

Intercultural Sensitivity in Iran: A Case Study of Intercultural Relations between Turks and Lors

Authors : Sepideh Mohammadi

Abstract : Iran is a country that boasts of ethnic diversity, comprising various groups such as Turks, Lors, Arabs, Baluchs, Persians, Kurds, Gliks, Azaris, and Tabaris. The majority of people in Iran are Persians and as such, the Persian language is the official language of the country. However, it is also a common language among different ethnic groups. It is worth noting that there is a longstanding history of coexistence and cultural relations between the Turkic and Lor ethnic groups. The purpose of this article is to study the range of intercultural sensitivities of Turks and Lor peoples to identify the state of intercultural competence and reduce conflicts in the direction of cultural policy. It is important to gain insight into the mutual perceptions of Lor and Turkic people towards each other. Understanding these perceptions can greatly aid in fostering stronger relationships and promoting effective communication between the two ethnic groups. The study employed a qualitative content analysis approach to gather data using a semi-structured interview tool. The participants consisted of ten individuals from the Lor ethnic and ten individuals from the Turk ethnic. According to Milton Bennett's six-stage model, our findings reveal that the Turkish and Lor ethnic groups tend to exhibit higher intercultural sensitivity in the second stage, which consists of defense against differences. Both groups tend to emphasize the differences between them, and the notion of "us and the other" holds significant importance for them. It is important to acknowledge that both the Turk and Lor ethnicities consist of various clans, which significantly shape intercultural relations between them. A common stereotype in this regard is that the Turks of Tabriz province often do not recognize the Turks of other provinces of the country as their own. Moreover, our study indicates that an increase in interaction and communication between the Lor and Turk ethnic groups may lead to a reduction in cultural sensitivities between them.

Keywords : intercultural communication, intercultural sensitivity, Iran, Lor, Turk

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