*Education and Embracing Cultural Differences*

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**Abstract**
The shared nature of the current concerns about education and embracing cultural differences require that people across the world are more educated to understanding and accepting these for the well being of anyone. Culture plays an important place in all aspects of life, including education. In turn, education influence the material and spiritual structures of any culture. The paper aims to highlight the importance of education and cultural features in the new global society. Multicultural education improves communication in a global society. Modern technology and the Internet have an important role in this regard. Educational systems are very different, so the acceptance of cultural differences is the attribute of progressive, multicultural education. Policies for educational systems are made by people; governments make decisions more emotionally than rationally. Positive emotions define the areas of progress in overcoming cultural barriers. Negative feelings, stereotypes, prejudices delimit the regression in the same process. Environmental forces amplify or diminish the movement for multicultural education. Educational deficiencies favor the establishment of a conservative culture in any structure. Progressive education facilitates the acceptance of differences. Imitation works in any community. Any national group will embrace or reject other cultural features; it depends on cultural, political, and educational dominance. The effects of collective imitation are slow but continuous; people become or not tolerant, regarding other cultures. The culture of the place touches everyone: "with a stick or a caress". Education in a culture of compromises or respect, and tolerance choose between embracing or rejecting the cultural differences.


Keywords: Education, Embracing Cultural Differences

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**Introduction**

The issue of Education for embracing differences is studied to better understand the multiple cultural behaviors and factors that can reduce identity inertia, prejudice, stereotypes, even inequalities. It is an up-to-date field of research that concerns scientists around the world. Education can provide solutions to improve communication between people from different geographical areas. It is a work of analysis and reflection, the consequence of 17 years of research. Being a professor allowed me to follow the behaviours of young people from different parts of the world. There was no predetermined sample. The people, from whom we received information about the cultural differences and the role of education, were in the age group 18-30 years. Discussions with people in other age groups, including over the age of 80, have clarified certain aspects of my research or created new dilemmas. The role of education was validated following the research. Education is the most important way to reduce identity inertia and to accept cultural differences.

I took notes and followed formal (during congresses and conferences) and informal (during socializing, relaxing, lunch) behaviors for almost two decades in which I participated in international events in 24 countries and over 35 cities. Although the number of those analyzed is not statistically representative for the cultures they come from, the research proved to be fascinating as identity, individual, group manifestations.

The main objective of this study is to find, describe, analyze out valuable links between cultures, education, behaviours. The object of the exercise was to check a few cultural features of people from different countries and geographical areas. Curiosity about other cultures has always fascinated me. People are very different and yet similar. The place and environment in which you are born and raised are vital for each individual. "We aren't who we want to be. We are what society demands. We are what our parents choose. We don't want to disappoint anyone; we have a great need to be loved"(Coelho, 2014, p.10). People are conservative in deep values related to the mother culture. The unprecedented mobility of the times we live in does not change the strong intimate values until after years of life in a new dominant culture. "We will keep our lifestyle in 5-6 centuries…. We are not at all interested in changing someone's perception (Coelho, 2013, Adulter, p.67). For example, in Calgary, Canada, I met people from different parts of the world. Each group kept its distance from the others. People interacted politely, but proudly maintained the mother's cultural traditions.  Everywhere in the world, there are minority groups that respect the rules of the host culture, although we will not know to what extent they believe in them. Contamination with other crops, acculturation occurs over a long period. And it is ok.  Cultural diversity makes life more exciting. In organizations, including universities, we will find the same pattern. International students adapt more or less easily to the organizational culture. They feel authentic multicultural organizational cultures and enthusiastically take on habits that make their lives easier and allow them to increase their esteems. The context given by the organizational culture collides or folds on the local culture (Hatch, 2013). The example of the last idea taken is from Romania. Some universities are trying to develop organizational structures that embrace cultural differences, but they are confronting with a culture of compromises.

Modern organizational cultures strike with the local cultures where political functions predominate and not value. Education, whatever systems are; conservative, liberal, religious, and tolerant or not, progressive or formal, are very important in the evolution of each personality. Education makes a difference between those who embrace or reject other cultures. Education from school, learning from experience, practical adult teaching is unique for each national culture. The idea of accepting multiple perspectives began was the key to the research. Each year, the study was developed through an interactive and iterative process of presenting thoughts about cultures to young met at different conferences. Many of them explained their ideas about cultures, education, behaviours. I enriched my knowledge and I managed to accept with empathy habits that if I had only read, I would not have understood. In some cultures (India, Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia) using the left hand for some activities is rude and insulting. Young people in these places who study or work in other countries may ignore or maintain the rule. It depends on what made them respect her at home: obedience or conviction. I think embracing cultural differences is proof of respect and social empathy.

