

**INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION  
IN  
PRACTICE:  
CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS**

***Acep Haryudin, M.Pd***

Anxiety

Ethnocentrism

Assumption of similarity

Prejudice

Language Barrier

Cultural Relativism

Effective communication is a skill that few people possess and even fewer people can get their point across when there is a cross cultural barrier. Cross cultural or intercultural communication is a part of the interaction of different people from different backgrounds and heritages.

# 1. ANXIETY

Anxiety is usually defined as a state of human condition where a person has a feeling of unease and nervousness. It is even sometimes associated with the feeling of an unrealistic fear. Anxiety usually occurs when a person usually comes across his or her first cross cultural interaction

## 2. ETHNOCENTRISM

Ethnocentrism is a perception that an individual has for someone else's culture and heritage as being inferior to his or her own culture and heritage (Coopman and Lull). The perception basically encompasses a wide range of assumptions regarding the culture as being morally correct and rational in all ways possible.

### 3. ASSUMPTION OF SIMILARITY

Sometimes people assume that two cultures are not different, but are similar in their nature. For example, if an Arab prefers to drink coffee instead of tea then others assume that coffee is a popular drink in UAE. This is not always true as people from different cultures have different preferences. The preference of a person or a group of people does not reflect the entire culture

## 4. PREJUDICE

Prejudice is another notable and important barrier to cross cultural communication. Prejudice refers to irrational judgments passed on certain groups or individuals (Flinders 3). It refers to a primary negative perception created by individuals on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, cast or language.

## 5. LANGUAGE BARRIER

Language is an exchange gate of communication. It refers to a source which exchanges values, ideas, and thoughts between two exchange groups. If exchange groups are cross cultural, definitely language can be a major barrier of exchange (Velo). Communication gap is there due to differences in language between exchange groups



## 6. CULTURAL RELATIVISM

Cultural relativism is another most notable barrier of intercultural communication. The denial of others' values and cultures for the augmentation of self values and cultures refers to cultural relativism (Flinders 7). Cultural relativism is a notion that reflects the superiority of a certain group. The denial of others' values makes cultural relativism a prominent barrier of cross-cultural communication. It is the same like imposing your conceptions on others' morals and conceptions

# CONCLUSION

Communication is the exchange of messages, which takes place across two certain groups. It is a skill that some people have and especially those who live in a cross-cultural setting. Intercultural communication is the interaction of people.

People from different values, cultures and backgrounds have to deal with issues of intercultural communication. There are certain barriers that come across intercultural communication. Barriers such as prejudice, anxiety, ethnocentrism, language, and assumption of similarity are most significant ones to consider.

**THANK YOU**