

Difference between Eastern and Western Culture

Posted on September 5, 2019

Geographically, the Eastern world includes parts of Asia, but conceptually, the East and West are differentiated in terms of culture rather than geography. Roughly, the Eastern world includes central, north, and East Asia, the Middle East, South East Asia, and South Asia. The Western world includes parts of Europe and America.

There are a lot of differences in the culture, traditions, languages, and way of living of Eastern people and Western people. For some time, they have developed together, but after that, they are really different from each other. Main differences can be seen in people's behavior and attitude towards life.

Culture Differences

Let's start with the cultural difference. The way people dress up in the East and the West is completely different from each other. In Eastern countries, people wear more covered dresses than in Western countries. The idea of Family is also different in Eastern and Western cultures. People mostly live in a joint family system with their father, mother, uncle, and aunts. All the people live under one roof and take care of each other. The relationships are also family-centric in Eastern cultures. For marriages, couples have to get family approval, and then the family takes steps to organize their marriage. So there are more arranged marriages in Eastern society and fewer love marriages. Mostly, parents select a bride for the groom. In Western culture, personal choice is given preference over family choice, and hence, decisions of relationships are of the individual. This is one of the major differences between Eastern and Western cultures.

Another major difference between Eastern and Western cultures is their religion. People give more importance to religion in Eastern countries than in the West. It can be reflected in their way of living, their food, clothes, family lifestyle, etc. People are more conservative in Eastern countries than in the West.

In the East, the family members are dependent on the head of the family to earn a livelihood for themselves. So, the head of the family takes care of them and provides all the utilities for them. In the West, everyone earns for themselves and fulfills their needs and wishes. So people are more independent in the West, as their culture allows children to live separately from their parents after reaching a certain age. It has its own pros and cons. A child can live as he wishes and will not allow his/her parents to intervene. It makes them independent and confident in their decisions, but also makes them indulge in drugs and early-age sex. In the East, parents guide their children throughout

their lives.

Well, there is more openness in the West. Discussing childbirth or sex is taboo in the East, while that is done quite openly and commonly in the West. This conservative outlook and lack of openness create hurdles in making sex education common in the East as opposed to the West, where it is prevalent without any difficulty.

There is a difference in women's status in the East and the West as well. In the East, women are expected to sacrifice their careers and professional lives so that they can bring up their kids and take care of their families. In the West, women are free to decide about their marriage, career, and children. In the East now, people are changing, and women are given their rights, but still, there are a lot of people who are not giving women equal rights and opportunities.

People are more rigid about their beliefs and ideologies in the East than in the West. Their traditions and practices have been carried forward by their ancestors for thousands of years. They still believe them, irrespective of their fading validity in modern times. However, people are more rational in the West, and decisions are not made on an emotional basis.

Traveling is an important part of life for people in the Western world. They take time to travel around the world. People look forward to vacations, take breaks from their work, and travel around for fun and recreation. Eastern people also eagerly wait for vacations, but getting vacations depends on the nature of work, workplace environment, individual nature, and society's mindset. Even after getting vacations, people think of traveling as an expense or a waste of money, and don't go for it. So in these countries, people rarely take breaks. (Nobanita Dhar)

Educational Differences

Because of the differences in religions, traditions, history, political regimes, etc, people in the East and the West have different thinking and different approaches toward education.

The Western educational system encourages creativity and ideas. It focuses on promoting brainstorming and thinking in students so that they can develop their intellect and knowledge. In Eastern education, it's all about struggle and hard work. They work on the principle that practice makes a man perfect. So children have to practice enough. In Eastern countries, children are taught to work hard, and enormous amounts of homework are given to them. This makes Asian students more productive when they enter into Western educational systems or institutions. Because of encouraging ideas, the Western education system helps students become active members of the training procedure. Students are encouraged to participate in the class by thinking critically, making inquiries, and debating on topics with the teachers. On the contrary, the Eastern educational method is less interactive, and students have to submit to the authority of the teachers.

In the Western education system, steps are taken to include kids with extra needs along with the general mass. It is considered their major right that they should be studying with ordinary kids. They

are given equal educational opportunities in the West. On the contrary, in the East, there are different schools for disabled kids. These kids are sent there for their education and training, and it is thought to be logical, not unfair.

Individualism is the most distinguishing feature of Western societies, so it is reflected in their education system. So individuals are considered more important than groups. Western students are less afraid of giving their opinions and even making mistakes. As in the personality development process, mistakes are considered to be a natural part. On the contrary, eastern societies are mostly group-oriented, which is reflected in their education system too. So to be successful in a group, the individual needs to give an opinion in conformity with the values.

In the Western system, students are encouraged to study what they like and enjoy. In other words, according to the aptitude of the students. This makes studying fun and learning rather than a burden on the student. On the other hand, in Eastern society, people are forced to study what they don't enjoy. The purpose of the study is to become productive for them and their society despite of their aptitude and inclination. (Jane Copland)

Social Differences

People in the West believe in freedom of expression and speak in a straightforward manner. On the contrary, people tend to speak indirectly in Eastern countries. They don't speak straightforwardly about the issues to avoid conflict. Another difference is the form of relationship formed by them. Western People don't make deep relationships with others. They make casual relationships that are professional and friendly. On the contrary, Eastern people like to make emotional and strong relationships with others. They keep their relationships for life.

Another difference is their expression of emotions. Westerners can become furious quickly and express their emotions in an aggressive and loud manner sometimes. But they calm down quickly after the offense is rectified. Easterners don't show extreme emotions and are mostly polite. Otherwise, they are pushed over the limits. (chalre.com)

Cuisines

European and American cuisines are characterized as Western cuisines. These include steak, burgers, fries, etc. In Western meals, meat is used in huge quantities compared to Eastern cuisines. Also, rice is served as the main dish as compared to Eastern where rice is part of the main course. Western dishes are fattening and less healthy. On the contrary, eastern cuisines are made up mostly of vegetables, which are healthier. Eastern dishes are spicier than Western dishes. But Chinese cuisine is not spicy, which is also included in the eastern side.

So, this was all about how the culture, social life, education system, and food of the East differ from

those of the West. East is East, and West is West. They can never be the same. The world has now become a global village because of technology. So the important thing is how people of both regions are adopting each other's cultural values, social values, and education system.

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