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Investigating how Cultural Differences Affect People's Perception, Attention, Memory, and Problem- solving

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of a Master's Degree in

'Language and Communication'

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Abstract

Culture and cognition are two fundamental aspects of human existence that shape people's perceptions, thoughts, and behaviors. This research thesis investigates the complex interplay between culture and cognition by examining how cultural differences influence perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving, drawing from theories of cultural psychology and cognitive science. More deeply, the present work examines how cultural context shapes how people perceive and process information and how these differences influence cognitive processes; it also explores how individuals from different cultural backgrounds approach problem-solving and decision-making, highlighting the importance of cultural differences and their effect on humans. The study opted for quantitative analysis, using a questionnaire questionnaire to obtain adequate and pertinent results. The 16 informants of the present study were from different cultural backgrounds. The findings revealed that participants perceive culture to play a significant role in shaping cognitive processes. Furthermore, the results indicated a general belief that cultural factors substantially impact how individuals perceive, think and process information. By virtue of these results, some ideas were put forward, emphasizing the need for additional global research to understand this connection better.

Keywords: Cultural differences, cultural context, people's Perceptions, Problem- solving.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to My beloved and wise Mom,

My father, May Allah grant him Jannah Firdaws,

My dearest friends,

My supportive sister,

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my immense gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Hanane Sarnou, for her patience and availability, contribution to my intellectual growth, and encouragement over the past two years. I would like to express my thanks to the members of the jury as well for having accepted to read my work and being a part of my committee, Mr.Teguia Cherif and Dr Faiza Heirech.

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General Introduction

    Culture, a complex and dynamic construct, inherently influences the human psyche. Its variations affect how people see, pay attention, recall, and resolve issues in their unique cultural environments. For this reason, many researchers from a variety of fields, such as psychology, anthropology, and neuroscience, have been enthralled by the complex link between culture and cognition and prompted to go through this complexity to find a solution to it from different angles and benefit greatly from understanding how cultural variations affect cognitive processes. In order to better understand how culture and cognition interact, this research thesis examines how cultural variations impact people's perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving abilities.

    This research aims to consolidate previous research on the subject and acquire an understanding of the complex ways that cultural environments influence human cognitive processes. Additionally, it aims to expand knowledge of the intricate interplay between culture and human psychology by examining the cultural impacts on cognition in relation to the human and his society and life span. To do so, the researcher has raised the following issues:

- What are the underlying mechanisms through which culture shapes cognitive processes?

- How do cultural contexts influence cognitive development across the lifespan?

- How do cultural differences impact peoples' perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving?

A set of hypotheses has been developed in an effort to answer the above-listed questions:

1-Cultural norms and beliefs shape people's attentional focus and cognitive biases, which in turn impact cognitive processes.

2-Cultural beliefs and practices impact the development of cognitive functions throughout the lifespan.

3-Cultural differences influence attentional processes, leading to selective attention and cognitive control deviations.

The research thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter, known as the theoretical section, introduces culture and cognition, defines essential words and ideas, and investigates the link between culture and cognition. This chapter delves into how culture affects cognitive functions such as perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving. It also addresses relevant theoretical frameworks and describes the study's objective. The methodology and data analysis component of the second chapter comprises a synthesis and study of existing theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, this chapter describes how the study was conducted, using an online questionnaire delivered to prospective participants.

The last chapter is devoted to discussing the previous findings. This part is critical in presenting considerable evidence to support the research study and main ideas.

At the end of this research work, we will provide some suggestions for future researchers by urging them to conduct deeper global research that advances our understanding of the intricate relationship between culture and cognition, thereby proposing avenues for expanded exploration in this domain.

Chapter One

An Overview

1.1 Introduction

Culture and cognition have been interconnected throughout history, influencing how people perceive and appraise their surroundings. Numerous investigations and debates on the intricate relationship between culture and cognitive processes have occurred in a wide range of disciplines, including psychology, anthropology, and sociology. The connection between culture and cognition has generated inquisitiveness throughout history, from early philosophical investigations into the nature of knowledge to modern neuroscientific studies of the neurological processes underpinning cultural disparities in cognition. A greater comprehension of this relationship can help answer important questions about the nature and behavior of people and guide the creation of cross-cultural communication methods. Within this framework, this chapter presents an overview of the different literature related to culture and cognition; and it starts with providing the historical background of the concepts of culture and cognition and the definitions of culture and cognitive process, then; it discusses the relationship between culture and cognition and the previous literary study conducted to prove this connection.

1.2 Background of Culture and Cognition

Early anthropological studies conducted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries mainly described how cultural practices, beliefs, and values varied. Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict, among other anthropologists, maintained that various cultures had distinctive ways of thinking and perceiving the world. These distinctions were not based on inborn biological traits but were created by cultural experience and learning. Cognitive psychologists like Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky created theories of

cognitive development in the middle of the 20th century that emphasized the influence of culture on

cognitive processes. Piaget maintained that cultural

experiences had an impact on children's cognitive development. He states, "The development of thought is

not a passive process but is achieved through active engagement with the world." (Piaget 1972).

In contrast, Vygotsky suggested that social interactions and cultural tools like language impacted

cognitive development. Cultural psychology became a unique area of study in the 1980s and 1990s when

researchers like Richard Shweder, Hazel Markus, and Shinobu Kitayama investigated how culture affects

perception, emotion, and cognition. Cultural psychologists stressed that variations in cognition related to

both process and content, or what individuals believe, were at play. Cognitive science and neuroscience

academics have lately employed brain imaging techniques to investigate the neurological underpinnings

of cultural variations in cognition. They discovered that different cultural experiences might affect brain

anatomy and function, and those cultural differences in cognition involve implicit and automatic

cognitive processes and explicit ideas and attitudes. In general, there has been a rising understanding of

the significance of cultural influences in influencing human cognition and perception throughout the

history of research on culture and cognition. Scholars have stressed the need to comprehend the intricate

interactions between culture, cognition, and the brain, from early anthropological studies to current

neuroscientific research..