Education and social intelligence are very important for accepting cultural differences. The first time I was in Japan, I was unpleasantly surprised by some compatriots, who refused to eat rice and asked, quite offensively, for bread. On the same occasion, the same people rejected the idea of eating with chopsticks and received spoons and forks. Japanese people were so polite! It was happening many years ago, and the story made me more careful regarding my own culture. With this last example, I try to explain a little bit the legacy of the communist collective culture in Romania. Progressive education is still waiting in Romania. Young people desire an educational movement that gives more value to experience than formal, political learning.

**Literature Review**

Studying people's behaviors' from different cultures brings out several interesting insights. The field is the subject of research for many scientific disciplines. The interest is natural, people have always been curious about the lives and experiences of their peers.

Education and embracing cultural differences is a very complex issue that concerns the present and the future. It requires intentional efforts to educating people to be globally aware and to accept cultural diversity (Reimers, 2020; Verkuyten, Yogeeswaran, Adelman, 2019; Benade, 2017; Klein, 2017; Meyer, 2016; Tchibozo, 2013; Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012); Moran, Harris, Moran, 2011; Białostocka, 2010; Deardorff, 2009; Banks, 2005; Hall, & Hall, 1990). Education and culture both are a way to serve the needs of the global market, and to advance social inclusion and more equity in the world. Group cultures have inspired researchers anytime (Mayo and Barnard, 1930, Mead, 1934; Weber, 1947; Durkheim, 1947; Geertz, 1973, countless after the 1980s and into the 21st century).

Nowadays, education needs global commitments to equality of chances and access to a modern education that includes instruction in IT, math, language skills, science, history, civics, culture, and the arts. Global challenges underscore the urgency for effective education for cultural differences understanding. Researchers and

organizations propose many conceptual approaches to advancing in culture, and education (Reimers, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2020; UNESCO. 2019a; OECD and Asia Society, 2019, 2018; Klein, 2017; Gardner, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Sachs, 2008; Schein, 2013, Hofstede, Minkov, 2010).

Education and embracing cultural differences require intentional efforts to educating students to be globally aware and to accept cultural diversity. Global challenges underscore the urgency for effective education for cultural differences understanding. Researchers propose many conceptual approaches to advancing in multicultural education. People must be attentive to apply it.

**Conclusions**

The research project I have been working on since 2004 highlighted the complexity of the relationship between education and culture. We restricted the research to the study of some cultural dimensions specific to some nations (Hofstede) and we followed their connections with the education system in each country included in the study.

**Research structure**

The research has been orientated towards identifying a few aspects that characterize the existing culture and educational system from different geographic areas. The methodological guidelines represent an adjustment of the Hofstede, GLOBE, and other models. We have also accessed similar researches as well as the representative literature, regarding culture and education.

This study aims to describe and find out valuable links between culture, education, and behaviors. Education for embracing cultural differences has as its research hypothesis the problem of identities and cultural inertia. The research project I have been working on since 2004 has required that I develop an interesting approach that suits the various specific cases I have studied throughout the years. Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in this study. During the time we have also observed and recorded formal and informal behaviors of people met at international events. In chronological order, data and information were collected in Canada, South Korea (2005), Romania (2005, 2008, 2010, 2014, 2016, 2020), Germany (2006, 2009), South Africa (2007), U.K. (2008, 2013), Belgium (2009), USA (2010, 2012, 2013, and 2014), Australia, Japan (2011), New Zealand (2012), China (2015), UAE (2016), Thailand (2017, 2020), Indonesia, India (2018), Brazil, Moldova (2019).

The structure of research by countries and cities where data were collected is in Table 1. Table 2 contents the chronological structure by participants.

