Cross-Cultural Dynamics

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November 9, 2023

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Assignment

### *Developmental Readings*

Review Assignment #3, the course essential elements, assigned readings, and recommended readings to identify selections of books and scholarly articles to identify and select developmental reading sources and entries.

* Refer to the “[Student Guide to Developmental Readings](https://drive.google.com/file/d/161V_FaYR2BnNGCSFUlWPjUSIQzcH04Hq/view?usp=share_link)” for updated information on sample comments, rubrics, and key definitions related to developmental readings.

**Source One:** Aririguzoh, S. (2022). Communication competencies, culture, and SDGs: Effective processes to cross-cultural communication.*Humanities & Social Sciences Communications, 9*(1) https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01109-4

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:**

“Culture literate communicators can help clear some of these challenges, create more tolerant communicators, and contribute to achieving global sustainable goals” (1).

**Essential Element:**

Cross-cultural communication work incorporates understanding worldviews through varied and complex perceptions; and exposure to scientific research designed to help students understand and form relationships; and engage in community development

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

Placing literacy in the context of cultural communication is an additive to my knowledge of cultural competencies.

**Contextualization:**

Years ago, when I heard the word literacy, I associated it with knowing how to read or understand words and sentences. For years now I have come to learn about financial literacy, or health literacy and now I can add into my vocabulary cultural literacy. It is such a profound concept. If you think about it, literacy means knowing how to read and cultural literacy can mean knowing how to read people of a different culture than your own. My meaning of cultural literacy is being aware that there are people that have different customs, habits, ways of life and traditions than one’s own. Cultural literacy can come from reading a book about a particular culture, visiting the museum and learning the history of different ethnicities and cultures or watching movies that center around a specific culture. Movies such as my Big Fat Greek Wedding or Crazy Rich Asians give the audience a glimpse of the culture's idiosyncrasies and customs. Although not totally genuine, you do get an idea.

Experiencing another culture firsthand may be the most authentic way to gain an understanding of the culture and attain cultural literacy. Spending a significant amount of time with a different culture gives one the opportunity to learn their language (if different), learn their faith or religious tradition, understand how they communicate non-verbally, become accustomed to their cooking, eating, and dining habits, and understand their ways of socialization.

 Years ago I was a mentor for returning citizens from prison. My protegee was an African American woman not too far from my own age. She invited me to go to her Alcoholics Anonymous meeting which was not too far from my church in Washington, D.C. Those who have struggled with substance abuse have their own culture. They have their own slang that they use to communicate. They have their own activities and their shared habits on how they manage their finances and survive from day to day. Attending the meeting was not the most pleasant experience for me but I agreed to go because I wanted to understand her culture.

One thing I learned is that they curse profusely when sharing their testimony of alcohol abuse. It's not that I was unfamiliar with profanity, I grew up with it and also cursed before I became born again. It was just the fact that everyone in the meeting used a curse word to explain the most trivial thing about their day. They also seemed very angry. My belief is that, unless the Holy Spirit delivers you from any type of addiction, you will always be in bondage and not be your best self. As far as cultural literacy goes, experiencing another culture first hand may not be easy but it does give more appreciation of that culture’s ideologies and worldview.

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase**

Monochronic cultures are known for doing one thing at a time. Western Europe is monochronic in time orientation, as illustrated by the familiar adage that says, “There is a time and place for everything!” Persons from this cultural background are very punctual and strictly adhere to plans. They are task-oriented. Polychronic cultures schedule multiple tasks simultaneously, even though there may be distractions and interruptions while completing them. Plans may often change at short notice. Such different time management and usage may constrict effective communication (p. 4).

**Essential Element:**

Cross-cultural understanding informs a multidisciplinary approach integrating human science, biblical and theological studies, missiology; and mega-skills necessary to communicate in an era of postmodernism and globalization

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

Although the terms monochronic and polychronic are an addition to my vocabulary the contextual meaning that the author has provided is variant to my understanding of these concepts.

**Contextualization:**

If a culture is monochronic, meaning they prefer to do things one at a time, then I do not understand how their adherence or non-adherence to punctuality is related. It seems that if I am the type of person who likes to do one thing at a time instead of multitasking, this would not affect my being late or on time. Personally, I am able to multitask and still be on time. As a matter of fact, it seems that multitasking would even help one be on time. Some cultures may in fact be inept at time management but that does not mean that they cannot multitask and complete a project with efficiency.

