

The Importance of Dialogue, Self-Respect, and Cultural Etiquette in Multicultural Society: An Islamic and Secular Perspective

Authors : Julia A. Ermakova

Abstract : In today's multicultural societies, dialogue, self-respect, and cultural etiquette play a vital role in fostering mutual respect and understanding. Whether viewed from an Islamic or secular perspective, the importance of these values cannot be overstated. Firstly, dialogue is essential in multicultural societies as it allows individuals from different cultural backgrounds to exchange ideas, opinions, and experiences. To engage in dialogue, one must be open and willing to listen, understand, and respect the views of others. This requires a level of self-awareness, where individuals must know themselves and their interlocutors to create a productive and respectful conversation. Secondly, self-respect is crucial for individuals living in multicultural societies (McLarney). One must have adequately high self-esteem and self-confidence to interact with others positively. By valuing oneself, individuals can create healthy relationships and foster mutual respect, which is essential in diverse communities. Thirdly, cultural etiquette is a way of demonstrating the beauty of one's culture by exhibiting good temperament (Al-Ghazali). Adab, a concept that encompasses good manners, praiseworthy words and deeds, and the pursuit of what is considered good, is highly valued in Islamic teachings. By adhering to Adab, individuals can guard against making mistakes and demonstrate respect for others. Islamic teachings provide etiquette for every situation in life, making up the way of life for Muslims. In the Islamic view, an elegant Muslim woman has several essential qualities, including cultural speech and erudition, speaking style, awareness of how to greet, the ability to receive compliments, lack of desire to argue, polite behavior, avoiding personal insults, and having good intentions (Al-Ghazali). The Quran highlights the inclination of people towards arguing, bickering, and disputes (Qur'an, 4:114). Therefore, it is imperative to avoid useless arguments and disputes, for they are poison that poisons our lives. The Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, warned that the most hateful person to Allah is an irreconcilable disputant (Al-Ghazali). By refraining from such behavior, individuals can foster respect and understanding in multicultural societies. From a secular perspective, respecting the views of others is crucial to engage in productive dialogue. The rule of argument emphasizes the importance of showing respect for the other person's views, allowing for the possibility of error on one's part, and avoiding telling someone they are wrong (Atamali). By exhibiting polite behavior and having respect for everyone, individuals can create a welcoming environment and avoid conflict. In conclusion, the importance of dialogue, self-respect, and cultural etiquette in multicultural societies cannot be overstated. By engaging in dialogue, respecting oneself and others, and adhering to cultural etiquette, individuals can foster mutual respect and understanding in diverse communities. Whether viewed from an Islamic or secular perspective, these values are essential for creating harmonious societies.

Keywords : multiculturalism, self-respect, cultural etiquette, adab, ethics, secular perspective

Conference Title : ICIBC 2023 : International Conference on International Business and Communication

Conference Location : Cape Town, South Africa

Conference Dates : April 13-14, 2023