Table 1: Chronological structure of research by countries
and cities where data and information were collected

| No. | Year | Country /countries | Cities |
|-----|------|--------------------|--------|
| 1. | 2004 | Italy, Netherlands, France | Ischia, Eindhoven, Paris |
| 2. | 2005 | Germany, Poland, Canada, Romania | Stuttgart, Warsaw, Calgary, Bucuresti |
| 3. | 2006 | Austria, South Korea | Innsbruck, Seoul |
| 4. | 2007 | South Africa, Romania | Pretoria, Johannesburg, Oradea |

| 5. | 2008 | Belgium, U.K., Romania | Antwerp, Cambridge, Iasi |
|----|------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6. | 2009 | Malaysia, Germany | Kuala Lumpur, Munich |
| 7. | 2010 | Romania, USA | Constanta, New York |
| 8. | 2011 | Australia, Japan | Sydney, Osaka |
| 9. | 2012 | USA, New Zealand,  Romania | New York, Auckland, Craiova |
| 10. | 2013 | USA, UK | New York, London |
| 11. | 2014 | USA, Romania | Miami, Iasi |
| 12. | 2015 | China | Beijing, Dubai |
| 13. | 2016 | UAE, Romania | Dubai, Drobeta- Turnu-Severin |
| 14. | 2017 | Thailand, Romania | Bangkok, Iasi |
| 15. | 2018 | Indonesia, India | Bali, Goa, Mumbai |
| 16. | 2019 | Moldova, Brazil | Chisinau, Rio de Janeiro |
| 17. | 2020 (February) | Thailand, Romania | Phuket, Bangkok, Iasi |
|  | Total | 24 | 35 |

Table 2: Chronological structure by participants

| No. | Year | Scrapbook pages | Participants in research by continent |
|-----|------|-----------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1. | 2004 | 121 | 69 Europa, 24 Asia, 14 North  America, 11 Africa, 3 Oceania |
| 2. | 2005 | 178 | 72 North America, 65 Europe, 20 South America, 12 Asia, 5 Africa, 4 Oceania |
| 3. | 2006 | 124 | 65 Asia, 35 Europe, 12 North America, 12 Oceania |
| 4. | 2007 | 134 | 82 Africa, 30 Europe, 10 Asia, 9  North America, 3 Oceania |
| 5. | 2008 | 127 | 37 Europe, 26  North America, 26 Asia, 15 Africa, 13 Oceania, 10 South America |
| 6. | 2009 | 124 | 64 Asia, 37 Europe, 11 North America, 8 Oceania, 4 Africa |
| 7. | 2010 | 120 | 37 North America, 33 Europe, 32 Asia, 11 Oceania, 7 Africa |
| 8. | 2011 | 72 | 47 Asia, 25 Oceania |
| 9. | 2012 | 125 | 35 North America, 34 Oceania, 27 Asia,  19 Europe , 10 South America |
| 10. | 2013 | 119 | 32 Europe, 27 Asia, 22 North  America,  15 Africa, 14 Australia, 9 South America |
| 11. | 2014 | 113 | 41 Europe, 40  North America, 26  Asia, 6 Oceania |
| 12. | 2015 | 117 | 66 Asia, 24 Europe, 22 North America, 5 Oceania |
| 13. | 2016 | 121 | 55 Asia, 33 North America, 15 Europe,  7 South America, 6, 5 Africa |
| 14. | 2017 | 118 | 70 Asia, 29 Europe, 10 North America, 9 Oceania |
| 15. | 2018 | 133 | 77 Asia, 33 Europe, 15 North America, 8 Oceania |
| 16. | 2019 | 44 | 21 Europe, 16 South America, 7 Asia, |
| 17. | 2020 | 69 | 55 Asia, 14 Europe |
|  | Total | 1959 |  |

The participants in the study by continent and gender are found in Table 3 and Figure 1.