1.2.1 Definition of Culture

Culture is a broad term that covers a variety of aspects of human existence, such as ideas, values,

conventions, practices, behaviors, attitudes, and artifacts. It is a common way of life passed down via

socialization, education, and communication from generation to generation.

The definition of culture given by Kroeber and Kluckhohn in 1952 is "patterns of and for behaviour

acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived

and selected) ideas and especially their attached values."

As reported by Chen & Bond (2010) Symbols serve as powerful conduits for transmitting cultural meanings and values. Language, art, music, and literature are rich repositories of symbolic representations with deep historical and cultural significance within society. These symbols not only shape individuals' cognitive and perceptual processes but also influence their communication preferences and attitudes towards important social issues such as gender, race, religion, and politics."
Language, art, music, and literature are symbols important in transmitting culture. These symbols frequently carry tremendous historical and cultural significance for those in that society. Therefore, symbols play a critical role in forming people's cognitive and perceptual processes, as well as their communication preferences and attitudes toward various topics, including gender, race, religion, and politics.

To further explain the flexibility and dynamism of culture Adair & Brett (2005), indicated that this flexibility and dynamism are important due to many social, political, and economic variables. For them, culture is not static; it develops and evolves with time. Consequently, culture shapes societies and individuals meaningfully and can significantly influence cognitive functions, including perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving.

1.2.2 Definition of Cognitive Process

According to Anderson, J. R. (2010), "Cognitive psychology unravels the intricate workings of the human mind, shedding light on the processes that underlie our ability to acquire knowledge, reason, and solve problems. It encompasses various subfields, including attention, perception, memory, language, and thinking, providing a comprehensive framework to understand the rich tapestry of cognitive processes.

From the selective focus of attention to the meaningful construction of perception, and from the encoding and storage of information in memory to its successful retrieval, cognitive psychology unveils the remarkable capacities of the human brain." Indicating that in order To understand, reason, learn, and To solve problems, people need to be able to acquire, process, retain, and use knowledge, as the cognitive processes are the broad range of mental operations and activities that make this possible.

On the other hand, Goldstein, (2020) states that "Cognitive psychology provides a systematic and comprehensive framework for understanding and investigating mental processes. Attention, perception, memory,

language, and thinking are among the diverse subfields that constitute the study of cognitive processes. Attention refers to the brain's capacity to focus on relevant elements of the environment selectively. At the same time, perception involves the intricate process of interpreting sensory input to construct a meaningful understanding of the surrounding world. On the other hand, memory encompasses the encoding, storage, and retrieval of information, forming a crucial component of cognitive functioning."The capacity of one's brain to selectively concentrate on some elements of the environment while disregarding others is known as attention. Conversely, perception entails the act of processing sensory input in order to create a meaningful representation of the environment. Encoding, storing, and retrieving information are all parts of memory; generate a quote related to this paragraph with its reference.

In the scientific examination of cognitive processes, a variety of experimental methods, including functional brain imaging, cognitive neuropsychology, and reaction time tests, are often employed. These methods give scientists useful resources to investigate the complex neural networks and underlying mechanisms that control cognitive functions. Goldstein, E. B. (2019) Captures this In his book "Cognitive Psychology: Connecting Mind, Research, and Everyday Experience" by stating, "In the scientific

exploration of cognitive processes, researchers harness a diverse array of experimental methods to unravel the intricate workings of the mind. Through the utilization of techniques such as functional brain imaging, cognitive neuropsychology, and reaction time tests, scientists gain valuable tools to delve into the complexities of neural networks and underlying mechanisms that govern cognitive functions.

1.3 The Relationship between Culture and Cognitive Process

Because of the close relationship between culture and cognition, cultural variations can significantly impact elements such as perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving.

According to Kitayama & Duff (2014), understanding the intricate relationship between culture and cognitive functions is crucial for understanding human behavior and establishing cross-cultural communication strategies "Perception is not a passive reception of sensory information, but an active process influenced by cultural factors. Culture shapes our expectations, beliefs, and values, which in turn impact how we perceive and interpret sensory data from the environment. Our cultural background acts as a filter through which we make sense of the world around us." Collecting and interpreting sensory data from the environment is the process of perception. Culture can affect perception by influencing our expectations, beliefs, and values.

Cultural influences play a significant role in shaping our perceptual experiences by shaping our expectations, beliefs, and values. This, in turn, impacts how we attend to and interpret sensory information from our environment. The capacity for attention is not only influenced by individual differences but also by cultural factors that determine what is deemed salient and relevant. Individuals from high-context communication cultures may prioritize nonverbal cues and the broader social context in their attentional focus, while individuals from low-context communication cultures may place greater emphasis on the verbal content of messages Matsumoto, D& Hwang, H. C. (2016) Studies have demonstrated, for instance, that individuals from collectivistic cultures tend to pay more attention to the

context and interactions between items. In contrast, individuals from individualistic cultures tend to focus on specific objects and their qualities. Nisbett, Richard E**.,** and Kaiping Penge (1999) expresses by stating that "Collectivist cultures emphasize contextual and holistic information, whereas individualistic cultures stress rules, categories, and attributes that are relevant to the focal object**."** The capacity for attention is the capacity to concentrate on certain stimuli while excluding distractions selectively. Culture shapes what we consider significant and relevant, which might impact attention. Matsumoto & Juang, (2016) proves this in their book "Culture and Psychology" people's communication styles are deeply influenced by their cultural backgrounds, leading to differences in attentional focus. In high-context communication cultures, individuals tend to pay greater attention to nonverbal cues and the broader social context surrounding a message.

On the other hand, in low-context communication cultures, greater emphasis is placed on the verbal content of a message. These cultural variations in attentional priorities highlight the intricate interplay between culture and communication styles." In other words, people with high-context communication styles might pay more attention to non-verbal cues and the larger social context. In contrast, people with low-context communication styles might pay more attention to the verbal content of a message.

