

Intercultural Communication at AUI

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Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to highlight how the intercultural communication contributes to the development of Al Akhawayn University. This has been done through the analysis of several investigations on local relationships in this specific community. The literature review demonstrated that a heterogeneous environment could be very useful in establishing any progression; hence, this review is a valuable tool that demonstrated how it could be difficult when dealing with a multicultural community. Al Akhawayn University is a complex milieu that contains many nationalities, and thus, many cultures. Therefore, surveys, interviews, and observations were done to be aware of the necessary relationships that are required to ensure any development. In data gathering, a sample size of 100 of both Moroccan and international subjects has been chosen to provide a representative data based on rational results. The qualitative research was based on interviews with five staff members that are specialized in this domain. Moreover, in order to familiarize the team with the complexity of this issue, a drama show was watched and analyzed. After these investigations, a major conclusion was deduced. This conclusion was that intercultural communication plays a significant role in attaining the development of Al Akhawayn University on both individual and general levels.

Introduction

Intercultural communication is a major problem in all kind of fields. It may be the original source of the clashes and misunderstandings that occur within relationships on an international basis. Communication is an important issue especially when dealing with different cultures. Therefore, one is to be very careful when using any sort of intercultural communication. A problem with communication at Al Akhawayn University has been identified as an issue that this team should investigate on.

This research was based on an analysis that has to do with local relationships in a specific community. The current intercultural communication that exists at Al Akhawayn University was evaluated in this paper. This university offers a heterogeneous environment that promotes interaction on a daily basis. Exchange students who come from 13 international universities represent 5.5% of the total student body. In addition, the university holds a large number of staff with different nationalities. These exchange students and faculty are confronted to Moroccan ones with whom they interact. However, this interaction may be misused and result in a lack of communication. This issue is problematic for it prevents the development and improvement of this university. Although this lack of communication is seen, by some unconscious students and faculty, to be insignificant and is often neglected in this community, it is, actually, causing enormous obstacles that prevent community members from reaching their full personal growth in intellectual, academic and social level.

Establishing fluent communication between the international and the national will allow long term development in the community that largely contributed to the success of the university. The main purpose of this investigation is to find solutions and ways to reach

effective intercultural communication. By finding them, progress was offered in all levels, both on the individual and general level. Indeed, this research ensured the awareness of the importance of this lack of communication which enhanced the productivity of the relationships within this university.

The following assumptions are the most important ones to consider in this research paper:

- Ineffective cultural communication leads to cultural clashes.
- The lack of intercultural communication impedes the welfare and the personal and academic development of the university. A developed environment with rich communication will promote “full development of every student in terms of a confident and constructive self-image of a commitment to self-discipline and of a responsible self-expression” (AUI student handbook, 2006).
- Intercultural communication is a major concern to any community since it has direct social, intellectual and academic effects.

The aim of this research paper was to determine how better intercultural communication can contribute to the development of Al Akhawayn community. This development will allow students and faculty, international and national, to live in a community and study together. This will reflect a positive image of the university urging more students and faculty to join this united environment.

This research paper mainly focused on how improving the intercultural communication could develop Al Akhawayn University. Indeed, many questions were considered. For instance, how does the lack of intercultural communication affect the relationship between students and students, faculty and faculty and students and faculty? How

could one establish fluent communication? By providing deep and detailed answers of these questions, one will be more able to identify the problem and therefore, propose solutions for it.

Literature review

A heterogeneous environment could be very useful in producing any improvement regarding the community that is concerned. Yet, this research paper demonstrated how it can also be very difficult when dealing with a multicultural context. This research paper focused on a specific community which is Al Akhawayn University; a complex milieu that offers a multicultural education. In this particular context, communication is very important since it establishes the necessary relations that are required to attain any development.

This case is also seen in non-Moroccan universities that, more or less, produce the same mistakes. They are mistakes that interrupt the development of such society and impede any established communication. In her book, Korn & Bursztyn (2002), an African American school psychologist, presents an example of the problems that occur in multicultural contexts. The example reflects the controversy of the different cultures. It sustains the idea of how an Arab student is rejected with his traditions from a white American culture. This example could represent a mirror to this topic. It introduces a multicultural environment that takes place in a non-Moroccan context and that may suggest details that are not visible in this community. However, in general, this type of environment is considered to be a very complex milieu since it brings together all kinds of different cultures. This difference in culture can cause significant problems if one is not conscious of it. Van Der, L (1996), a training teacher in a primary school in South Africa thinks that when people are not aware of cultural differences, it can lead to many considerable misunderstanding. As a reflection to the issue discussed, Moroccans and

International students may have conflicts caused by culture gap or cultural shock. Virginia M. Tong et al (2006), an English teacher of immigrants in Hunter College of CUNY in New York City stated in *Promoting a Positive Cross-cultural identity: Reaching Immigrant Students* that “All newcomers to the United States face adjustment challenges with regard to a new language, customs, laws, and lifestyles (Grossman, 2004; Organista, & Kurasaki, 2003; Tong, 2002).”(p. 203-208). This is the almost the case of exchange students who come to AUI. They face a new culture which is different from theirs.

It is in fact, very difficult to reach effective communication in this multicultural sort of environment and therefore, efforts are to be made and new resolutions are to be approved in order to achieve better interaction. Different cultural beliefs and traditions are coming into conflict impeding communication. As Schoem et al.(1993) suggest, “It is seldom possible simply to ‘teach’ a course in intergroup relations to a heterogeneous group,” (p.13). This team investigated the diverse ways that one should consider in order to make a united and strong atmosphere.

