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AN EXPERIENCE AND CHALLENGES**

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THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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The relevance of this research is to point out the purposes of intercultural Communication, barriers and characteristics of an intercultural communicator, examples and what ought to be avoided when interacting with other cultural groups.

Intercultural communication is the interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds. It involves understanding different cultures, languages and customs of people from other countries. That is, a person trying to interact in a foreign environment. For instance, the interaction of people from Ghana and people from Ukraine through communication and other social interactions can be classified as intercultural communication [4].

Purposes of Intercultural Communication

Intercultural Communication helps the people to share information, views, thoughts and their ideas. This is a communication between different cultures of the world. By doing this, we express ourselves and make other people to be aware of our existence and participate in various activities. We educate people about our cultural norms, fulfill our ambitions and achieve our aims.

Barriers to Intercultural Communication

We study briefly about the barriers to intercultural communication which goes thus;

1. Language Differences: This is a major barrier in communication. If you're a foreigner in Ukraine and speak only English and you want to buy

goods from a Salesman that can only speak Ukrainian, then you won't be able to communicate verbally.

2. Body Language: People find body languages offensive. Some people smile and laugh a lot while some find it offensive.

3. Value of Time: A culture's view of time influences how it sees deadlines. Some people believe deadlines are less important, so they take their time to find the best result. While some believe in fast result with limited time.

4. Level of Context: Some culture uses low context. Saying NO when it's a NO is a way of being honest and straightforward, while some are of high context. When they say NO, it might mean YES and they expect you to pick more meaning to the context.

5. Ethnocentrism: This is a natural belief that your culture is better than the culture of others, this may arise to feeling superior over them and not treat them well.

6. Feelings and Emotions: Some people keep a tight control and watch how they feel and react to things around them. Some people like to shout while some find it embarrassing and it may cause them to be scared [3].

Characteristics of Intercultural Communication

A person who is able to pass or convey messages, ideas or information across different cultural group is an intercultural communicator and he or she must possess the following characteristics of ethical communication;

1. He or she must be of the opinion that people are equal, despite that their values and beliefs might be different.

2. He or she must desist from judging negatively or picking the bad side of the behaviour of people from different cultural backgrounds.

3. He or she must be very patient to confirm the meaning of messages conveyed.

4. He or she must make a real effort to learn and understand the language, norms and culture of the people from other cultural backgrounds.

5. He or she must value intercultural cooperation and peaceful conflict reconciliation.

6. He or she must actively interact and treat with respect and dignity, individuals from other cultural backgrounds.

7. He or she must be aware about the religious differences, beliefs and take note of their holidays [1, p. 5].

8. He or she must adapt to the areas with different time-zones.

Examples of Intercultural Communication

Few instances of intercultural communication are as follows;

1. An Ukrainian and a Nigerian sharing their views about culture.

2. A Christian having a conversation with a Muslim.

3. A wife receiving an order from her husband.
4. A polish politician discussing with an American leader.
5. A classroom that comprises of different foreign students.

It should be avoided to abuse the traditions and culture of other people. Slangs and Idioms may not be necessary when you are interacting with people from other cultural backgrounds [2].

Summary. The way we communicate with other people automatically determines the quality of our lives because communication is very important for us to live in a society. Messages and information can be communicated from one person to another, an individual to a few and large gatherings. The listener may be of the same kind of group or different kinds of political groups, ruling people, scientists, doctors and professionals. Intercultural communication is essentially worldwide today to talk about the demands of various groups of people in every nation, race, religion, culture, professions, and politics. Today, we are covered by the worldwide economy, interdependent situation, and intercultural communication is to be put to use beneficially.

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