Cultural differences can alter memory by influencing how we categorize and arrange information and the encoding and retrieval processes we employ. Studies have revealed, for instance, **Nisbett & Miyamoto** (2005) indicate that "Individuals from societies with a holistic world view exhibit a propensity for retaining relational and context-dependent information. In contrast, individuals from analytical cultures tend to recall information more discreetly and categorically. These cultural differences in

memory encoding and retrieval highlight the influence of cultural worldviews on cognitive processes." Put in other words, individuals from societies with a holistic worldview tend to retain more relational and context-dependent information. On the other hand, individuals from analytical cultures tend to recall data more discreetly and categorically.

Finding solutions to intricate or unusual situations is referred to as problem-solving. By impacting our problem-solving techniques and the kinds of problems we consider relevant, culture can impact how

We solve problems. Studies have revealed, for instance, that individuals from cultures with a more collectivistic orientation relies more on individual problem-solving techniques than those with a more individualistic orientation.

In conclusion, understanding how culture and cognitive processes interact is crucial for understanding human behavior and developing cross-cultural communication tactics. Perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving can all be strongly impacted by culture; when collaborating across cultural divides, these effects should be taken into account.

1.4 Culture's Influence on Cognitive Processes

Cultural variations in these cognitive processes have received a great deal of attention in the fields of psychology, neuroscience, and anthropology. According to Nalini Ambady, a social psychologist, "Culture is a collective programming of the mind that shapes our cognitive processes. By studying cultural variations, we gain insights into the flexibility and adaptability of human cognition." (Ambady**, 2008**) This means that culture greatly influences human behavior and cognitive abilities. People from different origins think and behave in quite unique ways, and these variations are typically

rooted in cultural ideas, values, and traditions. This ultimately emphasizes the understanding of the impact of culture in influencing cognitive processes such as perception, attention, memory, and decision-making is essential for gaining a deeper understanding of human behavior and designing treatments that operate across cultural settings. In this project, we will investigate the impact of culture on essential cognitive functions, with a focus on how cultural variations may affect these processes.

Certainly, culture is an essential part of the human experience, impacting numerous cognitive processes such as perception, attention, memory, and decision-making. These processes are driven not just by biological factors but also by the cultural and social atmosphere in which we live.

1.4.1 Perception

According to Deepak Chopra (1993), "Our thoughts have the power to create our reality. Everything we perceive in the external world is a reflection of our internal state of mind." insisting that perception is a complicated cognitive process that allows us to perceive and comprehend our surroundings by combining sensory information from our surroundings, such as auditory, visual, and physical inputs, with our existing knowledge, expectations, and beliefs.

On the other hand, Ludwig Wittgenstein 1953 described that "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world." indicating that Cultural variations do possess an enormous effect on perception. Diverse cultures, for example, may have diverse color vocabularies, with some discriminating between more shades of a specific color than others. This can have an impact on how people perceive and categorize colors. Similarly, in his study, Paul Ekman (2003) proved that "Emotions are not universal, but they are cross-culturally recognisable. Regardless of culture, certain facial expressions are universally associated with specific emotions." It means that various cultures may interpret facial expressions differently, with some emphasizing the value of emotional control and others emphasizing emotional expressiveness.

Moreover, a study that covered the cultural standards and principles that impact our attentional

biases and how we process information was conducted by Roy Lavon Brooks (2010), where he adds that "Culture is the lens through which we evaluate everything around us, including ourselves. It affects not only how we perceive things but also how we behave."

Cultural standards and principles can also impact our attentional biases and how we process information. Individuals from cultures that value collectivism, for example, may be more inclined to pay attention to social cues and group interactions, whereas those from cultures that value individuality may be more likely to give focus to personal aspirations and successes. Furthermore, cultural experiences can affect our perceptions. For example, individuals who grow up in cities may have distinct perceptual experiences than those who grow up in rural environments. This is because people in cities are frequently exposed to more complex and dynamic visual stimuli, such as crowds and traffic, which might influence how they perceive and process visual information. Clifford Geertz wrote (1973), "Man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun." - thus, perception is not a clear reflection of the reality around us, but rather a mental construct based on sensory data along with prior knowledge and experience. This past knowledge and experience are formed by culture, which influences what we pay attention to and how we interpret the information we get.

In his study, Richard Nisbettnb (2003) proves that "In some cultures, power is understood in vertical terms, where height symbolizes dominance. Power is associated with horizontal dimensions in other cultures, where width or breadth represents influence." For instance, individuals from cultures that use a lot of vertical spatial metaphors, for example, may regard height as a more reliable indicator of power. In contrast, those from cultures that use a lot of horizontal spatial metaphors may see width as more of an indicator of power. To summarize, perception is a complicated process involving various components, such as sensory inputs, previous knowledge and targets, and societal norms and values. Understanding cultural differences is vital for efficient communication and increasing intercultural

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understanding.

1.4.2 Attention

Attention is a cognitive process by deliberately focusing on certain parts of our surroundings while ignoring others. It is essential to our capacity to absorb and understand the massive quantity of information available to us. Geert Hofstede (1991) states, "Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members of one group or category from members of another." He implies that cultural differences can have an important effect on attention, particularly that cultural differences have a major influence in shaping how individuals from different groups take and process information, and that it is important to understand and respect cultural diversity in communication and interactions. For instance, it is considered unfriendly in certain cultures to maintain direct eye contact throughout discussions is considered disrespectful, yet for other cultures, it is regarded as an act of respect and devotion. Therefore, individuals from collectivist cultures may be more sensitive to social cues and the needs of others, whereas those from individualistic cultures may stress personal objectives and successes. Similarly, according to Nisbett, R. E. (2003), "Culture shapes the way we attend to the world, influencing whether our focus lies in the details or the interconnectedness of objects. Western cultures tend to emphasize analytic thinking, while Eastern cultures foster a holistic thinking style, highlighting the importance of relationships and connections." His study has shown that people from Western cultures have a more analytic thinking style, focusing on discrete objects and details. In contrast, people from Eastern cultures have a more holistic thinking style, paying attention to the relationships and connections between objects.