The investigation was based on deep observations that were provided from surveys and books. More than one source has offered ways that one could use in order to base effective intercultural communication. Manning & Baruth (2000) explores the idea of founding fluent communication through the proposal of the different ways that one should consider in order to establish a successful multicultural education. Some of the ways include “gender integration” and “open dialogue”. Fullinwider (1995) highlights the same concept by suggesting some of the solutions that the community in question should deem not to “get in the way of equal educational opportunity and high student achievement,” (p.3). On the other hand, different methods are proposed by Bergen (2002). He simply underlines the idea that, in order to achieve any sort of

development, one should take into consideration, “the curriculum content, instructional process and the program structure,” (p.62). It is, in fact, an amazing way for to get a fluent intercultural communication, one needs more than a simple process. That is why there have to be intercultural communication courses to establish an effective way of communication within AUI. Concerning this kind of courses, Sercu, L. (2005) suggested that “Teachers of intercultural communicative competence also need to be acquainted with basic insights from cultural anthropology, culture learning theory and intercultural communication.” (p.90). This could be one of the solutions that may lead to establish an effective way of communicating within AUI.

After detecting these solutions, one may then take a look at all the benefits that could help in the development of the university and in this case, the benefits related to Al Akhawayn University. Chesler (2004), professor of sociology at the University of Michigan, emphasizes that “the automatic and the universal benefits of diversity without substantial planning and complementary organizational change, must be reconsidered,” (p.5). In other words, Al Akhawayn University should plan new exchange programs and reorganize its main goals to attend such diversity. One of the most important benefits that were extracted from this complex multicultural milieu is creativity. Tepper (2006) discusses this point in his article by mentioning the importance of this feature. By establishing efficient intercultural communication, Al Akhawayn community will be able to take profit from all these benefits and thus, reach a more creative development in all its fields.

Collecting data from academic sources are not sufficient to complete this research and thus, other questions are to be answered in order to attain a full overview of the highly expected environment.

- What are the different kinds of intercultural communication?

- What are the results of ineffective communication?
- How does the lack of intercultural communication affect relationship between students and students, faculty and faculty, and students and faculty?

Design

In order to correctly explore and adequately reflect the actual state of the existing intercultural communication in Al Akhawayn University, one should try numerous and diverse methods. This team chose to include in this research project a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative strategy was presented under the form of a survey, facilitating the comparison between data and helping the team to convert it to rational percentages. These statistics helped the team answer the main research question and enhance the understanding on how the intercultural communication could develop the university. Moreover, it will determine the consistency and the reliability of this topic. Thus, the quantitative data enhanced the general understanding of the problem and give certain objectivity to the results. (Winter, 2003, as cited in Burgess, 2003). On the other hand, the qualitative method was also very significant to this research project. It identified patterns and helped the team to analyze the data gathered; thus, it classified and provided a detailed approach to this subject. "Qualitative methods include the study of documents, passive observation, participant observation, interviews and case studies." (Burgess, 2003, p.5) In this case, this research proceeded with interviews and observations.

This research is descriptive and in, some aspects, correlational. It described the communication that exists between the different cultures as well as it depicts the multiple problems that this issue manifests in this university. However, this research only covered some correlational features. It is a comparison of the relationships that exists between the international

and Moroccan students and faculty regarding intercultural communication. This team explored the diverse common points and differences that take place in communication at AUI. Although this topic was often discussed and presented, this team exposed details that were not detected before. It is, in fact, a replication of a previous research project that presented a subject that is often discussed. Yet, a deep investigation was done in order to portray the unseen concepts and facts about this topic.

The team used several methods to collect data needed to analyze the actual intercultural communication between the national and the international students and staff. Since the Moroccans are more numerous than the international students, the survey was distributed to 100 students of whom 40 are international and 60 are Moroccans. This sample size has been chosen to provide a representative data based on rational results. Therefore, the nationality was the team's main focus. This research was only limited to the Al Akhawayn students. Furthermore, this team did not base the research on a particular age, gender, or level of study as a criterion. The team proceeded in distributing the surveys depending on the student's availability. The questionnaires were randomly dispersed without any discrimination or selection. This survey is one page with 12 closed-ended questions that do not involve writing but only checking and one question was added with a required short answer to get a general opinion of the views. The one page format was chosen in order to avoid the feeling of boredom and burden to answer each question. The checking method does not require much thinking and eases the task. This questionnaire helped the team accumulate sufficient data that can be compared. A pretest was done by the 1202 class to identify any present weakness and to receive feedback. Based on them, the team then revised the copy and made some modifications to the survey. This survey provided

only the team with quantitative data and thus, some interviews are required to intensify the reliability and the quality of the data.

The qualitative research was based on interviews with five staff members that are specialized in this domain. The first interview dealt with the Director of the International Program. Being an international professor too, he not only provided this team with constructive information but also enriched its knowledge on the international program process. The second interview proceeded with the exchange program coordinator; a Moroccan participator in the integration of the international students. These two interviews offered this team a two perspective of the insights and problems that exist in this environment. The team then tried to deepen this research by interviewing the Al Akhawayn Counselor who helped enunciate the source of the communication problems. This team also investigated on the procedure that teachers use to communicate with students. The first teacher is an international professor of interpersonal communication whom the team was planning to interview about the existing interpersonal communication with her students. The last interviewee is a Moroccan Arabic teacher who gives courses to international students.

In this type of research, questionnaires and surveys are not sufficient and that is why observations are required to complete this investigation. The observations that were included in this project focused on a theatrical analysis that occurred in building 17 in the Al Akhawayn University. This drama show, “Crash Land”, performed by youth from different Mediterranean countries, introduced a significant concept of the problems that exist when dealing with intercultural communication. This is a show that portrayed some of the effort that AUI expended in order to make its students aware of the difficulties in the intercultural communication.

This research project proceeded on campus. Concerning the survey which included only students, each member of the group distributed 25 copies of which 10 are for international students and 15 for Moroccan ones. The 100 copies that were accumulated will portray a realistic outcome since a comparison was done with percentages. On the other hand, the interviews were based on qualitative results since they structured with open questions answered by experts in this domain. Each interview was attended by two members of the group who were well trained before. The combination of the members was different at each interview to equally balance the task. The experimental observations were done without any member's interference or suggestions. It proceeded in a natural way to get neutral and reliable results. Overall, this topic is limited to the Al Akhawayn University and thus, the team did not face any difficulties in term of the place or finding the right sample. Yet, there was a time constraint since the summer is not the best period to investigate or represent the overall state of the present intercultural communication in the Al Akhawayn University.