There is a known phrase COP or colored people time. This is believed to stem from the culture of our African ancestry. Do other cultures view black people as polychronic? To be honest with you, when it comes to the business culture, church culture, and even day-to-day activities, I do not personally view black people in general as always late. However, I will say that I have experienced the African culture firsthand, and they have low regard for deadlines or time standards. It would be in my best interest to further research the nuances of monochronic and polychronic cultures to gain a better understanding.

“Deeply exogenic cultures look outside themselves to make sense of life. Hence, they believe in God and His power to intervene in the affairs of men. Endogenic cultures draw on themselves when searching for the meaning of life. They think they can generate solutions to tackle the problems facing them” (p. 5).

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase**

“Deeply exogenic cultures look outside themselves to make sense of life. Hence, they believe in God and His power to intervene in the affairs of men. Endogenic cultures draw on themselves when searching for the meaning of life. They think they can generate solutions to tackle the problems facing them” (p. 5).

**Essential Element:**

Cross-cultural understanding informs a multidisciplinary approach integrating human science, biblical and theological studies, missiology; and mega-skills necessary to communicate in an era of postmodernism and globalization

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

Exogenic and Endogenic are an addition to my vocabulary and enhance my understanding of cross-cultural dynamics.

**Contextualization:**

Here in the United States, it is my belief that Caucasians at large are endogenic and African Americans at large (whether born-again Christians or not) are exogenic. As an African-American, I can confidently assert, that we as a people do not rely on our own strength or wisdom. Even if referred to as a higher power (which I do not condone) black people in the United States do not possess the hubristic ideology that we accomplish all things in and of ourselves. We believe that we have divine help, divine wisdom, divine strength, and divine intervention. From my observation, and experience in working with other cultures, those who do not confess to being Christian, do not acknowledge anyone or anything outside of their own intellect or physical strength. This, in my opinion, is very dangerous and naïve.

Putting too much confidence in one’s ability does not allow one to gain strength in the time of weakness, which we all face. Overconfidence in one’s own on intellect does not allow one to resource wisdom or revelation on how to handle a particular situation. This overconfidence leads to cowardly acts in order to cover mistakes, an isolationist way of life, and not having the humility to ask for help or admit that one is in need of assistance in order to complete a task.

It is my belief that the reason African Americans survived slavery or Jews survived the holocaust, is because they knew God was on their side and holding them up. God would one day, intervene and take out the Pharaohs or the Masters or the Dictators and rescue them. We all need to be rescued at some point in our lives. As a property manager, I’ve been able to work with a few different cultures outside my own and have appreciated the shared exogenic beliefs of certain cultures.

**Source Two:** Capiberibe, A. (2021). Reaching souls, liberating lands: Cross-cultural evangelical missions and Bolsonaro's government.*Brazilian Political Science Review, 15*(2), 1-22. https://doi.org/10.1590/1981-3821202100020002

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase**

“Because of the theology and the behavioral ethos involved, these cross-cultural missions are becoming agents of a depoliticized action, a form of action that is opposite to a democratic political action aimed at some sort of collective social transformation” (p. 6).

**Essential Element:**

The Biblical core and the theological foundation of the mission mandate will be explored with a focus on the biblical and the uniqueness of Christ in mission theology and a pluralistic world.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

The assessment of the cross-cultural missions in Brazil is an addition to my knowledge of missiology and cross-cultural dynamics.

**Contextualization:**

My first thought with the author’s statement is that the depoliticization of missionary work is a good thing. Unless the mission work is harming people or exploiting them, the government does not need to intervene. Here, however, the author is not happy with the methods of the missionaries. Apparently, they have not respected the culture’s traditions, nor sought to understand their political or governing ideologies. The larger question for me is how one conducts missions inside of a unique cultural setting while still respecting the tribal governing system, traditions, and customs. Allowing a democratic process while at the same time teaching Christ, salvation, and redemption is the nuance needed. Understanding the group’s history of governing and social power would help in this scenario and then contextualizing scripture, and finding stories in the bible that may fit their customs would help.