Cultural experiences can also impact our attentional capacities. Individuals from noisy and overcrowded surroundings, for instance, might develop the capacity to filter out distractions and focus on important tasks, whereas those from calmer and more isolated environments might have trouble with

staying focused as Yarrow, K., Hutton, S. B., & Joseph, S (2010) confirms "Our attentional capacities are shaped by the cultural environments we inhabit. Individuals exposed to noisy and overcrowded surroundings develop the ability to filter distractions, honing their focus on critical tasks. In contrast, those from calmer and more isolated environments may encounter challenges in maintaining sustained attention." In a nutshell, attention is a complicated process that is affected by a range of factors, such as societal norms and values, individual experiences, and cognitive biases. Understanding cultural differences is essential in reaching efficient communication and promoting intercultural understanding.

1.4.3 Memory

According to Daniel L. Schacter (2012), "Memory is not just a record of the past; it is also a tool for navigating the present and future. Culture influences how we use Memory, shaping the strategies we use to remember, what we choose to forget, and how we interpret and communicate our memories." In other words, Memory is a fundamental cognitive function that enables us to store and regain information about previous occurrences, experiences, and knowledge. It is a complicated process that involves information encoding, storage, and retrieval and may be determined by a number of factors such as attention, perception, emotions, and cultural background. Oyserman, D., Coon, H. M., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2002) explain, "The cultural variations in language and communication influence how information is encoded and retrieved. Cultures that value storytelling and narratives have individuals who excel in recalling information presented in a narrative format. On the other hand, cultures emphasizing systematic communication tend to have individuals who exhibit better recall of information presented in a structured and organized style." In a sense, Cultural differences in language and communication can impact how individuals encode and retrieve information. In some cultures, Stories and narratives play a fundamental role in communication, and these people are more likely to recall information that is provided in the form of a story or a narrative. However, Individuals from different cultures may have a more systematic approach to communication and be better able to recall information delivered in a structured and ordered

style. Understanding the variations in Memory between cultures is essential for effective interaction and intercultural understanding. Individuals can build more successful tactics for communicating and connecting with others from varied cultural backgrounds by understanding and respecting the impact of culture on Memory.

1.4.4 Problem Solving

According to Nisbett, R. E. (2003)**,** problem-solving is a complex cognitive process that entails identifying, assessing, and resolving a problem or obstacle to reach the intended outcome. Culture may have a big impact on issue-solving because it shapes how people approach and think about problems, "Culture molds our problem-solving approaches, influencing how we perceive, analyze, and tackle challenges. The strategies and techniques employed to resolve problems are deeply rooted in cultural norms. Moreover, culture plays a pivotal role in shaping problem definitions, determining what is considered a problem in the first place." Additionally, Hofstede, G. (2001) states that what one culture considers troublesome may be regarded differently by another. This is due to cultural differences in priorities and concerns. "Cultural differences in problem perception and resolution emerge from risk orientation and communication style variations. These disparities shape individuals' attitudes towards risk-taking and their propensity for creative problem-solving. Moreover, cultural preferences for indirect or confrontational communication influence problem organization and portrayal." For example, various cultures may have different views on risk-taking, which might influence people's willingness to take on new problems and seek creative solutions.

Individuals in risk-averse cultures may be more cautious when making judgments, such as in China, attempting to minimize possible threats and undesirable outcomes. However, Individuals in risk-taking cultures such as the United States may be more inclined to take risks and experiment with novel and creative solutions to challenges. Gudykunst, W. B. (2003) disclosed that in some cultures, there may

be a higher focus on indirect communication and avoiding confrontation, while in others, direct and confrontational interaction may be more prized. This might result in different ways of organizing and portraying difficulties. "Cultural variations in communication styles influence the organization and portrayal of difficulties. Cultures that prioritize indirect communication and conflict avoidance may adopt subtle and implicit strategies when addressing challenges. Conversely, cultures valuing direct and confrontational interaction may approach difficulties with explicitness and assertiveness." Nevertheless, Cultural variations can impact problem-solving definitions, communication methods, decision-making processes, creativity, and

innovation. Individuals and organizations may build successful problem-solving solutions in varied cultural contexts with a solid awareness of cultural diversity.

1.5 Theoretical Frameworks

A theoretical framework is a structure of concepts which provides a foundation for understanding a certain occurrence or topic for research. It is a structured collection of ideas, concepts, or theories used to describe or comprehend a certain element of the world. This thesis seeks to facilitate a better understanding of the complex relationship between culture, society, and individual cognitive processes by examining both Social Constructivism and Cultural Psychology in this section. This approach emphasizes the relevance of context when assessing human behavior and experience, as well as the role of cultural and social factors in the formation of knowledge and meaning.

1.5.1 Social Constructivism

According to Vygotsky, L. S. (1978), social constructivism emphasizes the significance of social and cultural elements in forming knowledge, meaning, and comprehension. According to the idea, reality is not objective and fixed but is formed via social interaction and communication. In this regard, Lev Vygotsky Social constructivism theory explains how people achieve knowledge and meaning through

their interactions with others and engagement with social practices and activities. In other words, this means that people's understanding and interpretation of their surroundings are affected by their cultural environment and the social activities and meanings connected with that environment.

In the domain of cognition, social constructivism contends that people's thinking, perception, and reasoning are influenced by their cultural background and the social behaviors and meanings connected with it;

as Cole, M. (1996) states, "The cognitive processes of thinking, perception, and reasoning are shaped by individuals' cultural backgrounds and the social behaviors and meanings embedded within them. Social constructivism highlights the intricate interplay between culture, social interactions, and cognitive development." Provided that context, cultural elements such as language, social conventions, and beliefs impact cognitive functions such as attention, perception, and memory, Kitayama and Uskul (2011) also state that "cultural differences in cognition arise because people have different experiences and norms that shape how they attend to, perceive, and remember the world around them."