Results

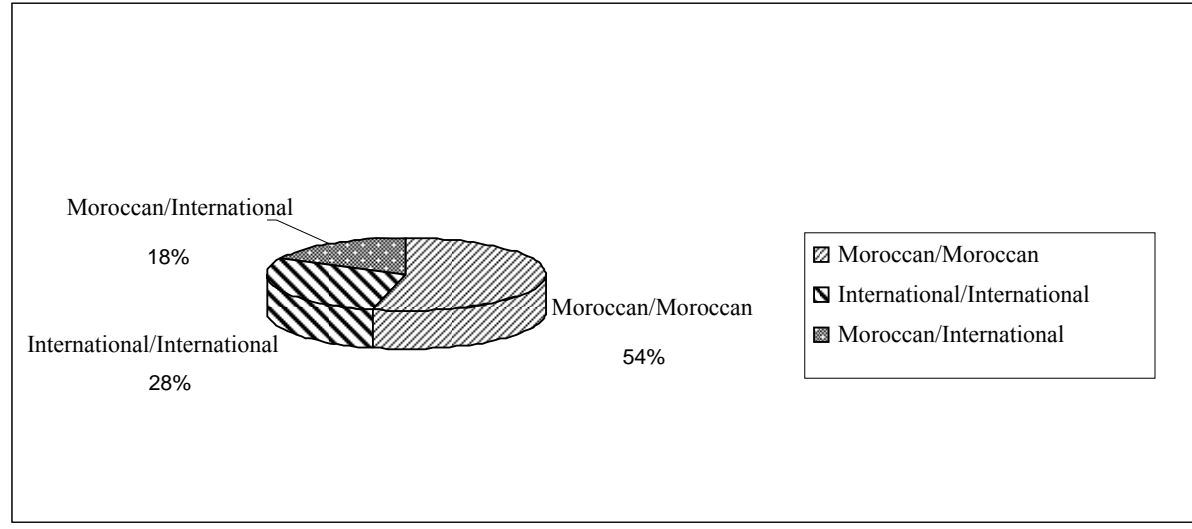
This research paper was based on one main question that could only be answered through various observations and results. The research question investigates how the intercultural communication can contribute to the development of the Al Akhawayn University. To answer this question, one should first see whether effective intercultural communication exists within this university. Surveys provided the knowledge on this matter to then lead to the next step. The next step helped analyze the different effects that lack of communication has. Last but not least, this team then linked the effects on how this sort of communication could help develop the Al Akhawayn University.

In this section, the data collected was based on the following questions:

- a. What degree of friendship exists between people of different cultures?
- b. What pushes one to make efforts in order to produce effective intercultural communication?
- c. Does the AUI environment encourage better communication?
- d. What are the problems that prevent people from establishing efficient intercultural communication?

Before analyzing whether there is efficient intercultural communication within Al Akhawayn University, the team first preceded by exploring the level of intimate interaction between the different cultures, that of Moroccans and the internationals. The survey was distributed to 40 internationals and 60 Moroccans. The following chart demonstrates the percentage of interaction between the international and Moroccan.

Figure 1: Close Relationships between Cultures

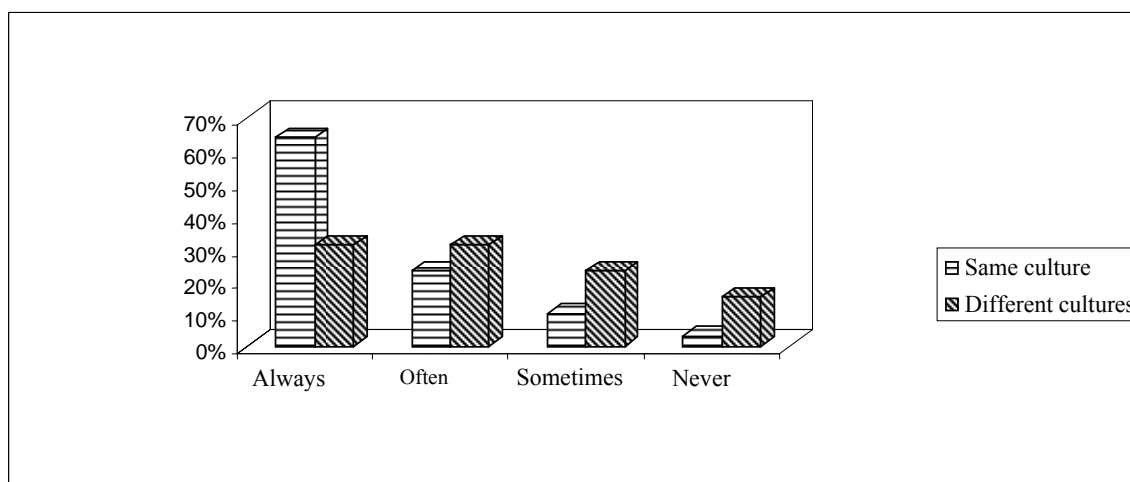


N=100

The close relationship between the national and international is, in fact, not representatively high. As the chart presents, nearly half of the Moroccan sampled tend to interact with Moroccans and only 18% of them have a close relationship with people from different countries. Moreover, it also evaluated the interaction that existed between roommates. The team

chose degree of frequency as a criterion to detect the level of complicity. The figure below exposes the degrees of communication that roommates from different or the same culture have with each other. In this case, effective communication expresses the idea of “getting along” and understanding each others. We based the results on these criteria to see whether there is effective communication.