When conducting missions in a foreign land, where the way of life is totally different than one’s own, protecting the group’s autonomy and agency is necessary. About ten years ago, a prominent Florida pastor came to my church, as he was allowed to advertise his annual crusade that was going to occur at Constitution Hall. They were seeking volunteers to help in witnessing and working the altar. As an Evangelist, this was right up my alley, so I volunteered. After participating that first night, the ministry’s methods left a bad taste in my mouth. What I observed made me feel uncomfortable. As their evangelistic team made the altar call, I listened to how they spoke to men and women in the audience exhorting them to come up to the altar and accept Christ.

Their teams had distributed flyers all across DC, mainly in low-income neighborhoods. This I had no problem with but I felt as if they spoke to people in a disrespectful and prideful way and were exerting too much force. This is not the same context as missionary work in foreign lands but It is the best example I have to write about. When witnessing Christ, an approach of humility, gentleness, and kindness as well as sensitivity towards the culture shows forth Christ’s character the best and will draw many souls to the kingdom.

**Source Three:** Mookgo, S. K. (2023). Cultural challenges about migration in the apostolic faith mission international ministries United Kingdom: An ethnographic approach.*The International Journal of Critical Cultural Studies, 21*(2), 43-53. https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-0055/CGP/v21i02/43-53

**Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase**

.Even when or if they try to win them, the reality is that they might struggle to create fellowship with such people because fellowship in an African context means eating together, sharing, and to some higher level such as even trying to help one another. The point here is should the British people join the AFMIMUK, they are more likely to feel isolated in this communal life and way of doing things. Thus, the challenge is for the AFMIMUK to assimilate into the lifestyle of the UK to make more members or to convert people to values as per their mission p. 47).

**Essential Element:**

The Biblical core and the theological foundation of the mission mandate will be explored with a focus on the biblical and the uniqueness of Christ in mission theology and a pluralistic world.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

The missiological efforts of the AFMIMUK ministry in the UK are an addition to my knowledge of missiology and cross-cultural dynamics.

**Contextualization:**

This is a perfect example of first seeking to understand a culture before even trying to communicate with them and then putting forth an effort to draw them to Christ. Black and White people, for the most part, have different worshiping styles. As an African or African American, it is one thing to witness Christ to a Caucasian or White British on the street and then it is another to successfully disciple them into joining one’s church. From my understanding, the White British culture is mostly exogenic in that they do not recognize God as a helper and Saviour. The African culture is mostly endogenic. They recognize God’s help and intervention in practically everything they do. Africans are also more verbally and physically expressive with their faith. They praise God with their bodies, tears, and voices.

It is a profound question of whether it is necessary that every convert be a member of the AFMIMUK church. Members of the AFMIMUK would do well in participating in local civic meetings, getting to know the community, attending their community events, and fellowshipping over food and fun. Perhaps there can be shared activities such as food drives and activities for kids sponsored by the AFMIMUK. It is after this cultural exchange that the two cultures can perhaps worship together. It may be that many of the White British community may accept Christ but then find a church that they feel more comfortable worshipping in unless the AFMIMUK adjusts some of the aspects of their worship service to make the White British members feel more at home. Getting them involved in the liturgy and activities of the church will certainly help.

The culture of the neighborhood my church is in is slowly changing. Gentrification began a few years ago and we are not building a new church behind the existing one to match the local landscape. The one thing I can is that while we may be successful in building an edifice that matches its surroundings, the culture inside the church will have to change in order that the new local residents, meaning White and Asian, will not only want to visit our services but stay.

 **Comment 6:**

 **Quote/Paraphrase:**

To know them, one must de-robe themselves of their own culture by not necessarily losing it but to de-robe themselves of worldview, beliefs, and values. To begin to learn about them, eat their food, learn about their pain, learn about their joy, and learn what stimulates them. Learn their history, and how they came to where they are. Learn the reasons for their beliefs. Only when one has learned that over a period of engaging and relating with them can the true gospel become authentic (p. 49).

**Essential Element:**

The Biblical core and the theological foundation of the mission mandate will be explored with a focus on the biblical and the uniqueness of Christ in mission theology and a pluralistic world.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

The concept of de-robing is a new concept and an addition to my knowledge of cross-cultural missions. It is also, in a way variant to my understanding of cross-cultural evangelism.