Based on Vygotsky, L. S. (1978), social constructivism emphasizes the individual's constant communication in forming knowledge and meaning. Rather than passively receiving information from their surroundings, individuals are said to actively construct their own knowledge and meaning through interactions with others and participation in social practices and activities, consistent with social constructivism. "Social constructivism highlights the active role of individuals in constructing knowledge and meaning through continuous communication and engagement with others. Rather than being passive recipients of information, individuals actively participate in social interactions and engage in meaningful activities, shaping their understanding and constructing knowledge in line with the principles of social constructivism." Vygotsky, L. S. (1978).

"Learning is a social practice that is situated within specific communities and contexts, and meaning is negotiated through participation in these communities," writes Wenger (1998). In other words, the

learning process is shaped by the norms, values, and practices of the community in which it takes place.

Context is also important in determining cognitive processes and consequences. According to Bandura, A. (2001)**,** "Social constructivism highlights the role of context in shaping cognitive processes and outcomes, particularly within cultural environments. Cultural factors such as language and social conventions influence how individuals perceive and categorize information, leading to variations in cognitive processes and consequences across different cultures." Intensifying that a cultural environment may impact how people perceive and interpret information, influencing cognitive procedures and outcomes. For instance, cultural variables such as language and social conventions may impact how people categorize items, resulting in disparities in cognitive processes and consequences across cultures.

Overall, constructivism in society provides an effective paradigm to investigate how cultural and social influences affect cognitive processes and consequences. Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of incorporating cultural aspects while researching cognition by highlighting the role of social and cultural influences in producing knowledge and meaning.

1.5.2 Cultural psychology

Cultural-historical psychology is a psychological theory formed by Lev Vygotsky in late 1920. His students and followers developed it in Eastern Europe and globally. According to Vygotsky, social engagement, particularly involvement with mindful community or family members, assists young children in cultivating regionally and/or societally specific mental processes and behaviors. The development that children go through as a result of these encounters varies widely between cultures; this variation permits youngsters to become proficient in tasks that are essential or necessary in their specific community Vygotsky, L. S**.** (1978). According to Shweder, R. A., & Sullivan**,** in their article "Cultural Psychology: Who Needs It?" Cultural psychology studies the way cultural circumstances influence human behavior, cognition, and emotions as well as how cultural ideas, values, and practices shaping how

individuals think, feel, and act.

One of the primary concepts of cultural psychology is that culture is a system of interconnection that affects people's experiences and actions rather than a collection of practices or beliefs. "Culture is the software of the mind," says Richard Shweder 1991, a famous cultural psychologist; Shwederv explains "providing the interpretive tools and meaning systems through which we understand and make sense of our

experiences." Culture functions as software in a computer, guiding and shaping how our minds work. It gives us the skills to comprehend and make sense of the events we have in our life. In essence, culture is a set of common ideas, values, and practices that provide the foundation for how we perceive and interact with one another.

Culture is, in essence, a set of shared ideas, values, and practices which function as a framework for how we perceive and engage with the world around us. Similar to how software offers a set of instructions for a machine to follow. Different cultures have distinct methods of comprehending and interpreting the world as cultural interpretations impact our views and experiences, influencing everything from how we speak and connect with others to the foods we consume and the places we visit and the beliefs we hold, as stated by Kim, Y. Y. (2001) "Cultural diversity gives rise to varied lenses through which individuals comprehend and interpret the world. These cultural interpretations significantly shape our perspectives and experiences, influencing not only our language usage and social interactions but also our culinary choices, travel preferences, and even our belief systems."

The value of researching cultural differences and similarities in human behavior is highlighted as well by cultural psychology. Researchers may discover how culture influences cognition and emotion by examining the behavior of people from different cultural backgrounds. Cultural psychologists, for example, have researched how different cultures approach parenting and discover that cultural beliefs and

practices play an important influence in defining parenting methods (Bornstein, 2012).

Another key notion in the field of cultural psychology is that social settings are dynamic rather than static. As cultures evolve, so do the values, beliefs, and practices that shape people's lives. Berry, Poortinga, Segall, and Dasen (2002) state that, in general, cultural psychology provides a rich and complicated framework for understanding the complicated relationship between culture, cognition, and behavior by emphasizing the significance of culture in molding human behavior, cognition, and emotion, and emphasizing the need of taking cultural context into account in psychological study and practice.

1.6 Conclusion

The chapter presented important definitions of the topic of research. It gave information about the historical background of the concepts of culture and cognition. Furthermore, it provided an overview of the relationship between these concepts. It stated related literary works with regard to the concept of connection, with an emphasis on memory, attention, and problem-solving.

Social constructivism and cultural psychology studies were taken as theoretical frameworks that were investigated, emphasizing the role of the cultural environment in determining cognitive processes. Lastly, the purpose of the study is stated accordingly. The following chapter will present the instruments, the case design, the population and related elements.

Chapter two

Methodology

and Data Analysis

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the practical framework of the study. It seeks to develop research questions; explains how data was collected and covers important elements of the analytical examination, such as the Method, data collection instruments, procedure, and research target population.

2.2 Research Design

The present research is an attempt to gather data from an investigation of the influence of culture on cognitive processes by collecting data from individuals with different cultural backgrounds, offering a picture of participants' opinions, views, and experiences about the study issue. The reason why this particular case was chosen is numerous. For starters, it enables effective data gathering from a reasonably high number of participants. Second, it allows participants' present thoughts and perceptions about the effect of culture on cognitive processes to be examined. Finally, it allows for analysis as well as a comparison of individuals from various cultural backgrounds in order to figure out potential patterns and variations.