Figure 2: Effective Communication between Roommates

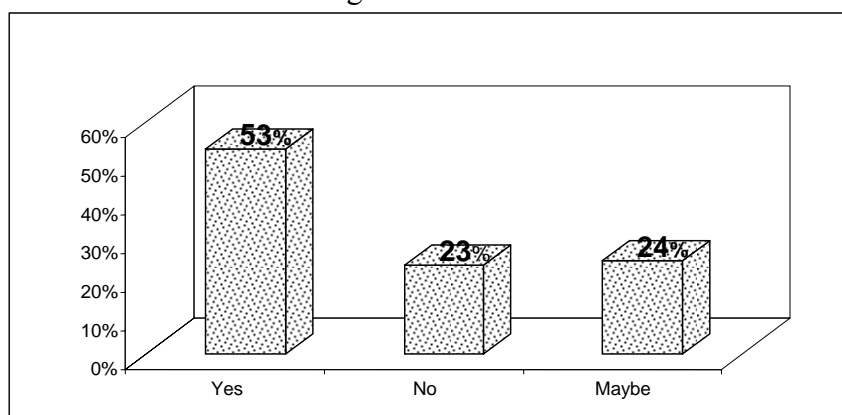


N=100

The different culture bars represent the numerous nationalities that get mixed once a room is shared. It includes the interaction between the following nationalities: Americans, Japanese, Moroccans, and French. However, in the same culture category, the team only included the roommates that were from the same culture whether it was Moroccan, American or Japanese. Only these three nationalities had a room in common.

The next chart of this research project was to detect if the Al Akhawayn students were willing to accept the others' culture through living. In fact, this graph exposes the level of tolerance and openness that each Moroccan or international student holds towards the idea of rooming with someone from different culture.

Figure 3: Tolerance when Rooming



N= 100

In this figure, the data reported were based on both the Moroccan will to live with an international and the international's will to live with someone from a different culture including Moroccans. Fifty-four percent were actually open to live with a foreigner and 23% of students were not, which is considered to be relatively high for such negative possibility. However, a positive attitude was shown since 77% are willing to think about this idea, the ones who said yes and the ones who said maybe. Moreover, a deeper investigation was to be done in order detect the reasons that pushes one to either want or not want to be open to any other culture. The following table presents the number of people that chose these specific reasons.

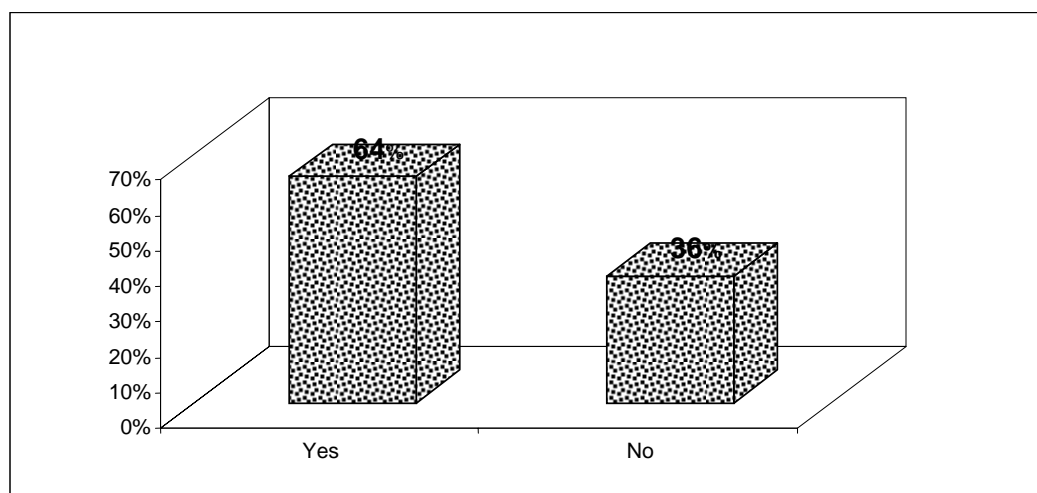
Table1: Reasons for Living with a Foreigner

	New experience	Open minded	Unsociable	Intolerant	Others
Yes	32	27			5
No			12	4	11
Maybe	8	13	0	0	7

N=100

Most of the students, who actually agreed to live with others, supported their choice by the idea of having a new experience and most that did not agree support their choices by saying that they are unsociable. However, many chose both unsociability and intolerance for their decision. In addition to the idea of having new experience, many attributed to themselves the quality of being open-minded as a reason for their decision.

Figure 4: Encouraging environment of communication at AUI



N=100

As previously stated, the team's next task is to detect whether the AI Akhawayn University environment encourages students to produce effective communication. To answer this question, a survey was made where both the international and Moroccan students gave their point of view about this matter. The chart above presents the percentage of students that believed that the AUI environment encouraged intercultural communication and those who did not. However, to be more precise, the team also sought the reasons that supported their choice. These reasons are shown in the table below, taking into consideration that many respondents supported their choice by two reasons or more.

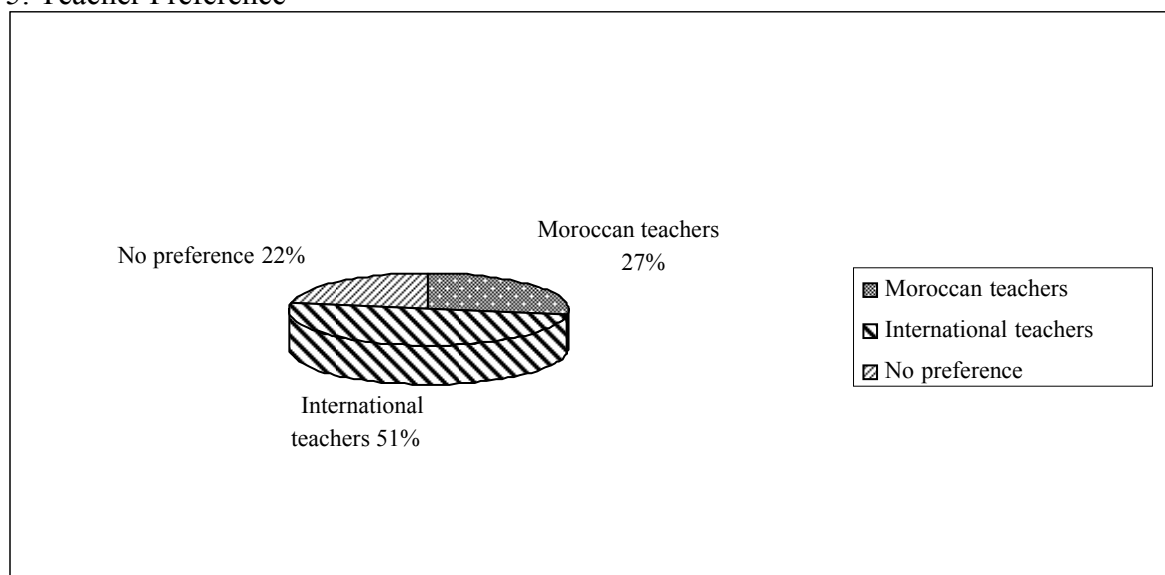
Table 2: Encouragements for Intercultural Communication at AUI