Table 3: The structure' s participants by continent and gender

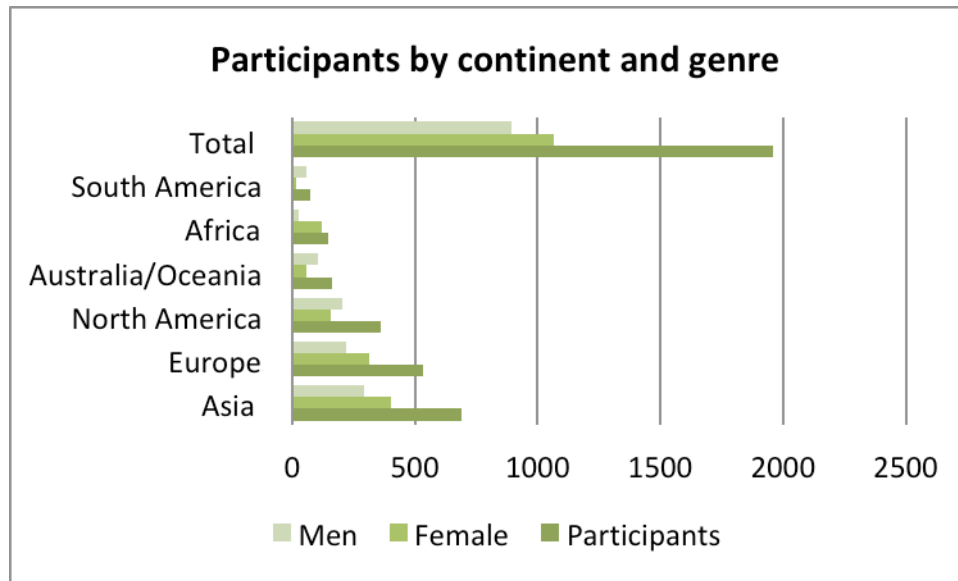| Continent | Participants | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|---|
| Asia | 690 | 400 | 290 |
| Europe | 534 | 314 | 220 |
| North America | 358 | 156 | 202 |
| Oceania/Australia | 161 | 59 | 102 |
| Africa | 144 | 120 | 24 |
| South America | 72 | 17 | 55 |
| Total | 1959 | 1066 | 893 |



Figure 1: Participants by continent and genre

The 1959 study participants were from 28 European, 16 Asian, 7 African, 6 American,  Australian Countries. Participants by country can be found in the tables below. The largest group was Asian (690), followed by Europeans (534), North Americans (358), Australians (161), respondents from Africa (144), and South America (72).

Table 4: Study participants from Asian Countries

| No. | Asia | Participants | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Bangladesh | 17 | 10 | 7 |
| 2. | China | 161 | 80 | 81 |
| 3. | India | 177 | 124 | 53 |
| 4. | Indonezia | 33 | 15 | 18 |
| 5. | Israel | 14 | 7 | 7 |
| 6. | Japan | 84 | 34 | 50 |
| 7. | Jordan | 17 | 10 | 7 |
| 8. | Lebanon | 16 | 11 | 6 |
| 9. | Malaysia | 24 | 16 | 9 |
| 10. | Pakistan | 9 | 7 | 2 |
| 11. | South Korea | 64 | 45 | 19 |
| 12. | Sri Lanka | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| 13. | Syria | 9 | 4 | 5 |

| No. | | Participants | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14. | Thailand | 32 | 22 | 10 |
| 15. | Turkey | 11 | 7 | 4 |
| 16. | United Arab Emirates | 17 | 5 | 12 |
| | Total | 690 | 400 | 290 |

Table 5:  Study participants from European Countries

| No. | Europe | Participants | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Austria | 19 | 9 | 10 |
| 2. | Belgium | 14 | 7 | 7 |
| 3. | Bulgaria | 11 | 4 | 7 |
| 4. | Croatia | 7 | 4 | 3 |
| 5. | Czech | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| 6. | Denmark | 8 | 5 | 3 |
| 7. | Estonia | 7 | 5 | 2 |
| 8. | Finland | 14 | 9 | 6 |
| 9. | France | 49 | 27 | 22 |
| 10. | Germany | 47 | 23 | 24 |
| 11. | Greece | 9 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | Hungary | 16 | 10 | 6 |
| 13. | Ireland | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| 14. | Italy | 47 | 20 | 27 |
| 15. | Portugal | 5 | - | 5 |
| 16. | Latvia | 4 | 4 | - |
| 17. | Lithuania | 21 | 17 | 4 |
| 18. | Moldova | 19 | 3 | 16 |
| 19. | Netherlands | 37 | 21 | 16 |
| 20. | Norway | 7 | 5 | 2 |
| 21. | Poland | 19 | 13 | 16 |
| 22. | Romania | 57 | 24 | 33 |
| 23. | Russia | 11 | 3 | 8 |
| 24. | Slovakia | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| 25. | Slovenia | 10 | 6 | 4 |
| 26. | Spain | 23 | 12 | 11 |
| 27. | Turkey | 11 | 4 | 7 |
| 28. | United Kingdom | 37 | 19 | 18 |
| 29. | Total | 534 | 314 | 220 |

Table 6:  Participants from North America

| No. | North America | Participants | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Canada | 124 | 49 | 75 |
| 2. | Costa Rica | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| 3. | United State of America | 230 | 105 | 125 |
| 4. | Total | 358 | 156 | 202 |

Table 7: Participants from Australia and Oceania

| No. | Australia/Oceania | Participants | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Australia | 99 | 49 | 50 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2. | New Zealand | 62 | 10 | 52 |
| 3. | Total | 161 | 59 | 102 |