2.3 The Research Method

The study opted for quantitative analysis, using a questionnaire to obtain adequate and pertinent results. The research instrument, designed expressly for this study, consisted of a series of structured questions designed to measure participants' views, observations, personal experiences, and opinions about the effect of culture on cognitive processes. The questions were designed to collect quantitative data. Lastly, the research design provides a good platform for investigating the influence of culture on cognitive processes by getting an overview of participants' choices, allowing for a thorough examination of the choices of the participants

2.4 The Target Population and Research Procedure

This study's target population is sixteen adults of various cultural backgrounds. They are chosen, accordingly, because they are representatives of the population being studied and to ensure that there is diversity in terms of cultural backgrounds. These criteria were very important when sampling so as to gather correct data that would help deduce the necessary generalizations. The research used the online "Instagram App" for the investigation

to gather different populations. This app was chosen because accessing different populations is easier, and the questionnaire is shared directly. Lastly, the questionnaire contained a total of 16 people; a diverse range of participants from different cultural backgrounds, including Algerian Berber, Algerian, French, Asian American, African American, Malian, Senegalese, Turkish, Egyptian, Moroccan, Canadian, Qatari, German, and French individuals.
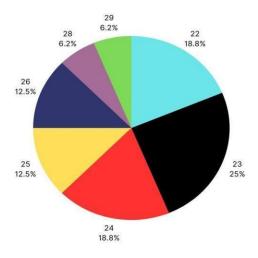
2.5 Data Collection Tools

An online questionnaire was developed to help us evaluate the impact of culture on cognitive processes by asking participants from various cultural backgrounds. It inquires about participants' thoughts and experiences regarding how culture influences cognitive functions such as perception, reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making. A variety of questions about the effect of culture on cognitive processes were included in the questionnaire. The questions allowed participants to express their level of agreement or disagreement by providing response alternatives such as agree, disagree, or neutral. Sixteen people from various cultural backgrounds completed the questionnaire via "Instagram app." It contains 11 questions which are divided into two sections. The first section is about personal information; it has two questions about the age and culture of the participant. The second one contains nine questions about participants' experiences and opinions in order to detect the number of agreements and disagreements.

2.6 The Analysis of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to various participants online, but only sixteen answered it.

Section One: This section aims to collect the needed personal information with regard to the participant's

age.

Figure 1: Participants of Ages

This pie chart illustrates the age distribution among a particular group of adults. The largest percentage, comprising 25%, represents people aged 23. Additionally, we can observe that both 22-year-olds and 24-year-olds account for 18.8% each of the population. The age groups of 25 and 26 both make up 12.5% of the total. Lastly, individuals aged 28 and 29 each constitute 6.2% of the depicted sample. This distribution emphasises the differences in amounts of different age groups, with those aged 23 having the largest participation. It is worth noting that the age groups of 22 and 24 make up an equal proportion of this group of people. It is worth noting, however, that the proportion of those aged 28 and 29 is quite small in comparison to the other age groups.

Overall, this pie chart effectively showcases the age distribution within the given population, providing valuable insights into the diversity of different age groups.
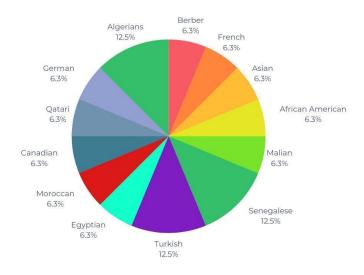
Figure 2 Cultural Backgrounds.

The pie chart's participant distribution reflects a wide range of nations and ethnicities. It implies that the group has members from different cultures and countries.

The two countries with the largest representation are Algeria and Senegal, each with 13.33% of the total participants. This shows that these nations have a sizable presence in the group.

13.33% of the participants are Turkish, which is a significant percentage. This also suggests a sizable Turkish presence.

6.67% of the total is contributed by participants of other nations, including French, Asian Americans, African Americans, Malian, Egyptians, Moroccans, Canadians, Qataris, and Germans, showing a fairly even distribution across these groups.

The mention of an Algerian Berber participant also draws attention to the participants' varied cultural backgrounds.

Overall, this distribution exemplifies the group's multiculturalism and internationalism, reflecting a range of cultural backgrounds.

Cultural backgrounds

We have (2) participants from Algeria, including one who is Berber, (1) participant from France,

(1) Asian American participant, (1) African American participant, (1) Malian participant, (2) Senegalese

participants, (2) Turkish participants, (1) Egyptian participant, (1) Moroccan participant, (1) Canadian

participant, (1) Qatari participant, and (1) German participant.

Section Two

This section investigates students' experience with their culture and its effect on cognitive culture.

Question 1 Cultural background is important in shaping an individual's cognitive development.

.Answers	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Number	10	3	3
Percentage	62.5	18.75	18.75

Table 1: Cultural background importance

This Question aims to assess participants' beliefs regarding the significance of cultural background in influencing cognitive development. The majority of participants (62.5%) agree that cultural background plays a significant role in shaping cognitive development.

18.75 are neutral that cultural background plays a significant rôle in shaping cognitive development, while 18.75

disagree completely.

Question 2:

I have observed noticeable differences in cognitive processes between people from different cultural backgrounds.

Answers	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Numbers	12	2	2
Percentage	75%	12.5%	12.5%

The present question aims to examine participants' observations of variations in cognitive processes among individuals from different cultural backgrounds. A significant majority of participants (75%) have observed differences in cognitive processes across individuals from different cultural backgrounds. (12.5%) are neutral while (12.5%) disagree.

Question 3: When participating in cognitive tasks or experiments from different cultures challenging, I found the task to be challenging to some extent.

.Answers	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Numbers	6	4	6
Percentage	37.5%	37.5%	25%

Table 3: Participants' experiences and perceptions

This question aims to explore participants' experiences and perceptions of the difficulty or challenges associated with cognitive tasks or experiments designed by researchers from different cultures. The responses to this question are evenly divided (37.5%) between agreement and neutral, with an equal number of participants agreeing and being neutral, while (25%) disagree.

Question 4: Cultural expectations for cognitive development differ across different cultures.

Answers	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Numbers	8	5	3
Percentage	50%	18.75%	31.25%

This question aims to investigate participants' recognition of variations in cultural expectations related to cognitive development across different cultures. Half of the participants (50%) agree that cultural expectations for cognitive development vary across cultures. (18.75%) are neutral while (31.25%) disagree.

Question 5: Language plays a role in shaping cognitive processes.

Answers	Agree	Netural	Disagree
Numbers	13	1	2
Percentage	81.25%	12.5%	6.25%

Table 5: Language rôle

This question intends to assess participants' beliefs regarding the influence of language on cognitive processes and development. An overwhelming majority of participants (81.25%) agree that language influences cognitive processes. all along (12.5%) are neutral and (6.25%) disagree.