	Student activities	Group work	Lack of Integration	Stereotypes	Others
Yes	42	27			12
No			18	13	15

N=100

The team also chose to analyze the level of tolerance through the teacher preference. From the surveys, the teacher preference was measured as the chart below shows.

Figure 5: Teacher Preference



N=100

The team chose to combine both the Moroccan and the international students' choice in order to evaluate the level of tolerance of the teachers at AUI. As presented in the chart, the international teachers were believed to be the most demanded by the students. The table below will allow the team to see if there is effective intercultural communication between the students and the teachers and its reasons. This chart shows the teachers' capacity of establishing fluent intercultural communication.

Table 3: Reasons for Teacher Preference

	Tolerance	Language	Diversity	Understanding	Others
Moroccan teachers	10	10	2	17	3
International teachers	4	28	20	15	2
No preference	5	9	10	5	7

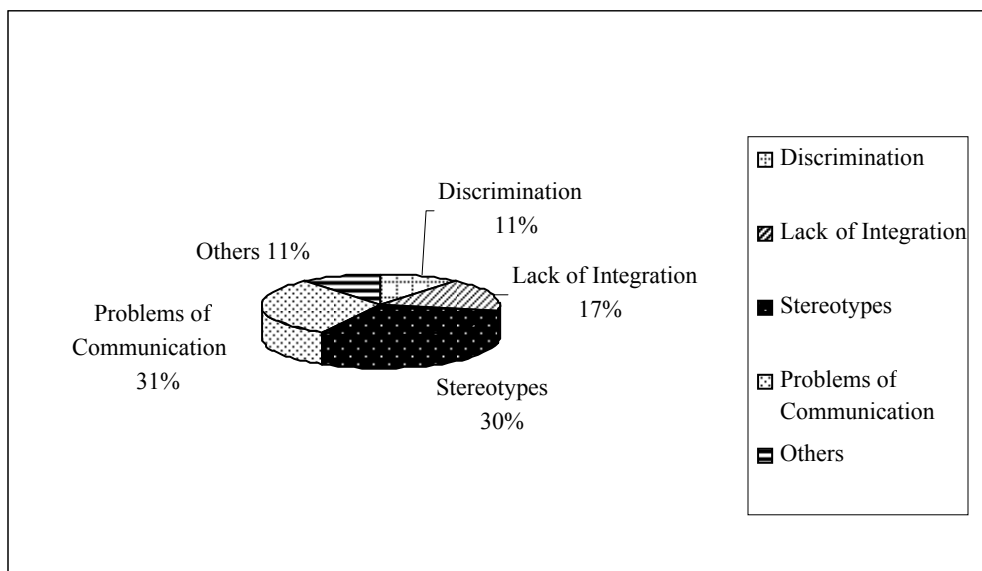
N

=100

The next step to accomplish is the evaluation of the obstacles that impede the intercultural communication. A comparison chart was produced in order to compare the problems faced by students in foreign countries and in Al Akhawayn University. Forty two percent of the respondents have already experienced studying in another country. They were

asked about the problems that both Moroccan and international students encountered when studying in a foreign country as well as in Al Akhawayn University.

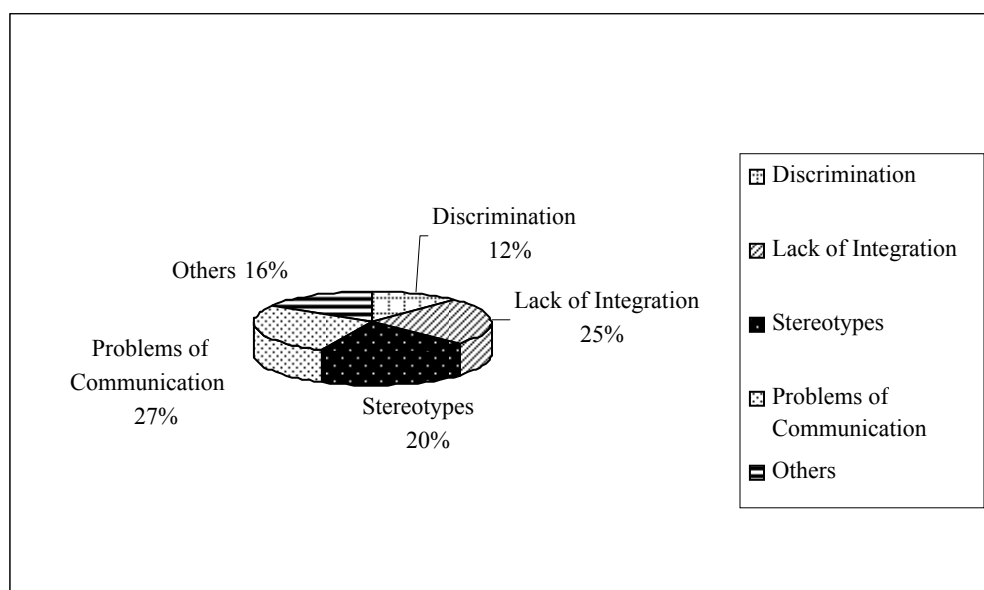
Figure 6: Problems Faced in Foreign Countries



N= 100

The problems that are mostly faced by students in foreign countries are the problems of communication, followed by the stereotypes. Discrimination was in fact, considered to be the least problematic in this matter. However, when comparing this chart to the one based on the problems faced in AUI, the team notices several similarities and differences. In Al Akhawayn University, communication problems were also believed to be the most problematic, followed by the lack of integration. The percentage lack of integration is mostly equal to the ones of the communication problems. However, the problem that is the least considered to be serious is again, discrimination. These percentages are based on the respondents that answered “no” when asked if they have experienced studying in another country.

