
Impact Of a Cultural Background On Person's Life

A person's cultural background is an essential part of his or her life. People's beliefs, morals, and even fashion style are shaped by the culture by which they come from. My life has been greatly influenced by my Nigerian roots. Almost every aspect of my life is, directly or indirectly, shaped by Nigerian culture. My parents, Beatrice and Samuel Osho, and all of my family members in America came from Lagos, Nigeria, one of the most populous cities in the world. In Nigerian culture, children are taught to be respectful and reverent towards their elders, studious and hardworking in school, and street savvy so they will not be taken advantage of. These values have been instilled in me, by my family, throughout my entire life.

My parents taught me at a very early age to be respectful. They taught me to use my right hand when giving an item to someone older than me. I also learned that I must prostrate when greeting an elder. Whenever I see my great-grandmother, I cannot just hug her, I must prostrate first. To others this may seem as strange but to my family and me, this is just another aspect of life. By learning the basic principles of respect, I have been able to be a nice, well-liked person. By showing others respect, I gain the respect of others which benefits me now, in school and personal relationships, and will benefit me in college and in the workplace.

In Nigerian culture, as also seen in several other cultures, education is essential. Many Nigerian parents, like mine, believe that the key to success in life is education. My mother and father have done everything they could, so that my brother and I could not only go to a good college but, get good grades, get a job and be an educated person when we grew up. In Nigeria, my grandparents and great-grandparents were not able to get an education and lived very hard lives. They made sure that their children not only got a good education, but saw the value in a good education. This belief has been passed down to parents and instilled in my brother and me and is the reason I pride myself on getting good grades and being an intelligent person.

Life in Nigeria is very tough as there is widespread poverty, a lack of electricity, and gas shortages. Rough living environments can lead to robberies and several other types of crimes to be committed in order for people to feed themselves and their families. In order to survive, people in Nigeria must learn to be street smart. My parents learned these street skills and used them to help them survive in New York City. They were not naive and foolish like other people new to the city. They kept a close eye on their surroundings and knew how to protect themselves with their words. My parents then passed those skills onto me. At an early age, I was taught how to protect myself from dangerous situations. These skills have built up over time and give me the confidence to go out into the real world, by myself, and know how to handle all sorts of situations that I may find myself in.

My whole life has been shaped by my Nigerian culture. The foods that I eat on a daily basis are rich in flavors and spices and are made with several different ingredients, like red peppers, spinach, and pounded yams. Nothing in my life defines who I am like my culture. Without the skills I learned from my parents, I would not be the person I am today. I would not be as hard-working or as confident as I am in my abilities. Nigerian culture has been very prevalent in my life and my application would not be complete without mentioning it.