Question 6: Cultural practices or traditions impact cognitive development positively or negatively.

Answers	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Numbers	11	3	12
Percentage	68.75%	12.5%	18.75%

Table 6: Cultural practices

The present question seeks to examine participants' understanding of the potential impact of cultural practices or traditions on cognitive development and to identify perceived positive or negative effects. The majority of participants (68.75%) agree that cultural practices or traditions can impact cognitive development. While (12.5%) are neutral and (18.75%) disagree.

Question 7: I believe Individuals from different cultures have different problem-solving skills or decision-making processes.

Answers	Agree	Netural	Disagree
Numbers	14	1	1
Percentage	87.5%	6.25%	6.25%

Table 7: Culture effect on problem-solving

The purpose of this question is to explore participants' beliefs about the presence of cultural differences in problem-solving skills and decision-making processes. A large majority of participants (87.5%) agree that individuals from different cultures can possess distinct problem-solving skills or decision-making processes.while (6.25%) are neutral and (6.25%) disagree.

Question 8: Cultural background has influenced my cognitive processes in a certain situation.

Answers	Agree	Netural	Disagree
Numbers	9	3	4
Percentage	56.25%	25%	18.75%

Table 8: Cultural backgrounds

This question seeks to understand participants' personal experiences and perceptions of how their cultural background has influenced their cognitive processes in specific situations. A little over half of the participants (56.25%) agree that their cultural background has influenced their cognitive processes in a specific situation.all along (25%) are neutral and (18.75%) disagree.

Question 9: Researchers' efforts should be taken to understand the relationship between culture and

cognitive development.

Answers	Agree	Netural	Disagree
Numbers	15	0	1
Percentage	93.75%	0%	6.25%

Table 9: Efforts towards the study

This question aims to assess participants' recognition of the need for further efforts and research to

 enhance the

understanding of the relationship between culture and cognition. The vast majority of participants

(93.75%) agree that efforts should be made to enhance the understanding of the connection between culture

and cognitive development. while (6.25%) disagree and none are neutral.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented a description of the methodology used, including the research design, the target
population and research procedure and data collection using one instrument, an online questionnaire.
Ultimately, it supplied an analysis of the results that were obtained. The next chapter will include an
interpretation of the results and a full discussion.

Chapter 3:

Results and Discussion

3. Introduction

The previous chapter analyzes the data, and the findings were presented in tables and graphs. In this chapter, the findings are discussed. A quantitative analysis of the data will be carried out and analyzed. A research limitation is concluded with given suggestions and recommendations for future researchers working on this domain.

3.1 The Analysis of Major Findings of the questionnaire

Firstly, the collected data shows that a majority of participants (62.5%) agreed that cultural background is important in shaping an individual's cognitive development. This indicates recognition of the influence of cultural factors on cognition. It implies recognition of cultural values, norms, and experiences that might influence cognitive development; therefore, it aligns with research highlighting the impact of cultural values, beliefs, and experiences on cognitive processes. The recognition of cultural background as a significant factor in cognitive development emphasizes the need for further understanding. Secondly, a significant majority of participants (75%) reported noticing differences in cognitive processes among individuals from different cultural backgrounds. This finding supports cognitive diversity across cultures, supporting the idea that different cultural backgrounds can result in unique cognitive techniques and views. Understanding these differences can increase cultural awareness and foster awareness of how culture affects brain function. The questionnaire also examined the perceived influence of language on cognitive processes. An overwhelming majority of participants (81.25%) agreed that language shapes cognitive processes. This finding supports the thesis that language serves as a means of communication and influences how individuals perceive, think, and process information. And as we know, language is closely intertwined with memory as it plays a significant role in the development and use of language.

Therefore, acknowledging language as a cognitive shaping factor underscores its significance in understanding cultural differences in cognition with the alignment of memory. Participants also

acknowledged the potential impact of cultural practices and traditions on cognitive development. A majority (68.75%) agreed that cultural practices or traditions can impact cognitive development positively or negatively. This finding reflects an awareness of the role of cultural contexts, educational methods, and social practices in shaping cognitive abilities, as cultural practices and norms shape what individuals pay attention to in their environment. These cultural practices create expectations for appropriate intentional behaviors, and each culture has its own set of norms and rules regarding attention. This indicates the outstanding impression of cultural practices on cognitive development and attentional focus.

Additionally, participants recognised the presence of cultural variations in problem-solving skills and decision-making processes. A large majority (87.5%) agreed that individuals from different cultures may possess different problem-solving skills or decision-making processes.

This discovery highlights an understanding of the diverse approaches to cognitive tasks across cultures. Emphasizing the significance of cultural context in shaping cognitive strategies and problem-solving approaches regarding personal experiences, more than half of the participants (56.25%) agreed that their cultural background had influenced their cognitive processes in specific situations.

This finding demonstrates that individuals recognise the impact of their own cultural backgrounds on cognition, suggesting that cultural influences can manifest in various cognitive tasks, decision-making processes, or problem-solving situations.

Ultimately, the findings showed that participants (93.75%) strongly agreed that further research should be done better to understand the connection between culture and cognitive development. This highlights the perceived importance of further research in this area. It underscores the need to deepen our understanding

of how cultural factors shape cognition, with potential implications for education, psychology, and cross-cultural interactions.

In conclusion, the questionnaire results provide insightful findings into participants' perspectives on the influence of cultural background on cognitive development.

The findings prove a recognition of the importance of cultural factors, the cognitive diversity across cultures, the role of language-allied attention, the impact of cultural practices and memory, problem-

solving differences and the need for further research.

These discoveries underscore the broader understanding of the intricate relationship between culture and cognitive development, highlighting the significance of cultural context in shaping cognition.

3.2 Research limitation

A limitation of this study was the constrained availability of resources, due to limited participants and time constraints, the research could not include a larger and more diverse sample size. The findings need to fully capture the variability and nuances of cultural backgrounds and their impact on cognitive development. Additionally, participants were only recruited from a limited geographic area, limiting the generalizability of the results to a broader population.