Figure 7: Problems Faced at AUI



N=100

The comparison of these two chart demonstrates that Al Akhawayn University's major obstacle for producing any effective intercultural communication is the lack of integration. This lack of integration is relatively high compared to the problems faced in other countries.

Interviews

Another method was used by the team to form a certain image of the goals and the expectations for the international program at AUI. It also helped this team get a brief overview of the existing problems concerning this issue. This method was to interview people. Therefore, it would help answer the research question and identify how the intercultural communication could develop the university.

The first interview dealt with the Director of the International Program and the Exchange Program Coordinator. These two interviews offer this team a perspective of the insights and problems that exist in this environment. They stated that there is not really effective intercultural communication at AUI since students and staff are from different cultures and they face problems integrating. The problems of culture difference cause a lack of communication and

close relationships because exchange students and teachers usually form groups to travel for example. They also affirmed that there are many religious stereotypes about others at AUI, which impede the successful interaction between Moroccan students and faculty and international ones. However, trips, activities, group projects, and clubs are actions that AUI do to improve the exchange program, and thus, to develop the university regarding reputation. In addition, they acknowledged a new program that AUI has adapted to promote a rich heterogeneous environment that reflects effective intercultural communication. This program called ARANAS suggests that AUI is working towards having a positive exchange program. In order to establish intercultural dialogue, AUI has created international Arabic classes and *Darija* classes. Although these courses exist, AUI still needs courses in intercultural communication in humanities for juniors and seniors in order to know more about different cultures and be able to effectively communicate with others.

The second interview was accomplished to deepen this research by interviewing the Al Akhawayn Counselor who helped enunciate the source of the communication problems. As the counselor of AUI, she is mostly consulted for personal and academic problems, sexual harassment, problems with roommates, and cross-cultural shocks. She confirmed that there is not a clear racism within AUI, but a kind of discrimination exists such as special treatments and preferences. AUI is not the only source of the problems of integration, discrimination, and communication. These problems are mainly caused by the ways of thinking and interacting. She also agrees that there is intercultural communication at AUI, but it should be developed by intercultural communication orientation, and a physical, cultural, and linguistic adjustment. To establish and control efficient intercultural communication, students and staff from different cultures should take advantage of each other's culture by interpretation, expectation, perception

checking, trust, comfort, security, and understanding. She declared that since effective communication enhances one's state of mind by developing his personality and making him tolerant and able to exchange opinions, intercultural communication contributes to the development of AUI on psychological, social, and intellectual levels.

This team also investigated the procedure that teachers use to communicate with students. The first teacher is an international professor of interpersonal communication. Since she has lived in eight countries on different continents, she thinks that all cultures differ from each other, and this difference in culture is a factor that impedes the intercultural communication. She thinks that there is no intercultural communication within AUI. The reason for the absence of intercultural communication is that foreigners think they are not integrated and they blame Moroccans for that whereas Moroccans think that they just do not want to be integrated. She thinks that intercultural communication can be improved by providing more activities, celebrating foreign holidays, club meetings, and by making exchange students stay more than six months. Furthermore, the managers should assign every exchange student to a Moroccan one by, for example, inviting him home and teaching him about the Moroccan culture. She affirmed that intercultural communication could contribute to the development of AUI by adding diversity; helping students to after graduating join multinational companies or go abroad. Like any other professor, she encounters several problems when dealing with Moroccan staff like language; also, she thinks that Moroccans deal indirectly with people they have conflict with, which is different from what she had seen in other countries. However, she says that there is no difference in communicating with Moroccan or international faculty.

The last interviewee is a Moroccan Arabic teacher who gives courses to international students. She says that she faces many problems when dealing with international students; for

instance, they are very demanding, they like things to be very concrete and precise and they do not want the teachers to be very serious. Moreover, there are cultural misunderstandings; for example, if she asks an international student to write on the board, he will think that she wants to put him in shame. From international students' evaluations, she noticed that they ask for more interaction with Moroccan students which means that intercultural communication is limited. To overcome this problem, she suggested that international students should have Moroccan roommates and should be mixed in the same classes. As a result, that will contribute to the development of AUI because exchange students may come back in other semesters or talk about the university to other people in their countries.

In order to portray the unseen concepts and facts about this topic with diversity, all members of this team have seen a drama show at AUI where an accident happens between a Moroccan and a tourist bus in a deserted area in the Atlas Mountains. The survivors must spend the night together and make great efforts to overcome the stereotypes they have on each others. In addition, the survivors spoke three different languages which made the communication more difficult. Through this drama show, observations were made and concepts were discovered. This drama shows presents a non common situation that could not be present in the AUI community. It is a complex situation where different people from different cultures are forced to integrate with each others in stressful situations. Through the drama show, different ways of managing this situation were portrayed and different challenges were presented.

Discussion and Conclusion

After several investigations, the main research question was answered efficiently and the assumptions were confirmed. In order to familiarize the team itself with the complexity of this issue, a drama show was watched and analyzed. The drama show presented the numerous

quarrels that one may encounter when trying to deal with the intercultural communication. This shows established a certain awareness of the problem's intensity.

