
Culture Of Egyptians

Egypt is full of life and color, with over 6000 years of recorded history to contribute to their culture. Arts, architecture, music, literature, and festivals are an integral part of Egypt's history and modern day society. This culture is what dictates their professional relationships and the religion, Islam. That 94% of Egyptians are. Their culture also dictates the medical decisions they make. For example, women don't go to the doctor often because of Islam's value placed on modesty for women. Also, some common etiquette that Egyptians believe in is removing shoes before coming into someone's home and complimenting their house. All of these aspects are important parts of Egypt's culture that contribute to modern day perceptions of Egyptians and Egypt as a whole.

Cultural Overview of Egyptians (1 page)

Egypt's culture is especially unique and different from other cultures across the globe. Egypt has 6000 years of recorded history and is rich in culture, arts, architecture, and science. Many parts of Egypt's current culture are characteristics of the past mixed with new aspects such as the introduction of Christianity, Hellenism, and Islam into their general population. One aspect that is imperative to Egypt's culture is the art and architecture. In fact, Egypt was one of the first major civilizations to design art and architecture. Wall paintings were done of the current Pharaohs and provide insight for scholars today about past Egyptians thoughts and experiences. Their art industry is still flourishing today, with the Cairo Opera House serving as one of their main performing arts venues in Cairo, the capital. Literature is also another important aspect of Egyptian culture. ("Culture of Egypt," 2009)

The Egyptian poets and novelists were some of the first to utilize modern styles of literature and the forms that were used from Egyptian poets and novelists are still used throughout the Middle East. Vernacular poetry is one of the most popular forms of poetry utilized in Egypt, and one that is still popular today. Additionally, Egyptian music is rich in culture, and is a mix of Western, Mediterranean, and African elements to make the unique Egyptian style music. Harps and flutes were some of the more commonly used instruments in the past as well as the ney and the oud. Also, vocals and percussion became very important in Egyptian music as well. This music was often played at festivals in Egypt, which they are renowned for. These festivals are referred to as mulid and are religious carnivals that the Egyptians put on. One example of this is the Sham en Nisim, which is an ancient spring festival that has been celebrated for thousands of years by the Egyptians. The culture of Egypt is vibrant and full of culture incorporating literature, music, festivals, art, and architecture. ("Culture of Egypt," 2009)

Professional Relationship

Business etiquette and relationships amongst professionals in Egypt are extremely important since their culture is a bit different than Western cultures. For example, Egyptians like all of the information to be presented to them about a topic when conversing. Additionally, if they do not like you, then they will not conduct business with you. Egyptians have to decide if they like you first. They don't like the pushy negotiating of Westerners, so high-pressure tactics will not work even though they are tough negotiators. The pace of their business is also significantly slower

than that of European and Western business, so this needs to be kept in mind. Also, no business should be conducted on Fridays, as this is the Muslim holy day. (“Doing business in Egypt,” 2018)

Medical Decisions

Medical decisions made in Egypt vary based on religion as well as an understanding of the medical profession in the country. For example, one study noted that many Egyptians did not have satisfactory information about what practices were ethical. Additionally, 52% of the Egyptians that were surveyed by the researchers in the study were not satisfied with the quality of care they were given from their physicians. However, many Egyptians, particularly Muslim women, are fearful of going to the doctor because of their strict conservative values. Muslim women are prided on not showing their bodies and not coming into unnecessary contact with men. This means that they cannot have a male doctor, and even a female doctor is questionable because they may have to show their bodies when getting breast exams or pap smears. This leads to medical decisions being made on account of conserving one’s purity and abiding by religious and social standards. (Mohamed, 2012)

Poor practices in the healthcare sector in recent years in Egypt have prevented many Egyptians from seeking medical attention because they are not pleased with the medical services provided to them. Hence, they often stay away from going to the doctor whenever possible. Thus, Egyptians are making their medical decisions based on the experiences they have had with the doctor. This is not good because it means many men, women, and children are losing out on care they need from the physician because of biases and decisions made on past experiences that may not reflect the current physician they have. (Mohamed, 2012)