Another limitation of the study is the use of the survey and the self report, using only self reported data opens the door to bias and mistakes in the results.

Instead of truly expressing their genuine experiences or behavior, participants may give answers that they feel align to cultural expectations and reflect their intended image. due to social desirability bias. they may exaggerate the favorable features of their experiences or minimize the negative ones, which can result in misleading or incomplete assessment.

Additionally; participants' memories or recall of prior events may be faulty, resulting in inaccurate responses. they could find it difficult to precisely recall or detect the precise impact of culture on their cognitive functions which might lead the data to be incorrect.

3.3 Suggestions and Recommendations

The findings provide us with a complex knowledge of how culture affects cognitive development. These results underline the need for additional research to understand this connection. Scientifically

speaking, these studies can reveal priceless insights into cultural variations that permeate cognitive capacities, problem-solving techniques, decision-making processes, and various types of other cognitive functions.

Future researches may go beyond the limits of unique viewpoints and explore the unexplored realm of cultural impacts on cognition by methodically analyzing both the common threads that bind humans and the different patterns that arise among civilisations.

These initiatives not only reveal the significant ways in which culture affects the way people think, but they also help people appreciate the rich tapestry of human culture more fully, the diversity of humankind.

A more thorough investigation across various cultural contexts and a more representative sample would be possible in future research with more resources, such as larger budgets and longer timelines, leading to a more thorough understanding of the connection between cultural background and cognitive development.

As for the self report withdrawal, researchers can overcome the restriction by using several data findings and improve the reliability of the findings. To provide a more thorough picture of the cognitive effects on people, objective measurements such as cognitive tests and behavioral observations can be used in addition to self report measures.these measurements can provide precise insights into the relationship being studied by following individuals experiences and cognitive performance across time.

3.4 Conclusion

The findings shed important light on how respondents view the connection between culture and cognitive development. Although there is broad agreement that cultural background influences cognitive processes significantly, the study additionally demonstrates the complexity and diversity of viewpoints on this subject. Participants acknowledged the variations in cognitive functions across people with various cultural origins and the impact of cultural practices, customs, and language on cognition. To better understand how culture affects cognitive development, they

emphasized the need for further research, cross-cultural studies, and culturally sensitive techniques.

General Conclusion

The present study investigated the impact of culture on cognitive processes, specifically focusing on how cultural factors influence how individuals perceive and interpret information. The objective was to understand the impact of culture on cognitive processes, specifically perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving. To accomplish the purpose of this study, a quantitative approach to data collection was applied by adapting a questionnaire. The latter helped us to reveal participants' beliefs and observations regarding the influence of cultural background on cognitive processes and their perceptions of the impact of cultural expectations, practices, traditions, and attention on cognition. We could develop the three given research questions about the underlying mechanisms through a culture that shapes cognitive processes, cultural contexts that influence cognitive development across the lifespan, and cultural differences that impact peoples' perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving.

This research study offered an in-depth investigation of the connection between culture and cognition. The theoretical section established the groundwork by defining fundamental concepts and investigating how culture regulates cognitive skills, including perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving. The methodology and data analysis segment synthesized existing theoretical frameworks and collected data using an online questionnaire. The findings reported in the last chapter validate the hypotheses proposed, confirming that cultural norms and beliefs influence attentional focus, cognitive biases, and cognitive processes. Furthermore, cultural ideas and practices influence cognitive development across the lifetime, and cultural variations alter attentional and cognitive control processes.

The questionnaire could have been more accurate as it was based on a specific sample of participants, which may only partially represent the broader population. However, the survey result is still remarkable and should be considered in this study. The survey's findings supported the three thesis hypotheses that claim that cultural variations influence many cognitive functions, including perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving. These hypotheses are supported by the participants' consensus on the significance of

cultural background in influencing cognitive development. Accepting cognitive differences among people with various origins shows that cultural differences can affect how people perceive, attend to, recall, and solve issues. According to this perspective, cultural variations can influence cognition through certain cultural elements, such as cultural practices affecting attention or language influencing problem-solving techniques.

The survey results further support the thesis by highlighting the need for greater investigation, cross-cultural studies, and initiatives to comprehend the complex interactions between culture and cognition. Participants' support for these initiatives revealed a common desire to learn more about how cultural variations impact perception, attention, memory, and problem-solving. The survey's findings showed that individuals believe that culture influences different cognitive processes and that additional science is required to comprehend how culture and cognition interact deeply.

Future studies on the relationship between culture and cognition should focus on developmental features, specific cognitive domains, fundamental processes, and practical applications in order to enhance our understanding of the complicated link between culture and cognitive processes. Researchers can contribute to a more complete and culturally informed understanding of cognition by addressing these issues and experimenting globally.

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Appendix

This questionnaire is to collect data about cultural differences that affect people's cognitive processes. Thank you for accepting to collaborate and take time to share your answers on these questions.

Section1:

1-What is your cultural background?
(if you have mixed cultures please mention it)
………………………………………….

2-What is your age?
………………………………………….

Section2:

1-Cultural background is important in shaping an individual's cognitive development.

● Agree

● Neutral

● Disagree

2-I have observed noticeable differences in cognitive processes between people from different cultural backgrounds.

● Agree

● Netural

● Disagree

3-When participating in cognitive tasks or experiments from different cultures challenging, I found the task to be challenging to some extent.

● Agree

● Netural

- Disagree

4-Cultural expectations for cognitive development differ across different cultures.

- Agree

- Netural

- Disagree

5-Language plays a role in shaping cognitive processes.

- Agree

- Netural

- Disagree

6-Cultural practices or tradition impact cognitive development positively or negatively

- Agree

- Netural

- Disagree

7-I believe individuals from different cultures have different problem-solving skills or decision-making processes.

- Agree

- Netural

- Disagree

8-Cultural Background has influenced my cognitive processes in a certain situation.

- Agree

- Netural

- Disagree

https://8vx0gvnestx.typeform.com/to/H4tc30Qj