To critically analyze the relations between international and national, the team investigated overall condition of roommates and friends from different cultures. The results have shown that 64% of the same culture tended to get along well with each other. Nevertheless, only 31% of those from different cultures had the same relationship. This could be due to the different cultural backgrounds that each one holds. These backgrounds consist of different way of thinking, traditions and beliefs. The students' attitude will be based on these features and thus, cause a lack communication. Concerning the level of friendship between the national and international students, it was proven that there was only 18% of interaction between them. As the result demonstrated, the Moroccans tend to mix themselves with only Moroccans, not leaving space to any potential effective communication with non Moroccans. This could also be seen as a problem that destroys any hope of intercultural communication. Since there is no interaction or contact between the different cultures, there is no space to an attempt to communicate. Nevertheless, this was an unexpected result since the team did not consider it as a problem. The team related the causes of this problem to the misunderstandings and the different ways that a student may use to communicate.

The second step to follow was to identify if there is a potential effort in forming efficient intercultural communication. Fifty four percent of the sample was willing to produce efforts. This relatively high percentage proves that the Al Akhawayn community has a hidden potential that has still not been exploited. This is due to the total reliance on the university's dealings. If students were given full responsibility and attributed the burden to integrate, they will effective intercultural communication.

The main reasons for making their choice were the desire to face new experiences and adjust open-mindedness. However, others were not able to live with others from different cultures. This lack of potential is due to the unsociability and intolerance that some students are characterized by. It is an astonishing fact since Moroccans are believed to be sociable. This could be due to the rare occasions that the university offers to integrate and socialize its students. This hidden potential should not be neglected since it could play in favor of the university's development. It should also be applied so as to take profit from this beneficial aspect.

The analysis that closes this part of the investigation is to determine the origins of the lack of communication that exists at Al Akhawayn University. In order to fulfill this part, the team studied the multiple programs the University offered in favor of the exchanges. Sixty four percent responded by saying that the University environment urged students to efficiently communicate with each other. The fact that there were a high percentage of yes answers deepens the actual problem. The problem is that the AUI students are not aware of this lack of intercultural communication. They hold an ideal image of the actual state of the intercultural communication that is somehow misleading since it does not reflect the real situation. Their hidden potential efforts are also imprisoned by their extreme dependence on the Al Akhawayn University. As an international student complained, only a few of the Moroccans have been approachable, nice and helpful. In fact, 69% of the 36% that disagreed with the idea that AUI environment encouraged intercultural communication are internationals. It appears that not many of the Moroccans notice the gravity of this problem. The full dependence and the acceptance of this dependence are the main causes. Al Akhawayn University has a constructive program called ARANAS, which is enhancing the intercultural communication. It is an efficient and unique educational program that enriches the Al Akhawayn University's reputation. However, it is not

tolerated by the international students regarding social part because they believe that it segregates international from Moroccans. As an international student claimed, “it is a bit hard to communicate with Moroccans since my program ARANAS is only with foreign students, and the only moments when we could socialize like lunch, we are segregated.” The international’s unrealistic expectations and demanding hopes prevents them from seeing the program’s educational benefits. Overall, both the Al Akhawayn faculty and international students should first be able to effectively communicate in order to assemble both goals.

When dealing with relationships between the students and the teachers, new opinions were presented. Nearly half of the students preferred to be taught by an international teacher over a Moroccan teacher. Their reasons were mainly based on the will of benefiting from diversity and the fluency of language; however, a great number of these students affirmed that ethnicity is immaterial, communication is essential. This means that a high-quality pedagogy and way of transmitting based on effective communication is more interesting than the ethnicity. The Al Akhawayn students and teachers should follow this example in order to establish an effective intercultural communication.

After comparing the foreign universities with AUI, the obstacles that were believed to be problematic based on their high percentages are the following: stereotypes and problems of communication. These were considered to be common problems that most of the countries dealt with. Yet, when comparing these results to AUI’s problems, almost the same problems were revealed. However, only one of them attracted the team’s attention. A high percentage of the lack of integration was present at AUI which was not a common obstacle when compared to other foreign countries. The lack of integration is highly concentrated at AUI and therefore, it should be seriously considered. This lack of integration is due to the fact that there is no forced

interaction to produce any sort of intercultural communication. In fact, a Moroccan student has noticed this problem and said that “there is a lack of adaptation and integration from Moroccan students”. Considering the fact that the lack of integration is the major problem, one should also take notice of the other minor problems. As the Al Akhawayn counselor stated, religious stereotypes, discrimination which includes preferences and special treatments and a lack of acceptance are also considered to be problematic.

The major obstacles and problems that impede the intercultural communication are the lack of integration and more importantly, the lack of awareness of such problem. Yet, the most important question is how the intercultural communication could develop Al Akhawayn University. This was answered through a deep analysis of the interviews. The team’s answer to this question was based on three levels: the personal acknowledgment which enriches the reputation of the university, and then leads to the diversity.

First of all, intercultural communication has a main role in developing the personal acknowledgment. This effective intercultural communication enhances one’s state of mind by developing his personality. Therefore, this makes the person more tolerant and capable of exchanging opinions. When attaining this level of confidence, the person also develops a certain open-mindedness which could be beneficial on general basis. This was supported by the counselor of Al Akhawayn University for the reason that psychological development of each individual could contribute to the social and intellectual improvements. Each member of Al Akhawayn University will fully contribute in the development of the university itself. In addition, the teachers’ participation is also important in the fulfillment of the student’s acknowledgement. The adoption of tolerance and open-mindedness amongst the teachers could be transmitted to the students which will form the new generation; hence, ensure the

development of the university. Overall, each member of Al Akhawayn University is significant to its development.

Intercultural communication could also contribute to the development of Al Akhawayn University for it promotes positive reputation. This reputation could enrich the university's diversity. Through the intellectual, spiritual and social construction of the AUI students, the university is transmitting a positive image of itself and ensuring a constructive reputation. This will encourage a heterogeneous environment that will increase diversity. It is a diversity that will bring many benefits to the university's development and to its opponents. This environment will prepare the AUI students to go abroad and adapt to multinational companies. As a result, the reputation will not only be limited to a local state but on an international basis.

