

Cultural differences

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Every country has contributed in shaping the profound history of the world. However, there are notable countries that greatly impacted societies today. Among many nations in the world, two countries have a rich cultural background: United States of America and Egypt. Although both countries differ in various aspects, the legacy of both nations in present society cannot be overlooked. As such, the differences and similarities of the said countries are needed to be examined in detail in order to further understand their impact in world societies.

United States of America is a federal republic region situated in the North American continent, consisting of 50 states. USA is considered as the third largest and most populous country in the world with an estimated population of 303, 824, 650. Each of the 50 states of USA is further divided into counties. One of the key features of America's culture is diversity. Right before the Europeans and the Africans arrived, United States is already a diverse culture, inhabited by Native American people, who are able to speak 300 different languages.

The Europeans and Africans later added their own varying culture to America's diversity (Boehm, 2008). Meanwhile, Egypt is an Arab Republic country, located in the north-eastern part of Africa and the south-western part of Asia. Unlike the USA which is made up of several states, the terrain of Egypt is made of desert which is divided by the Nile River into two unequal parts, the valley and delta which are the main areas of habitation (Johnson, 2008). Similar to USA, Egypt is also a populous country.

It is noted to be the most populous among the Arab regions (Tristam, 2008). In terms of economic perspective USA is known to have a capitalist economy

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which means that the economic system of the country is controlled by several small groups of people. America's economy benefits a lot in its advanced technology ("How the US Economy Works," 2008). Contrary to America's economy, the Egyptian economy is run and owned by the state, and the country's government plays a significant role in economic planning.

However, just like the USA, Egypt's economy is now moving toward a decentralized and market oriented economy, giving further emphasis on foreign investment ("Egypt: Economy," 2008). This is also due in part with the country's adoption of advanced technology. The economic prosperity of both nations is reliant on natural resources. Likewise, both countries are consistently acquiring substantial gains through labor productivity. However, it has been noted that America is currently experiencing reductions in the worldwide value and status of dollars (CIA, 2008).

Conversely, Egypt's economy is stable and growing. Yet, despite the economic improvements, the country remained in the poor index due to the economy's inability to sustain energy, housing and food to its people (Tristram, 2008). Another point of discussion is centered on the religion of each country. The prominent culture in Egypt in terms of religious perspective is Islam, while majority of the American populace adheres to Christianity which is made up various components. Islam and Christianity trace its roots to the prophet Abraham.

Currently, together with Judaism, Christianity and Islam are three of the greatest monotheistic religion practiced in the world (Ahmad, 2008). The constitution of Egypt stipulates religious freedom, but in practice the liberty to choose religion is severely limited. This is because the legal system in <https://assignbuster.com/cultural-differences-research-paper-samples/>

Egypt follows the law of Islam which is known as Sharia. Hence, despite the claim for religious freedom, religious intolerance, and discrimination against other religious groups is still present in Egypt.

The law recognizes an individual's conversion to Islam, but the law does not tolerate Islam members to convert in other religions (Tristram, 2008). On the other hand, the legal system and religion in America are different set of entities. USA has a tradition of religious tolerance and each individual has the total freedom to choose their religions. The freedom to exercise the choice of religion is incorporated in the US constitution's first amendment. Christianity is the widely practiced religion in the United States. However, there is other religious influence permeating in the United States.

Still, it is claimed that despite the differences Americans remained religious ("Religion," 2008). Islam is ruled by the notion of conservativeness and honor. Such notion strictly applies among all the Egyptians but especially for the women. Egyptian women are expected to behave and dress modestly. Thus, women who reveal themselves by dressing inappropriately, having a loud voice and sensual behavior within the public eye is regarded as a dishonor to their hosts and kin, and is therefore considered as an insult to their families ("Egyptian View point," 2000).

Because religion and state functions are separate in the US, American's especially the women are enjoying their freedom in terms of personal choice of clothing, although there are also Christian groups in America that require appropriate dressing during church services. Despite of the traditional belief in the value of marriage, American society practice and fully recognizes divorce. Islam, on the other hand, although discourages such

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action, does permit and grant divorce upon the initiation of either the husband or wife (Ahmad, 2008).

Human rights record is also a distinct characteristic between the two countries. Egypt's human rights records are poor and showed little improvements in the past years. Egyptian prisons are known for notorious tortures and arbitrary detentions. Torture is not only inflicted among political dissents, but also among ordinary people who were detained due to petty crimes (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Likewise, women and street children are also violated and non-governmental and political organizations are under the unwarranted control of the government.

In addition, the creation of associations is heavily guarded and engagement in political unions is subject to penalties (Human Rights Watch, 2005). United States has long recognized itself as an effective advocate of human rights worldwide and a country that puts into action what it preaches. However, such picture has never been perfect, and America's reputation is undermined by the long standing presence of institutionalized discrimination and the reported coercive interrogation and maltreatment of the detainees in Afghanistan (Human Rights Watch, 2005).

Apparently, Egypt and the United States share little resemblance and myriads of differences. Each country presented cultural backgrounds that are at some point enticing and at times were not. However, whatever similarities and differences that each country has, it is with no doubt that each has managed to influence different nations with their rich cultural background.

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