**Contextualization:**

The author’s suggestion on how to interact and connect with those of a different culture is quite profound. The concept of de-robing, in my view, means to strip oneself of pre-conceived notions, stereotypes as well as inhibitions. While I do agree with the author’s suggestion to de-robe of one’s worldviews, I do not agree with letting go of one’s beliefs and values. A worldview is a perspective of the world, past and current phenomena, and the reason for the current state of society. Because of past experiences, child-rearing, religious beliefs, and cultural socialization, our worldviews are different.

Before I can connect with another culture, I have to be willing to see the worldview from their perspective after I have had conversations with the other and allowed them to communicate their past, their traditions, their desires, and their meaning of life. My values, however, shall remain the same while synonymously respecting their values. What is important and priority for their family or future may not be the same for mine.

There are different cultures even within one’s own extended family. My mother’s side of the family, my cousins, past aunts and uncles grew up in a different culture than I did. Although we are all African American, speak the English and most of us believe in God, when visiting them in Pittsburgh, I feel as if I am in a foreign land. We are quite different when it comes to our value systems, our worldview, and our way of life. My life has always had structure, and adherence to precepts, rules, and regulations, and I’ve conducted my life, for the most part with self-control. My life has had much joy and theirs has had much sorrow and regret. My life has included opportunity, culture, and education and theirs has not. When we get together, we can converse but there are not many things in common. Although many of them believe in God, they have not accepted Christ and surrendered their life wholeheartedly to God. My way of witnessing and evangelizing is to find things in common, such as a love for cooking or movies. It is also important that I give them space to be themselves and share their day-to-day experiences. It is not that I am above them, I was just raised in a healthier atmosphere and have had more opportunities for success. Only after an atmosphere of love respect and understanding in a no-judgment zone is created that I can lead them to Christ or influence them to elevate their way of thinking and living.

**Source Four:** Shamne, N. L., Milovanova, M. V., & Malushko, E. Y. (2019). Cross-cultural professional communication in the context of globalization.*IOP Conference Series.Materials Science and Engineering, 483*(1) <https://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899X/483/1/012081>

 **Comment 7:**

 **Quote/Paraphrase:**

“However, it is almost impossible to characterize the process and the result of forming business relations solely due to the so-called endogenous factors. There also exist many exogenous characteristics that are not so closely related to specific business relations but affect the process of communication from the outside and are hardly changeable in the course of cross-cultural interaction” (p. 2).

**Essential Element:**

Cross-cultural understanding informs a multidisciplinary approach integrating human science, biblical and theological studies, missiology; and mega-skills necessary to communicate in an era of postmodernism and globalization

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

Endogenous and exogenous factors in cross-cultural business relationships are new constructs and an addition to my knowledge of cross-cultural relations.

**Contextualization:**

Endogenous stems from the root word in or within and exogenous stems from the root word without or outside of. It makes sense that there are many internal cultural factors to consider when corporations or industries attempt to collaborate. Endogenous factors such as the existing values, management styles, and ideologies of one corporation will be different than another. Exogenous factors may be climate, economic climate geographical setting, the culture of competing companies, as well as sociopolitical determinants.

In my own desire to start a faith-based, fashionable t-shirt company and a desire to appeal to different cultures within the Christian community, endogenous and exogenous, I imagine would have to be considered. My desire is not to appeal to one demographic or denomination but to a variety of cultures that confess Christ as Saviour. Each denomination within the Christian community has its own culture. The Pentecostal community has a different culture than the Baptist and the Catholic community ascribes to a different set of values, and ideas than the Methodist community.

Sociodemographic, fashion tastes, and institutional values are to be assessed in order to sell my brand to a variety of cultures so that the message and price point is accepted. It is even a desire to appeal to those who have yet accepted Christ or adhere to biblical truths. They may decide to buy my t-shirts solely based on the aesthetics of the apparel.

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:**

“Business climate (atmosphere) and business culture are not the same, they are just related. Climate is a pattern by which the daily life of the organization is built. Culture is the basis of the organization, its originality and individuality” (p. 4).