To conclude, after many investigations, the team has noticed that the intercultural communication has a major role in the development of Al Akhawayn University. To establish this development, AUI has already provided *Darija* classes, yet more enforcement is needed in order to enhance intercultural communication. As a start, intercultural communication courses should be available for juniors and seniors to mix with the international students who are often from these categories in a common and useful course that make them more aware of different cultures. As the Al Akhawayn counselor suggested, these courses teach how to make balanced interpretations, fair expectations and significant perception checking that will ensure trust, comfort, and understanding between cultures (personal communication). She also explained that "intercultural communication orientation; physical, cultural and linguistic adjustments should be accomplished by AUI." (Personal communication). In addition to these solutions, a professor of the interpersonal communication advised the creation of encouraging programs that will make international students stay more than six months, assigning every exchange to a Moroccan for

traditional teaching and extracurricular purposes with a reward for their help, and finally, the celebrations of foreign holidays. By celebrating foreign holidays, this will create a share of happiness that will bring all students together. The holidays will attribute a certain value to the internationals pushing the Moroccans' desire to get more familiar with the other culture. When considering these solutions, one may establish and ensure a successful intercultural communication in a fully-developed environment.

In this research, the team faced several problems when gathering data. The first problems were related to the survey. For example, there are two questions in the survey that are not related. The first one is about studying in another country, where the students had to answer by a yes or no. The second question was about the problems of communication faced in that country or at AUI. The majority of the student who answered no in the first question did not answer the second one. Because they did not read it all, they thought it was just about the other country. The team related those two questions by comparing the problems that exist in foreign countries and those in AUI and this result was based on only the small percentage that answered the question. This problem prevented the team from benefiting from the results of an important question in the survey. Another problem was that the research was made in the summer session which is different from other semesters, and that was due to the fact that ARANAS program is not offered during the academic year. The internationals that come for the winter term tend to have more chances to socialize since their stay is longer and their classes are heterogeneous. That makes the research paper relevant just for the summer session.

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Appendix A



SSK 1202 Survey: Intercultural Communication

This survey will help this team develop a general overview of the current state of the international/ Moroccan students regarding the intercultural communication.

These answers will remain anonymous.

1. Define your nationality :

- Moroccan American French South African Others

2. Are your close friends:

- Moroccan American French South African Others

3. What is the nationality of your roommate?

- Moroccan American French South African Others

4. Do you find it easy to communicate with your roommate?

- Always Often Sometimes Never

5. Can you identify the reasons?

.....

6. Do you think you can live with someone from another country?

- Yes No Maybe Others.....

7. What are your reasons? (for answer n°6)

- New experience Unsociable Others.....
 Open-minded Intolerant

8. Does the AUI environment encourage you to have close relationships with students from different nationalities?

- Yes No

9. Why or why not? (for answer n°8)

- Students Activities Lack of integrity Others.....
 Group work Stereotypes

10. Do you prefer to be taught by a Moroccan or an international teacher?

- Moroccan International No preference

11. What are your reasons? (for answer n°10)

- Tolerance Diversity Others.....
 Language Understanding

12. Did you ever experience studying in another country? Yes No

13. What are the problems you faced in that country (ies) or at AUI?

- Discrimination Lack of integrity Others.....
 Problems of Communication Stereotypes

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix B

Interview: The Director and the Coordinator of International Program at AUI.

This interview will help this team to form a certain image of what are the goals and the expectations for the international program at AUI. It could also help this team get a brief overview of what are the existing problems concerning this issue.

The answers will remain anonymous.

1. What is your role exactly within the AUI?
2. How does it contribute to the development of this University?
3. Do you believe that there is effective intercultural communication at AUI? How? Why?
4. Is there a project regarding the improvement of this program?
5. As a professor, what are the problem that you encounter when teaching Moroccan students or dealing with Moroccan staff?

Date: 06/21/06

Appendix C

Interview: A Professor of Interpersonal Communication at AUI.

This interview will help this team develop a general overview of the current state of the international/ Moroccan students regarding the intercultural communication

These answers will remain anonymous.

1. What is your role in Al Akhawayn University?
2. As a professor, what are the problems that you encounter when teaching Moroccan students?
3. Do you prefer to teach international or Moroccan students? Why?
4. How many countries did you visit?
5. Does the Moroccan culture largely differ from all the cultures that you have known?
6. Do you believe that this factor impede the intercultural communication?
7. Do you think that there is effective intercultural communication on campus? How?
8. How could one improve it?
9. How could the intercultural communication contribute to the development of AUI?
10. As a professor, what are the problems that you encounter when dealing with Moroccan staff?
11. Do you communicate better with the international faculty?

Date: 06/23/06

Appendix D

Interview: The Counselor of AUI

This interview will help this team develop a general overview of the current state of the international/ Moroccan students regarding the intercultural communication

These answers will remain anonymous.

1. What is your role in Al Akhawayn University?
2. As a professor, what are the problems that you encounter when teaching Moroccan students?
3. As the AUI psychologist, what are the most frequent of problem that you hear from students?
4. Are there any problems of integrity? Of discrimination? Of communication?
5. Based on your experiences in this domain, do you believe that the AUI environment causes these problems?
6. Did any of your patients report any racism from teachers / students/colleagues?
7. Do you think that there is effective intercultural communication on campus? How?
8. In general, how could effective communication enhance one's state of mind?
9. How could the intercultural communication contribute to the development of AUI on a psychological level?

Date: 06/27/06

Appendix E

Interview: A Professor of intensive Arabic courses

This interview will help this team develop a general overview of the current state of the international/ Moroccan students regarding the intercultural communication

These answers will remain anonymous.

1. What is your role in Al Akhawayn University?
2. As a professor, what are the problems that you encounter when teaching International students?
3. Do you easily communicate with the International students? Were you ever accused of being racist for any misunderstandings?
4. Do you prefer to teach international or Moroccan students? Why?
5. Does the Moroccan culture largely differ from all the cultures that you have known?
6. Do you believe that this factor impede the intercultural communication?
7. Do you think that there is effective intercultural communication on campus? How? How could one improve it?
8. How could the intercultural communication contribute to the development of AUI?
9. As a professor, what are the problems that you encounter when dealing with International staff?
10. Do you better communicate with the Moroccan Staff? Why?

Date: 07/07/06