Table 8: Participants from Africa

| No. | Africa | Participants | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Algeria | 20 | 3 | 17 |
| 2. | Kenya | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| 3. | Morocco | 27 | 7 | 20 |
| 4. | Nigeria | 6 | - | 6 |
| 5. | South Africa | 79 | 11 | 68 |
| 6. | Sudan | 4 | - | - |
| 7. | Tanzania | 4 | - | - |
| 8. | Total | 144 | 24 | 120 |

Table 9: Participants from South America

| No. | South America | Participants | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Argentina | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| 2. | Brazil | 66 | 16 | 50 |
| 3. | Paraguay | 3 | - | 3 |
| 4. | Total | 72 | 17 | 55 |

In this research several questionnaires were applied to 17 groups within 2004-2020 timeframe. The answers were then grouped by country and continent and statistically processed. The data collected from the research groups required the definition of a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences database and the information has been used for the calculation of econometric markers. 5- Point Likert scale has been used: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree. Moreover, in the research, there has been used through shared experiences, real-time, for example, rituals, ceremonies, etc., as well as another less structured or institutionalized context (including casual meetings or informal gatherings) which, as the case may be, in time has acquired more importance.

Grouping the answers into several cultural and educational dimensions led to the following results:
1. Uncertainty Avoidance and Risk
2. Masculinity – Femininity
3. Individualism/Collectivism
4. Embracing differences
5. Power Distance
6. Cooperative/ Competitive Learning
7. Environmental Education
8. Daily use of the internet
9. Conformity
10. High Self-esteem
11. The importance of social position in life
12. Cultural and Religious Tolerance
13. Empathy

14. Curiosity for different cultures

Table 10: The average score of cultural and educational dimensions analyzed

| No. | Cultural/ educational components | Average score by continent $\bar{X}$ | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Asia | Europe | North America | Australia | Africa | South America |
| 1. | Uncertainty Avoidance and Risk | 3.97 | 3.59 | 2.32 | 2.52 | 2.41 | 4.14 |
| 2. | Masculinity – Femininity | 3.07 | 2.54 | 2.66 | 3.11 | 3.19 | 2.47 |
| 3. | Individualism/ Collectivism | 1.99 | 2.92 | 4.77 | 4.81 | 2.81 | 2.07 |
| 4. | Embracing differences | 2.27 | 3.99 | 3.87 | 4.03 | 3.44 | 2.98 |
| 5. | Power Distance | 3.27 | 1.77 | 1.81 | 1.68 | 2.51 | 3.11 |
| 6. | Cooperative/ Competitive Learning | 3.33 | 4.44 | 4.12 | 4.07 | 4.59 | 4.28 |
| 7. | Environmental Education | 2.85 | 3.99 | 3.11 | 4.99 | 4.21 | 3.99 |
| 8. | Daily use of the internet | 1.89 | 4.99 | 4.77 | 4.65 | 1.77 | 4.01 |
| 9. | Conformity | 4.85 | 2.47 | 2.13 | 3.17 | 4.11 | 2.57 |
| 10. | High Self-esteem | 2.03 | 4.67 | 3.77 | 4.51 | 2.42 | 3.11 |
| 11. | The importance of social position in life | 4.85 | 2.51 | 2.13 | 4.47 | 4.87 | 4.77 |
| 12. | Cultural and Religious Tolerance | 1.79 | 2.13 | 2.41 | 3.05 | 2.44 | 2.77 |
| 13. | Empathy | 4.21 | 3.56 | 2.71 | 2.66 | 3.25 | 4.44 |
| 14. | Curiosity for different cultures | 4.33 | 4.77 | 2.85 | 3.14 | 1.88 | 2.17 |

The arithmetic mean is just a number that, at first glance, can be interpreted this way:
o       Uncertainty and risk are widely accepted in South America
o       The average for masculinity-femininity covers very different situations. For example, responses from young people in Japan clearly showed a preference for masculinity, responses from other Asian countries showed evolution for balance
o       Individualism appears to be very high in Australia and low in Asia
o       Cooperative Learning is a wanted concept around the world
o       Environmental Education has a high score in Australia
o       Daily use of the the internet has the lowest score in Africa (very closed to Asia)
o       Conformity to social norms are very high in Asia
o       High Self-esteem has been recorded in Australia

o        The importance of the social statute in life has the highest score among participants in Asia and Africa

o        Cultural and Religious Tolerance has surprised by a low score almost everywhere

o        Empathy works well in Africa and Asia

o        Curiosity about other cultures have the highest values in Europe.