**Essential Element:**

Cross-cultural understanding informs a multidisciplinary approach integrating human science, biblical and theological studies, missiology; and mega-skills necessary to communicate in an era of postmodernism and globalization

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

The distinction and connection between business climate and business culture is an enhancement to my knowledge of cross-cultural understanding

**Contextualization:**

When attempting to do business with another organization, many miss the importance of knowing the current business climate in which the other organization is operating and the unique culture that exists within the organization. A business’s culture may actually clash with the existing business climate. One company that has been steadfast in maintaining its business culture despite the business climate is Chick-fil-A. It has a culture of friendly, warm customer service, quality chicken, and adherence to Sunday as a sacred day on which business is not conducted.

The current climate in which it operates is the idolatrous, sociocultural relativity of many other businesses. Many businesses feel they have to engage in the culture war we are experiencing and take sides on issues such as gay or abortion rights. Chick-Fil-A has not wavered in its ideologies and does not feel pressured to accept cultural norms. It also maintains a business model of reasonable wages and benefits despite companies who take a top trickle-down approach.

**Source Five:** Mei, L. F., Canham, S. L., & Battersby, L. (2023). Supporting intersecting cultural needs of gender and age by increasing cultural safety and humility for housing first initiatives.*BMC Public Health, 23*, 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-15955-7

 **Comment 9:**

 **Quote/Paraphrase:**

“Cultural safety refers to an environment where individuals feel respected, valued, and safe from cultural harm or discrimination [27]. It involves recognizing and addressing power imbalances, prejudices, and systemic barriers that may impact marginalized populations” (p. 14).

 **Essential Element:**

Cross-cultural understanding informs a multidisciplinary approach integrating human science, biblical and theological studies, missiology; and mega-skills necessary to communicate in an era of postmodernism and globalization

 **Additive/Variant Analysis:**

The concept of cultural safety is an addition to my knowledge in the area of cultural understanding

 **Contextualization:**

This concept of keeping culture safe and even preserved is a profound one. It is my assessment that discrimination, prejudices, and power imbalances would even be avoided in an effort to keep a particular culture safe. My experience with this construct is the safety of the culture of one. One person. Years ago, I managed a senior citizens apartment building that was ninety-nine percent Korean. There was one Caucasian in the building. Her name was Rita. A majority of the Korean residents did not speak English and they were all close-knit, with most of them belonging to the same church just maybe one hundred feet away from the building. From my understanding, no discrimination occurred while the apartment building was being constructed and applicants were processed.

The large Korean church members as well as their friends or relatives literally waited outside of the building the night before applications were to be received. The culture of this apartment was distinct. They all shopped at the same grocery store, ate the same foods, were very dedicated members of their church, and were very communal. They had immigrated from Korea, were married (unless their spouse was deceased), and had raised successful Korean American children. There was also a small chapel in the building but by law, a person of any faith could use it to pray and worship.

Rita was culturally isolated and felt left out. It was my job as a property manager to notice if residents were not participating in leisure activities or rarely coming out of their apartments. It was a joy to plan activities such as setting up the Nintendo Wii game, setting up arts and crafts, or bringing in entertainment for them to enjoy. It was obvious after several months, that Rita was not participating. This was not her culture, and she was the only white resident in the building.

One day I approached Rita and asked her why she did not participate in certain events. She felt discriminated against and unseen. Her cultural values and ideas had not been valued and were not safe.

This was hard to hear but it was also a personal challenge to me to make her feel welcome. From then on it was going to be my personal mission to invite her and connect her with other residents that she could socialize with. Most of the time, I arranged to have American food, and the Korean residents on occasion would bring a Korean dish to share. If I had to sit in the activity room for a little while and hang out with Rita, that’s what I did. Certainly, if she was neglected, it was not my intention. It’s easy to cater to the masses while ignoring the one. Those in power, authority, or leadership have a duty to recognize everyone. While it is not possible to appease one hundred percent of the people, one hundred percent of the time, it is a leader’s duty to recognize the needs, and values of all they serve. This includes Pastors, community leaders and business managers.

