

Ways in Which Cultures Differ

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| Time orientation | Past: Focus on what has happened in the past, respect for one's ancestors. | Present: Meeting Present obligations May be more important than planning for the future. | Future: Planning for the future including sacrificing current pleasure and relationships. |
| Activity | Doing: One is judged by what one does and can accomplish. | Being: Who one is more important than what one does. | Becoming: Emphasis is on the future and what one can make of oneself. |
| Relationships | Equality: All adults are viewed as equal in status, differentiated in terms of skills. | Familial: People treat one another on the basis of intra-or inter-family relationships. | Hierarchical: People treat each other on the basis of differences in authority based on class or power. |
| Individual/Collective | Individual: is seen as most important with individual freedom and happiness as paramount. | Family: The immediate family or, more often, the extended family is seen as most important. | Collective: One's tribe or nation is seen as most important. |
| Human/Nature Control | Human Dominance: Human beings have the ability to understand and control natural forces. | Harmony: Human beings are part of nature and should live in harmony with it. | Dominance of Nature: Human beings are at the mercy of natural forces and cannot control them. |
| Relationship of children to the family | Child centered: Children are pampered and entertained, as much as possible is done for them. | Child as contributor: Children are full family members contributing to the family and sharing in its rewards. | Child as server: Children's interest are subservient to those of older generations. |
| Attitudes about child rearing | Benign Neglect: Children are left to learn from the consequences of their behavior. | Permissive: Children are allowed to learn from consequences of behavior within limits. | Authoritarian: Children obey adults and the rules they set. |

Of course, in most cultures some of these characteristics are combined but there is a different emphasis on what is most important. Virtually all cultures meet some of the needs of the individual, the family, and the larger society. However, they defer it to which is most important, and where sacrifices are expected to be made when there are conflicts.