The 1959 notes and answers from 17 questionnaires taken over 17 years surprised by their diversity within the same geographical area. The results are extremely different because the culture in each country is strongly influenced by traditions, quality of life, available resources, and governance. Technology and the Internet contribute to increasing education in cultural diversity approach. But the means can also be used contrary.

The results of this analysis partially confirm some scientific findings regarding the uncountable links between culture and education. There are highly valuable models and theories for analyzing cultures and educational systems. There are supported by arguments, but there is no consensus in the research community on which one should be preferred. The interpretation of cultural and educational features is relatively open. The space for the paper is limited, which is why I will express only a few conclusions of the research.

Avoiding Uncertainty and Risk, as a cultural dimension, have acquired, over time, more interpretations. It is generally believed that groups living in countries with a high index of Uncertainty Avoidance are reluctant to unpredictable changes. Those who are resident in countries with a low UA index are more inventive, take risks, and accept uncertainty as part of every day. The statements about cultures on the level of "values" do not describe "reality"; such statements are generalizations and they are relative.  The comparisons were made using qualitative analysis. The countries with a high index of Avoiding Uncertainty can be found in Table 11.

Table 11: Countries with a high Uncertainty Avoidance index

| Countries | UA index (research) | UA index (Hofstede) |
|---|---|---|
| Greece | 96 | 100 |
| Portugal | 90 | 99 |
| Russia, Moldova | 97 | 95 |
| Belgium | 98 | 94 |
| Poland | 95 | 93 |
| Japan | 96 | 92 |
| Romania | 94 | 90 |
| Slovenia | 90 | 88 |
| China | 91 | 87 |
| France, Spain, Costa Rica, Argentina | 89 | 86 |
| Bulgaria, Turkey, South Korea,  Paraguay | 93 | 85 |

The statistical results, followed by discussions about avoiding uncertainty with study participants from Japan and Romania led to the following:
- Young people from both countries expressed a preference for certainty regarding the choice of a job; they want stability in their lives, predictability about the future.

- Young people in Japan have shown respect for the rules of society, organizations, families; that in Romania is not willing to respect the rules because they are violated even by those who impose them.

Avoiding uncertainty in these two groups is different, even if both have a high AU index. Thus, young Japanese people adhere to customary and legal norms. Formalism is high and education preserves it. Paradoxically, they reject uncertainty, although they are accustomed to seismic manifestations. Respecting the rules and collectivism arouse admiration in crises (including now).  In young people in Romania, the manifestation of this dimension is different from the statistical results. Thus, young people often break the rules because they do not believe in them and see that they are only apparently respected by the authorities, families, friends, organizations (especially public). In private organizations, there is a decrease in the score, avoiding uncertainty, taking risks, accepting changes, ambiguities. Here, people have initiative and courage. Young people in such organizations are educated, including emotionally, and choose to abide by the rules.

Femininity – Masculinity is an exciting and somewhatmcontroversial domain for many cultures. The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche has considered that "beyond personal vanity, women have an impersonal disgust towards other women" (Nietzsche, p. 76). Offering a point of view philosophical Nietzsche has talked about an unconscious orientation towards an ideal of masculinity, as a form of protection of self-confidence. The same idea was in the works of the psychoanalyst Adler, who has considered the feminine inferiority as a natural state.

Their protest was virile, as a result of the inferiority feeling experienced more or less consciously by each woman in part (Adler, p.176. In the 21st Century, women gained some rights in predominantly male countries ( Japan, Hungary). Maintaining genre discrimination has been partially demonstrated by the following examples. This research has involved 84 Japanese people, 34 female, 50 male. Sharing ideas and information with women was possible only in Japan. At other events outside of Japan, I only interacted with men. They have answered that it is normal that the society and organizations are better run by the men. 22 respondents out of a total of 30  were pretty sure that women's emancipation is not suitable for Japanese culture. The classic, traditional activities are more proper for women than for men.  And, unfortunately, it's not only men who maintain cultural beliefs.  25 women from a total of 34 were willing to accept stay home after finish studies.

