

Intercultural Communication Challenges and Its Effect on Students' Interpersonal Relationships at a South African University

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ABSTRACT Intercultural communication has been known to refer to communication, which takes place amongst the individuals from distinctive cultures. However, problems and challenges are evident in cases where people are not able to accommodate one another or communicate effectively across cultures. This paper evaluates intercultural communication challenges and their effect on students' interpersonal relationships at a South African university. Purposive sampling technique was adopted and data was collected through two focus groups and analysed qualitatively. Interestingly, this paper revealed that there is cultural prejudice, stereotyping, ethnocentrism and cultural conflict among the students of this selected university, which negatively affects interpersonal relationships among students. Therefore, responding to this problem, this paper recommends that the university should put more effort in reducing intercultural communication challenges through regular engagement of cultural educational programmes within the university that will gather different students of distinctive cultural groups together.