identified for creating terror in some countries

across the world. Such a generalization is misleading given the fact that most of the terror activities are funded by malicious people from the Middle East but that does not necessarily mean that all people who practice Muslim as a religion are terrorists.

As a clinical psychologist, the cultural believes among the Muslims and Western cultures are different. Whereas the west sees nothing amiss with a boy maintaining physical contact with a girl, Muslim culture strongly discourages that. This means that as a psychologist, there is need for sensitivity especially when handling Muslims. For instance Muslim culture discourages men from venturing into medical professions such as gynecology (Bernal, Jimenez-Chafey & Domenech, 2009, p 362). As a result Muslim women will feel more comfortable being attended to by a woman psychologist and same case for men.

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