 **Comment 10:**

“Cultural humility, on the other hand, is an ongoing process of self-reflection and learning that enables service providers to be open, respectful, and adaptable when working with diverse populations [31]. It acknowledges that no single cultural perspective is universally applicable and encourages service providers to engage in a continuous process of learning and adaptation to best serve the unique needs of each individual” (p. 14).

**Essential Element:**

Cross-cultural understanding informs a multidisciplinary approach integrating human science, biblical and theological studies, missiology; and mega-skills necessary to communicate in an era of postmodernism and globalization

 **Additive/Variant Analysis:**

The concept of cultural humility is an addition to my knowledge of cultural understanding.

 **Contextualization:**

How difficult is humility in any context? In today’s society where a large portion of the population is averse to diversity and cultural exchange, humility is almost impossible. As a mass of immigrants attempt to flood the U.S. borders, gradually infiltrate local communities and social squares, humility stands out as an important virtue to possess. Especially as Christians. One’s sole culture is not the wisest, most sophisticated, or most important, especially in the eyes of God. All cultures have bad apples, success stories, historical significance, trials, and victories.

As a property manager, it may be hard to believe that I have had to inculcate and promote cultural sensitivity and humility in some of the buildings I have managed. It is not uncommon that many of my African American residents will get frustrated with the Hispanic or Ethiopian population living in the same building. They get upset with the smell of their food coming through the vents, the fact that they may not speak English, their unique body odor, and their cultural practices such as the way they parent their children or their communal dinners. Thankfully the law protects residents in that as long as their cultural practices are not causing harm to anyone else, they are committing no violations.

The law stands as my partner in navigating various ethnicities that live in the same building. I’ve had residents ask me if I can make another resident stop cooking after midnight. The answer is no I cannot. The reality is that within our apartment buildings and our neighborhoods there are shared spaces, and everyone should feel safe and welcome. My response to complaining residents is that others may not like the smell of their cooking or like their body odor or like the clothes they wear. God made us all distinct and there is no respect of persons.

**Source Six:** Mwanri, L., Miller, E., Walsh, M., Baak, M., & Ziersch, A. (2023). Social capital and rural health for refugee communities in Australia.*International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 20*(3), 2378. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20032378

**Comment 11:**

 **Quote/Paraphrase:**

“In this context, our data suggest that building on the strength of social capital in cultural communities through the formation of bridging ties with members of majority communities can have positive outcomes” (pp. 12-13).

**Essential Element:**

Cross-cultural communication work incorporates understanding worldviews through varied and complex perceptions; and exposure to scientific research designed to help students understand and form relationships; and engage in community development

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

The intersection of social capital and cultural dynamics is an addition to my knowledge of cross-cultural understanding.

**Contextualization:**

The use and benefit of social capital within affordable housing has been an intriguing construct for me for the last two OGS Cores. Because of a surge of mixed-income housing developments in the District of Columbia, cross-cultural understanding and awareness are now imperative and the idea of creating social capital through social resources amongst people of varied cultures is even more intriguing. Bridging the gap between the two or more cultures can be difficult. However difficult it is, two cultures can gain from each other in the area of home management ideas, meal planning, and recipes, learning new languages, job referrals, and more.

In a mixed-income apartment building, the dominant culture may be Caucasian American by the fact that whites tend to earn a higher income in most inner cities. The apartment building would probably only have a small percentage of affordable units that would usually house immigrants or African Americans. In my observations, as a traditionally dominant culture, Whites are not as culturally sensitive and have not been as racially socialized as other ethnicities, therefore they may not possess cultural humility. Property Managers such as myself and affordable housing industry leaders have the task of creating an atmosphere of cultural awareness that will create opportunities for bridging, bonding, and social capital.

**Source Seven:** Gaio, A; Rosewall, E., Wroblewski. (2019). *Sustainable Cultural Management*.

 **Comment 12:**

 **Quote/Paraphrase:**

“Grid-group cultural theory distinguishes three mainways of life, or cultures: individualist, egalitarian, and hierarchial. Each culture has its own orientation to nature and specific conceptualization of needs and resources by which its members justify their set of behavioral strategies (p. 116).

**Essential Element:**

Cross-cultural understanding informs a multidisciplinary approach integrating human science, biblical and theological studies, missiology; and mega-skills necessary to communicate in an era of postmodernism and globalization

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**

The grid-group cultural theory is an additive to my knowledge of cross-cultural understanding.

