

Influence of culture on personality essay sample

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I have come to learn, over the course of this summer, that personality is a very interesting yet complex topic in the field of psychology. What is most interesting about the topic is that there are numerous theories that attempt to explain how personality is developed or influenced over time. There are many factors that are said to have an influence on personality, but the one that is most interesting is the idea that personality is shaped by culture. The reason why culture is interesting is because just like personality, culture is also a very complex term that encompasses a lot of factors when we discuss what makes up culture. In using culture as a basis for this paper, I have gathered information on how culture influences personality in different age groups and across genders. By looking at three different articles, I will discuss the content of the articles and their contribution to the said topic. In the article done by David Schmidt, et al. the authors aim to figure out if sex differences exist across cultures when it comes to personality traits, mainly those of the Big Five; openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

The researchers use empirical data and quantitative data gathered from over 50 different cultures to help them determine if sex differences exist in personality traits across cultures. In their study they find that across cultures, personality profiles of men and women become less similar in prosperous societies but in societies where women are seen as equal to men there is no difference. They attempt to explain why this difference exists and find that sex roles are not the reason but suggest that evolutionary theory is a possible answer. Similarly, in article published in 2005 by Robert McCrae and Antonio Terracciano, the two researchers attempt to figure how culture

fits into the equation of developing personality. McCrae and Terracciano argue that there are three ways that personality can be understood within culture: 1. Ethos-used to describe the culture 2. National character-personality traits that are perceived to be prototypical of members of a culture 3. Aggregate personality- characterizes cultures in terms of the assessed mean personality trait levels of culture members (McCrae & Terracciano, 2005).

They used the same method of data collection and analyses, as the previous study, to examine college students from 51 different cultures in order to determine if aggregate personality traits are indicative of personality profiles within cultures. They have found that their study has been useful in characterizing cultures based on the different personality trait but have ruled that is unclear of where the difference in personality have originated. This study, like that last has focused on cross-cultural relationship between personality and culture but however neglected the smaller cultural roles that people take on such as being students, or being parents. Each of which I see as being a culture of their own within a larger culture. In the last article that I have come across, the researchers addressed how the Big Five personality dimensions manifest themselves within the culture of parenting. It is through this manifestation of these dimensions that a culture of parenting begins to form.

Through a research method known as meta-analysis, the researchers combine and compare already existing data to formulate their conclusion. They conclude that when there are changes in the Big Five dimensions of personality in parents, the parental culture shifts. An example given in the <https://assignbuster.com/influence-of-culture-on-personality-essay-sample/>

study as apart of the conclusion is that when there are high levels of every Big Five Dimension except for Neuroticism, the parenting culture reflects warmth and behavior control (Prinz et. al., 2009). As I read each of the articles and I stated briefly before, the first two articles I discussed were closely related to one another in their attempt to explain and develop conclusions around how personality and culture influence or compliment each other. This analysis is clear because both studies focused on cross-cultural analyses. Although the last article that I chose to use did not speak specifically to how culture (in the typical sense of the word) and personality are related, it discussed how personality can affect the subculture of parenting which I thought was interesting and adds more complexity to this already complex topic.

Some of the overall views that all three of the article share is that personality traits constantly change amongst individuals but are largely influenced by the culture that which they are part of. This makes sense because if in my personality I am more introverted than most but my culture tells me to be more extroverted, I am going to try and exhibit what my culture wants also though inherently I am introverted person. Just based on what I have read and the understandings that I have formulated, I think that our personality traits can be altered based on how closely we align ourselves with the cultures that we are around. For example, I am typically an open person, but when I travel places, I am thrown into someone else's culture and because I am not closely aligned with this other culture, I think that I would be less likely to remain open to experiences. Something was unique about the forth article is that it discussed personality in terms of the roles we take on. I think

that this is a pretty important thing to consider because our personality traits will determine how successful we will be in a particular or the outcome of being in that role. The example that the study gave was within the role of parenting but I think it can also be applied to students. I think that this is an interesting take on the personality and culture that the other two articles did not consider.

The biggest things that I learned from reading these studies are that personality traits are not indicative of cultures but rather, cultures are more likely to indicate the type of personalities that people within them are going to have. In essence, personality traits can be developed through evolutionary mechanisms that take place within cultures (i. e. upbringing) but neither of the studies went into detail about that matter but merely speculated. That other big thing that I have learned from reading these studies are that there are many ways to study the relationship between culture and personality and that no one way is the correct way. Each type of study or data collection method can yield results that are relative to the field. I also learned that while both personality and culture are complex topics within themselves that are more complicated in trying to develop answers in how they co-exist.

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