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Understanding the concept of culture

Major Competency

IEPs have an understanding of the concept of culture and the pervasive influence it will have on their life and work abroad.

Core Competency

- 3.1** IEPs have a conceptual understanding of how culture affects all people and societies.

Behavioural Indicators

3.1 Interculturally Effective Persons:

- know that values, appropriate behaviours, and appearances (attire etc.) vary from culture to culture and that every culture is valid in its own right
- can articulate the concept of culture, what it is, and its pervasive influence, by being able to:
 - describe some of the main factors in comparing cultures (e.g. authority systems, social stratification, attitudes to work and time)
 - point to examples of the influence of culture in such areas as the nature of social and economic institutions, management processes, concepts of power, relationships, leadership, and attitudes to technology and change etc.
 - describe the two parts of culture: the visible, e.g. clothing, and the invisible, e.g. values (this being sometimes called the “iceberg” model)
 - give examples of the changing and non-static nature of culture (e.g. the historical evolution of values in their own culture) indicating that they understand that all cultures do evolve
 - cite examples of the interrelationships, both conflictual and cooperative, that have existed or do exist between cultures