Beliefs

The beliefs of many Egyptians are based on their primary religion, which is Islam. About 94% of Egyptians are Muslim. Additionally, since such a significant portion of the population is Muslim, Islam guides Egypt’s politics and the policies that the government passes. One example of this would be the daily paper that Egypt puts out which prints the five designated Islam prayers. Also, everything except for emergency services is closed on Friday’s, Islam’s holy day similar to Christianity’s Sunday. One common belief amongst Egyptians is that family comes before everything. They also consider verbal agreements binding, and if you tell someone you are going to do something, then you do it. They steer clear of risky behaviors as any behavior, positive or negative, reflects back onto their family in the eyes of society. (Orrill, 2017)

Common etiquette in Egypt is important, especially in regards to dining with others. For example, when having dinner with an Egyptian family, you would bring pastries or dessert. Also, you must remove your shoes before coming into the home and allow the host to seat you. When eating dinner, you always eat with your right hand and compliment the host on their home, as this is considered to be common courtesy. Egyptians take great pride in their cooking, and asking for a second helping of food is a compliment to the chef that you enjoy their cooking. (Orrill, 2017)

Dinner etiquette is important, but so is business etiquette. When shaking hands, a woman always extends her hand first to handshake with a man. If she does not, then polite bows of the head are used. Also, when addressing someone unless they tell you to use their first name, you

use their title. Older business men and women have better success because Egyptians placed emphasis on age and experience. (Orrill, 2017)

Health Problems

The health issues that affect Egypt's population disproportionately affect their poor. For example, poor women are 20% less likely to receive prenatal care than wealthy women. Also, 42/1000 children of the poor die versus 19/1000 for the wealthy. Some of the highest rates of Hepatitis C in the world can be found in Egypt, as 7% of their population ages 15-59 contract Hepatitis C. Additionally, with the rising health problems and concerns that Egypt has, their fertility rate has risen 17% in the past six years. With this rise in fertility, a reduction in post-partum and pre-partum care can be seen. Early breastfeeding rates have been reduced significantly as well as weak management of health systems in the public, which the majority of the poor use. However, the main issues continue to be maternal with the high fertility rates, high infant mortality, and reduced public healthcare for the poor.

There are a few ways that these issues can be mitigated in Egyptian culture. One way is to improve child and maternal health as well as nutrition services. Also, utilizing family planning and getting the general population access to birth controls and condoms will reduce the fertility rates as well as the poverty that occurs from unwanted children. Hence, strengthening the overall family planning program will help reduce the amount that the population is growing and ensures that Egypt is able to support the population that they currently have which is rising dramatically with the increased fertility rates. Lastly, improving the overall healthcare infrastructure in Egypt will help reduce the rates that Hepatitis C is being spread as well as the number of prenatal deaths and maternal deaths in Egypt within the poor population.

Spiritual Beliefs

In Ancient Egypt, the religion for the majority of the population was a polytheistic system that had multiple deities and rituals. However, today 94% of the Egyptian population is Muslim with the other 6% being Christian. Thus, their spiritual beliefs are centered around Islam. An example of a belief in Egypt is that you should not work on Friday's, as that is Islam's holy day. This holy day is similar to Christianity's Sunday, where many people in Christian based countries don't work on Sunday's. Their women also wear the hijab, one of the most recognizable beliefs about Islam. They recite the Muslim professional of faith, Shahadah. Also, Muslims perform rituals prayers five times a day referred to as Salat. They also pay Zakat, where they give donations to charities that benefit the poor. Muslims also fast during the month of Ramadan, which is Sawm. Lastly, one of the most important moments in a Muslim's life is the pilgrimage to Mecca, Hajj.

Conclusion

Overall, Egypt is a country that is rich in culture ranging from the beginning of recorded history which was 6000 years ago. This culture influenced their arts, architecture, music, and literature. It also influenced other aspects of their culture such as the professional relationships, common dinner etiquette, and professional etiquette that Egyptians believe in. Their main religion, Islam, is a driving factor for many of the beliefs that Egyptians hold, like that you shouldn't work on Friday's. This is why every institution except for emergency services is closed on Friday's, which is the Islamic holy day. Even though Egypt is rich in culture, they have many health

issues such as a drastic rise in fertility. Ultimately, Egypt is a beautiful country that needs reform in many ways.

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