

Dynamics of Inclusion: Extremes Are No Longer an Option

My presentation deals with the identity of immigrants. More specifically, of whether an immigrant who come to the United States should assimilate and integrate into the main stream way of life or remain connected and attached to their native culture and traditions. Throughout my presentation I'll talk about the current issue, two solutions which have been presented and debated for quite a while, along with a new solution which, in my view, would be a more fitting and effective resolution.

Before I begin, I'd like to give you an idea of where the U.S stands because of immigration. As of 2009, there were more than 38.5 million non-native immigrants living in America. That number represents only foreign immigrants; meaning it excludes U.S 1st generation born babies who are often raised and taught the culture of their parents before the American way of life. It's important to note that most immigration trends and networks were established many years ago- some even before the formation of border patrol or any physical barrier along a border. It's amazing to know that any of us can go to a grocery store and find a myriad of vegetables available all year along at an affordable price. Better yet, go to dinner and enjoy a fancy, taste dish at a manageable price. The fact is that such privileges, which are often taken for granted, are in great part due to immigrants.

It important to see where the U.S stand because of immigration, but just as important to see where migrants stand in today's diverse country. What a better indicator to rely on than statistics. According to several different statistics, in High School, Hispanics had the lowest graduation rate and African Americans were bullied upon the most. 32% of the college body is composed of minority groups. a studied showed that, while in the recession, in 2009 all minority groups had higher unemployment rates and lower percentage rates covered by health insurance compared to the

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Anglo population. So, what exactly do these statistics reveal? In my opinion, they reveal that most if not all minorities have been left behind, and the new question is how do help the underrepresented groups make bigger stride of improvement?

Assimilation and Multiculturalism are two solutions which have been debated by many experts over many years. While Assimilation proposes that immigrants leave behind their native traditions and adapt those established in their new country of residence, Multiculturalism indicates that a diverse country which allows all migrants to maintain and carry on their customs is the most beneficiary for the U.S. I, however, argue that both of these proposals are ineffective solution. At it's heart assimilation holds a set of moral, cultural, and national standards to be acceptable and correct. How can we pick and choose certain from a wide range of options in the United States? On the other hand, allowing immigrants to live/practice all traditions and beliefs as those of their hometown in a modern society will also cause conflicts if those beliefs are extremes such as subordination of women or oppression against homosexuals.

In my eyes, the most effective solution would come as a compromise between both ideas. A lenient assimilation plan that would help, not force, migrants to assimilate. A plan that would also allow immigrants to familiarize with the established culture and at the same time maintain beneficiary parts of their native culture. If the Census' forecast proves to be correct, we would not want to have 50% of the U.S population behind in the year 2050.

For migrant children who are in the ages of 4-18, an integration to the American culture will come as time rolls along. School is a kid's second home. Through bilingual teaching programs

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public schools can essentially give students an edge in the future and eliminate the notion of a superior culture.

Help should not stall at the public education level. It is well known that education can be the driving force for improvement of any country. Experts around the nation constantly recognize the work ethic of most migrants. Making post-secondary education harder to immigrants will only contribute to leaving them behind even further. A person have a more significant contribution to the country by holding a profession than holding two minimum-wage jobs. That would take care of the ages 19-23

Finally, are those who are 24-older- which is, for the most part, the working force. How do we help them? The answer is through their everyday routine. A study was done, in which scientist grabbed a group of immigrants who consider themselves to be successful. Those immigrants stated they were able to deal with change, do well in their jobs/ careers mainly because of the support and great relations they had with family and co-workers. The fact is that if we make immigrants feel welcome and accepted, they will, over time, build a sense of security enabling them to step out of their boundaries and learn a new way of life. The more they feel suppressed, the more they will refuse to let go of what they know; due to fear. Knowing that they will not be judge for who they are or where they come from migrants will begin to learn the new language or become more involve in their community or local area.

It may seem like simple concepts, but the idea of helping and accepting others can make a huge difference in many aspects of a individual as well as a country like the U.S. Most of the time we think of how foreigners should act or what they should do while living or visiting the United

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States; the new question is how should WE act or how should WE help to make a difference for them?