**Contextualization:**

The grid described is an intriguing theory and in this example, that can apply to various milieus such as corporations, nations and even churches. An egalitarian culture is perhaps ideal but because of sin, selfishness, and pride it is quite difficult to achieve. The egalitarian culture will have balanced power, no distinct hierarchies and individuals will share and assist each other. There would be not central authority figure. Honestly, it may not be realistic for any group or even relationship to be totally egalitarian although there can be some aspects of it within the dynamic.

Some may say that America has a hierarchal culture. Many cultures such as India, and African have more of a communal, egalitarian culture. Perhaps all three cultures exist in America which has why there has always been culture wars in our country.

The critical question is what happens when the cultures on this grid interact or clash?

**Source Eight:** Bowman, J. (2023). *Cross-cultural missional partnership: mediating relational, cultural, and hermeneutical tensions for mutual, faithful missional engagement* (American society of missiology monograph series). Pickwick.

 **Comment 13:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:**

“Cross-cultural tensions may never disappear, but within a healthy partnership, partners can assist one another in understanding and responding faithfully to Scripture” (p. 1).

**Essential Elements:**

The Biblical core and the theological foundation of the mission mandate will be explored with a focus on the biblical and the uniqueness of Christ in mission theology and a pluralistic world.

**Additive/Variant Analysis**:

The element of cross-cultural tensions and how to handle them is an addition to my knowledge of cross-cultural dynamics.

**Contextualization:**

How does one overcome or engage in cross-cultural tensions? These tensions can arise at work in a neighborhood and even in missions where one is trying to witness Christ, but a misunderstanding can happen. Just yesterday, I encountered a tense moment with someone from another culture in the beauty supply store in my city. During my work hours, I decided to take a quick break to walk to Georgia Avenue to get some beauty supply products. First, I went into the beauty supply store to check if they had my preferred brand and to check the cost. They did have the brand, but I knew Walmart across the street would be much cheaper.

Upon leaving the store, I unnecessarily told the cashier (maybe the owner) that I was going to Walmart. Walmart had run out of one item and did not sell the other. I was only able to purchase one item and had to go back across the street. As soon as I opened the door to the beauty supply store, I showed the cashier my conditioner and receipt and let her know I was bringing something in. She immediately said to me “Give it to me”. Although I was obliged, I thought she could have said it a little nicer. Tip #1, don’t sweat the small stuff. As I proceeded to walk down the aisle to grab my shampoo and gel, she said “Give me that too”, meaning my receipt. Here is where the tension began.

I approached her and said, “You need the receipt too?” She stated with a loud voice “Yes, I want to put it with this”, meaning the conditioner I brought in. To be honest, I cannot remember her exact words upon taking the receipt because she was so loud. That is a no-no. First of all, I was the one who voluntarily let her know that I brought an item in from Walmart. Of course, this was necessary, so they would not think I had stolen it from their store. I stated in a soft tone, “Don’t yell, don’t yell” as I handed her the receipt and walked away. I heard her say “I don’t understand”. What was there not to understand? Speak to people in a mannerly tone. Plain and simple. The old me would have matched my tone with hers. Thank you Holy Spirit.

Tip #2, don’t escalate the situation further. I quickly grabbed the items I needed and came back to her to pay for them. She immediately apologized. “I accept your apology”, I stated. I believe the lady was Ethiopian and owned the store with her husband/family. They definitely communicate differently than others, including African Americans. From my experience managing an apartment building that was sixty-fiver percent Ethiopian, I would know. For me, it was disrespectful and a little embarrassing. For her, I choose to see it as a learning lesson on how she should speak to the customers.

What if one day I wanted to go back to the store and witness Christ to her? How would she receive me? This is what I think about when I interact with strangers and even when conflict or tension arises because of miscommunication. It is important that I watch my tone and mannerisms, even when I am disagreeing with someone. Everyone is a soul that will prayerfully be reconciled to Christ. It was very professional of the beauty store owner to apologize, and it was my responsibility not to wear my feelings on my shoulders. It is very hard for me not to correct people. I’m still learning. Tip #3, maintain humility. My goal is to represent Christ everywhere I go.

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