Cultural Awareness

Name

Institution

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Culture refers to the beliefs, values, and norms that guide how a particular group of people lives. The personality of individuals born within a specific community develops initially from the thoughts and actions influenced by the traditions. A child grows with constant information on the conduct expected in society. The community's regulations will guide individuals' views and behavior. People often adopt the value systems they were familiar with from childhood. According to Diener and Lucas (2019), the distinct trends of actions, thoughts, and feelings are portrayed through a person's character traits. Personality, therefore, is the reflection of how society has shaped the emotions and conduct of a human being.

Attitude portrays the response people give towards their environment, which changes from one individual to another. For example, an introvert will feel emotionally drained in a large crowd while an extrovert will be jovial in a similar setting. Attitudes can be revealed through facial or physiological expression. Research studies on human behavior show that people portray the same bodily feelings to different emotional events, regardless of their cultural background (Tsai, 2019). The facial expression, however, varies from one individual to another, revealing the influence of one's environment. People deal with emotions differently, depending on cultural origin.

Research studies by psychologists revealed that the different personalities influenced by culture and portrayed by people shaped could be classified into five broad traits that include openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeable, and neuroticism (Diener & Lucas, 2019).Open individuals appreciate diversity in ideas, feelings, behaviors, and values, while conscientious people tend to be hardworking and careful to follow the rules. The friendly and talkative people are extraverted while those that go along with the opinion and choices of others are agreeable. Neurotics portray interpersonal sensitivity with several negative emotions, such as anger and worry (Diener & Lucas, 2019). According to Donnellan (2019), individuals' response to their environment facilitates personality change. Therefore, it is possible to transform from one-character trait to another depending on the surroundings.

Cultural differences can affect the functioning of a team if the members are unwilling to accommodate the values, beliefs, and abilities of others. Communication is a vital component for the success of projects carried out in work groups. Effectiveness of a message is achieved when a listener understands the speaker clearly. When a team is comprised of individuals from the same ethnic background, information flows effectively between speakers and listeners. Diversity in a group can affect interaction if some members have difficulty in expressing themselves in the universal language. Employees should have patience with individuals who have heavy accents that influence their communication.

People from cultural backgrounds with patriarchal characteristics tend to undermine women's leadership. The man is believed to be the leader in the family and the society while the woman takes the supporting role. Existence of a glass ceiling discourages female employees from undertaking positions for which they are qualified. Men with patriarchal character traits contribute to the burden of the artificial barrier by frustrating their female colleagues in their roles. Female team leaders have to deal with immense negativity in the workplace to effectively execute their duties. Performance of teams whose members consist of competent women with low esteem is affected by the failure of the workers to offer their expertise for lack of confidence.

Differences in age and physical and mental abilities affect the functioning of a team when some members perceive others as inferior. Older and more experienced employees in a group can undermine the input of individuals they consider young whose ideas might be beneficial to the projects undertaken. Physically challenged members may be limited to do manual work but possess excellent planning skills. If their competency is sidelined in a group, the outcome of the tasks carried out is negatively affected.

Employees from an individualistic culture may perform poorly in group work due to the self-centered characteristic nurtured within them. Such workers excel in tasks that require less interaction with other people, such as research and design. Collectivistic cultures shape the characters of their members to value teamwork in the execution of duties. Such employees thrive in group-related activities since they have learned how to collaborate with others. Stereotyping of cultures can result in the development of attitudes and biases, which impact the effectiveness of group work negatively. When members fail to support the mission of the team because their leader comes from a perceived inferior ethnic background, the performance of that group will be dismal.

The understanding of the local sample rules will help individuals to appropriately express their feelings and avoid compromising the cohesion that exists among teammates. If a member disagrees with the majority's decision, he or she should control the reaction towards the choice made. The employee is expected to support the team's agenda, regardless of how they feel about it. Disagreements and conflicts are a common occurrence when people work together. Different members believe that their suggestions are significant in solving the group's challenges. Understanding the difference in character among people helps in recognizing the traits that are either beneficial or detrimental to the group. Team leaders can delegate work appropriately, reducing the chances of conflicts. For example, highly conscientious employees should handle tasks that require delicacy in execution, such as preparation and review of reports, while highly open employees should take part in planning and organization of activities since they accommodate other people's opinions.

The change that I need to make to be successful in a diverse work group is to accept the differences in personality traits that exist in the team and facilitate appropriate allocation of tasks among the members. Belonging to a group in which I barely know the personalities of the teammates will likely create conflict if I apply the same approach of interaction on all the employees. I should take time to learn the individual strengths and weaknesses to be aware of the different emotional responses each member portrays. One method of identifying the diverse characters in a team is using the informant ratings. This approach involves asking someone who knows and interacts with a particular member well to describe their personality characteristics (Watson, 2019). Knowledge of traits will assist in applying the appropriate method of interaction, such as minimal audience for introverted employees.

I believe that high performing teams are comprised of individuals with roles that suit their character traits. Allocation of tasks according to personality types increases the effectiveness in the execution of duties. For example, people who possess an individualistic character will perform well in the

group if they are given roles that require single-handed input, such as research work. Extraverted members can take project presentation tasks due to their friendly and talkative nature. Individuals with a high score on openness are likely to perform well in group work because of their willingness to accommodate different ideas (Diener & Lucas, 2019). Cultural awareness creates a foundation for acknowledging the existence of differences in character and seeking ways of socializing with people without undermining their traditional backgrounds. Excellent performance of teams comprised of individuals with diverse personalities is achieved when all members support one another in their strengths and develop patience with the weaknesses.