Three European participants from the conference were invited to dine at one of the organizers. The wife served the meal, then withdrew from the room. The lady's absence was explained as the best choice for Japanese culture. The local culture is not ready for the emancipation of women. These examples confirm the high index for masculinity-femininity in Japan. The following example (without generalizations) will invalidate the Masculinity-Femininity index from the Hofstede comparison. Thus, the women respondents from Turkey presented in a conference, research on gender discrimination, from rural areas in Turkey. In a particular village, many women wrote an official letter to the mayor of the village.  They have asked him to take decisions to punish their spouses who physically hit their wives more than twice a week. It seems unbelievable, but there is still a lot of domestic violence in many countries around the world. Domestic violence is at a high level in Romania as well.

The culture of the place determines the abused women not to address the authorities; of shame because they are stigmatized by society. The survey found that 98% of respondents witnessed domestic violence at least once.

**Individualism-Colectivism**

Respondents with a tendency from individualism (98% of young people in the United States, Australia, The United Kingdom, The Netherlands, New Zealand) are independent, optimistic, and they have high self-reliance. They are more tolerant of cultural differences than those who have raised in strong collectivists are cultures. Embracing cultural differences and rebuilding a healthy world needs a balance of both.

The study of individualism and collectivism demonstrates the decline of individualistic characteristics, even in countries with a very high index. This feature has resulted from the answers received since 2011. 87% of respondents appreciated that teamwork is preferable to the individual, and 94% said they understand to develop a strong commitment to the organization that gives them motivation and development of IT and language competencies.

Youth, education, and technology are changing the world. The Internet facilitates global cooperation and communication, requiring changes in education and the labor market. People can be ambitious by achieving goals on their own, but they can also be full of compassion and understanding for different people. Or, not! Education for acceptance of cultural differences will make the difference.

The fourth theme resulting from the data is the embracing of differences. The study conducted in 53 countries analyzed the most effective policies to build an academic environment that values cultural diversity and equity. From the answers, it was found that universities with international students have a positive social climate and offer adequate programs for all members of the academic community (98% of respondents in developed countries). Participants from developing or underdeveloped countries (77%) said they had difficulties in communication, especially due to their lack of English language skills.

**Power Distance**

The credibility and trust of the population in their authorities are crucial to implementing education in embracing cultural differences. For example, the answers of young people (99%) from 8 countries regarding Power Distance reflect inherent inequalities in countries with a high Power Distance Index (Romania, Russia, Moldova, Bulgaria from Europe; Malaysia, China, India, Indonesia from Asia). Perpetuating inequality, fear, corruption, and suspicion are major obstacles in the development of credible and tolerant educational systems.

**Cooperative/Competitive Learning**

The research showed that over 70% of respondents want an educational system that combines the virtues of cooperation and competition. There is a need for a mixed choice and as a result of changes related to individualism and collectivism. The

students realized that the competitive spirit strengthens their self-determination, but in such an interconnected world, there is a need for cooperation and teamwork. The blend of cooperation and competition methods in an open environment could provide opportunities to be successful and to develop social and personal skills(88% from respondents).

## Environmental Education

Nearly all respondents in the study expressed concern about the negative changes in ecosystems(99%). But environmental education is included in a few university programs(32%). The global risks, like as extreme weather events, failure of climate-change adaptation, pollution, disasters (oil spills and radioactive contamination, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, and geomagnetic storms) are well known by young people who participated at the research. The problem reported by young people regarding environmental education was a cultural-economic one. Thus, respondents from Asian countries (India, Thailand, Indonesia), European countries (Romania, Bulgaria) reported the lack of money and the appropriate collective culture to stop environmental degradation. Moreover, students' perceptions show that parents, schools, and governments are the most responsible parties in cultivating student awareness of the environment. Research has shown that few respondents (27%) are worry about the reduction of forest areas, the growth of the global population, but also the resources used by future generations. This ignorance of the dangers due to environmental degradation also demonstrates the insufficiency of educational programs related to these truly alarming phenomena. The problems of ecosystem deterioration is one of the greatest threats to life on earth. The qualitative analysis of the answers received overtime highlighted the fact that in this direction, local culture and education matter the most. Along with the financial resources necessary to implement strategies appropriate to each geographical area, depending on specific environmental emergencies. The respondents were very different in analyzing this issue. Many of them have been considered that poverty is the major problem in their countries; others have argued that corruption and lack of confidence is one of the most important.  Others from very developed countries were enabled to disseminate awareness regarding the environment. With some exceptions. The problem of ecosystems degradation is one of the greatest threats to life on earth. The qualitative analysis of the answers received highlighted the fact that in this direction, local culture and education matter the most. Along with the financial resources necessary to implement strategies appropriate to each geographical area, depending on specific environmental emergencies.

