

Ashlyn Mesidor

Professor Perez

Our America

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Our America Final Paper

The United States is a nation built upon immigration, boasting a vast array of people, cultures, music, cuisine, and sports. Consequently, it is challenging to establish a clear definition of the "typical American family." Moreover, the country features an incredible diversity of geography, climate, and landscapes, making it difficult to generalize about what to do and see. Every city, suburb, and town prides itself on its unique attractions, contributions, and lifestyles. The United States comprises immigrants hailing from various cultures and nations.

Every culture brings something unique to the United States, providing new perspectives on the nation's history. African Americans currently make up 14% of the U.S. population and are residents of the country who typically have African ancestry. The term "black" is more general and encompasses anyone of African descent, including recent immigrants. Asian Americans are the fastest-growing racial group in the country, making up 5.4% of the population and consisting of diverse ethnicities and languages, such as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indian, Laotian, Filipino, Thai, and Vietnamese. Pacific Islanders are a varied group with cultural ties to Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia. They tend to have close-knit communities and follow ancestral customs and traditions that promote honorable lifestyles. The indigenous peoples of the United States make up 1.3% of the population and are an important source of cultural heritage and support for their communities. There are over 500 recognized Native tribes in the USA, and while they share similarities in their heritages and traditions, their cultures vary from nation to nation. Latinos comprise 25% of the K-12 population in the U.S., and educators need to understand the acculturation processes that these children may face when adapting to new

environments. The term "Hispanic" is commonly used in the United States to describe people of Latino and Spanish ancestry, encompassing individuals from over 20 Central and South American countries. For this reason, educators must be aware of the diversity among Hispanic students. Diversity and multiculturalism can benefit societies by broadening perspectives.

However, some societies feel threatened by changes resulting from increasing immigration and geopolitical conflicts. This has led to the emergence of right-wing parties and anti-immigration policies such as Brexit and those adopted by the United States. To investigate the actual impact of immigration on societies and their well-being, the DAVID project was funded by European funds. Previous studies have shown that people in multicultural societies tend to be less trusting of their fellow citizens and politically apathetic or disappointed. The project aimed to assess the impact of ethnic and religious diversity on people's quality of life, health, and well-being globally over three decades, drawing data from surveys conducted in different countries. Surprisingly, the study found that ethnic and religious diversity at the national level was associated with better health and well-being. Although citizens may feel that diversity puts their culture or identity at risk, it actually has a positive effect on the country as a whole. The results provide valuable insights into the discourse on immigration and multiculturalism and contribute to the argument for tolerance, inclusion, and multiculturalism.

Although cultural diversity is often viewed as a problem, it actually presents numerous advantages. The reasons for viewing it as problematic stem from human nature; people tend to resist change, feel insecure in the face of differences, and are not naturally open to new ways of thinking. However, cultural differences actually provide opportunities for personal growth and development. They teach us that our way of thinking is not the only one and that there are numerous ways to approach problems and achieve objectives. Other cultures also offer different perspectives that can broaden our understanding of issues. Additionally, no culture is self-sufficient, and we need other cultures to fill in the gaps in our own. For example, while some cultures emphasize individualism, others prioritize community and working together. Overall,

cultural diversity offers benefits that extend beyond individual gains and enrich the collective experience.

Cultures can be complex but understandable, and there are three ways to identify them in daily life. The first is through how each culture values and manages time. For instance, Nordic cultures prioritize order and punctuality to achieve goals, while Latin cultures prioritize socializing and being together. This doesn't mean that work isn't important, but it is done in conjunction with socializing. Another way to understand cultures is through how they manage space. In some cultures, waiting in line isn't as important as socializing and getting to know each other, so the person with more needs may go to the front of the line. Finally, cultures differ in how they manage interpersonal relationships. In some cultures, the focus is on individualistic problem-solving, while in others, social networking and working together as a group is more effective. The diversity of cultures is valuable because it allows us to learn from each other and to recognize what can make us better. The strength of diverse cultures lies in their differences rather than their similarities.