## Daily use of the internet

If at the beginning of the research, daily Internet users were only 7% of respondents, after 2009, their number has steadily increased to 100% since 2014. This phenomenon has been validated even in countries with modest ITC infrastructures. Using the Internet takes precedence over other needs. For example, in Goa, India, I met a lonely environmentalist who lived in a cave, isolated from the rest of the world, but with a telephone connected to the Internet. The research revealed situations in which internet access is difficult due to lack of money (India, Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia, even Romania, Turkey, Moldova for mountainous areas, especially rural). The daily use of the Internet is not enough to bring the advantages of technology for everyone.

The respondents from developing(95%) countries have been considered that the wide progress of ITC needs feasible policy intervention at national, regional, and global levels. Contrary, new technologies could widen existing disparities among countries were ae still many marginalized groups. This action requires international support for its national policy in innovation and new technologies. Building forward-looking and inclusive education systems are one of the most efficient ways to make opportunities equally shared.

**Conformity**

Conformity was analyzed only in connection with the cultural-educational norms of each country. The answers to the questionnaires are not so relevant, as long as we don't know that the young people have been in the stage of compliance, identification, or internalization of the level of compliance. The research has found that people who live in collectivist cultures and have lower self-esteem are more able to conform in comparison with those who live in individualistic or well balanced cultures have higher self-esteem.

Of course, there are differences between people in their compliance with rules, including cultural and educational. The research showed through qualitative analysis carried out during some artistic manifestations that young people were immediately compliant under the situational impact, and they reacted identically to the majority (imitation works anywhere and anytime in the world). At an artistic program in Beijing, they did not have the idea of not applauding or disturbing the show, which, moreover, they did not understand at all, the spoken language being Mandarin.

**High Self-esteem**

Self-esteem versus the esteem of others seems to be less important for young from poor and developing countries. Poverty and a low-quality of life hurt self-esteem. Most of the respondents are struggle with the confidence in their abilities or chances of success.

As a general finding, research has shown that young respondents have seen a steady decline in self-esteem over time. Those interviewed in 2017 were not as confident in themselves as those in 2007. 99% of teens in 2017 versus 72% in 2007 have felt inferior at some point in their lives. When asked why they have felt inferior, students have chosen:appearance: 89%in 2017 vs. 44 % in 2007; abilities in managing house activities without internet: 99%in 2017vs. 66% in 2007. 34.5% of students have reported having "high" self-esteem vs. 65.5% of teens who said having "low" self-esteem.

**The importance of social position in life**

It is almost evident that the economic and cultural environments in which people have been growing and live their lives have a deep influence on how they perceive the importance of social position (93% from the respondents). The results have shown that the differences given by social status and money are bigger in 2020 versus 2004. Education is an important issue of social status because individuals from higher social classes are more likely to have the means to attend famous universities, to land the

best jobs, to gain the highest salaries. Education, poverty, and social status are closely interconnected. We are already witnesses to the increasing impact of social differences worldwide. Many times, money makes a difference: to have access to infrastructure, health, education, leisure, ITC, food, water, or not.

It seems that humanity has the power, but not the will to reduce inequalities. In reality, humanity is witnessing the rise of egocentrism, the desire for absolute power over others. Discrimination, the illusion of the invulnerability and superiority of some demonstrate the failure of many optimistic policies. If the intentions remain on paper, many words are superfluous.

I have been chosen for the last features of cultural and educational differences a simple rule, "Treat others so that they feel truly considered, appreciated." I chose the last features of cultural and educational differences the golden rule, "Treat others so that they feel truly considered, appreciated". Cultural and Religious Tolerance, Empathy, Curiosity for different cultures are strong attributes of emotional-rational educated individuals.

I have learned, from this exciting experience, that in life nothing is good or bad, white or black. It all depends on our mind, education, and culture. I am convinced that I know nothing about cultural and educational diversity, but I will try to learn more. People are amazing; resonant context can develop the best traits of the human being. Education and embracing cultural differences is a topic of great relevance and interest. In a general tone, during the research, there has been noticed a greater openness to others to young people who have more emotional skills than rational. Everyone has emotions, but at home, school, in each specific environment, we really could learn to observe and temperate our emotions, to become more empathetic, assertive, and tolerant of others different from us.

The dominant culture in which we are grown-up has major importance in shaping everyone's personality. The culture of the place and the education can give the degree of freedom of each individual.

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